



'Faster, stronger, higher, longer' or 'splutter and stumble'?

FASTER, stronger, higher, longer may be the Olympic motto but the pervasive feeling among staff in TAFE Tasmania and Secondary Colleges is that the *Tasmania Tomorrow* proposal will 'splutter and stumble' at the starting line and will not be in medal contention.

Tasmania's new Premier, the former Minister for Education, has retained the Education portfolio reflecting a strong personal commitment to revamping post-compulsory education in Tasmania.

The cycling/walking Premier would understand the 10% inspiration/90% perspiration perspective of effective change implementation and that his vision needs to be complemented with detailed planning, preparation and team-work over a relatively long period to realise the vision.

Gold medallists do not become such in the space of six months.

Less than six months out from the implementation start date of 2009:

- the Statutory Authority legislation has not been put out for public scrutiny;
- chairs of Boards have been announced but there are no Board members;
- the CEOs of the Academy and the Polytechnic have not been announced, presumably because suitable candidates were not identified in the first round of interviews;
- AEU members on the ground want to be engaged but have very little of substance to relate to.

The official line is that matters of substance, such as the shape of the new entities, including the melding of two dramatically structures and cultures, seeming cannot be addressed in an open and transparent way until the new CEOs are in place.

TAFE members are awaiting a tap on the shoulder (which could be as late as September) as to which entity they will be assigned to. Unhappy staff will have an appeals avenue.

The pervasive feeling is that the new entities will start with a whimper rather than a bang.

Negotiations for the new TAFE Teachers Agreement remain stalemated. There has been no movement for a considerable period of time, with the outstanding issue remaining the parameters surrounding the deployment of sessional teachers.

Salary nexus will deliver perhaps 3.56%. Being out of Agreement since March 2008 and moving into a new financial year, the government has raised the spectre of any salary increase being paid from the time of settlement.

TAFE teachers remain annoyed about the attitude of TAFE Tasmania, and the loss of goodwill given the looming organisational changes should be a matter of great interest to any or all players seeking a gold medal. ❖

Jon Paice is TAFE Tasmanian Branch member of NTCE.