



## ***Australian Education Union - Federal Office***

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### **JOHN HOWARD SHOULD HAVE GONE TO TAFE**

If the Prime Minister had attended a TAFE college he would have learned the practical approach to meeting the skills shortage. High quality vocational education for students and industry simply requires TAFE to be resourced to provide urgent additional training places.

The Federal TAFE Secretary of the AEU, Ms Pat Forward today called on the Federal Government to stop playing politics with the states and teachers' rights and to forget the sideshow of Australian Technical Colleges and get on with the creating the solution.

"The solution is staring the Federal Government in the face, as it has been for the five years that the AEU has been calling for additional funding. Instead the Federal Government is continuing the policy of no growth in funds to the states and territories to increase places.

"Even a relatively modest injection of new funds would allow students who are now being turned away from colleges in many parts of the country to start their training," Ms Forward said.

Ms Forward drew attention to the dynamic partnerships which TAFE was developing with industry to provide innovative solutions to skills shortages in the traditional trades, despite the lack of funds.

Kangan Batman TAFE and the Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce are working collaboratively to address skills shortages in the automotive industry. Swinburne University is working with ten engineering companies through the Centre for New Manufacturing focusing on new technologies such as nano-technology and computer-aided engineering.

"Increased funding to provide additional TAFE places and a commitment to work cooperatively with state governments, employers and unions are the first practical steps which should be taken to find the solution", Ms Forward said.

The ACTU Skills Summit involving peak industry bodies is the opportunity to start the process on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> April at 9.00 am.

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