



SUPPORT THE PUBLIC TAFE SYSTEM

The public TAFE and VET system is the worst funded education system in Australia. Government recurrent expenditure per hour of training declined by 15.4% between 2004 and 2009—part of a longer term trend that has seen funding per hour decline by about 25.7% since 1997.

Government funding for TAFE has declined both because of the decline in recurrent public VET expenditure per hour and because of a shift of government recurrent funding away from the TAFE sector. If both expenditure per hour and TAFE's share of that expenditure had been maintained at even 2003 levels, TAFE's funding would have been \$623.6m (or 17.0%) greater in 2008 than it actually was.

Guarantee funding for TAFE

The AEU believes that the Federal government must develop and progress policies which guarantee the funding of TAFE to ensure continuing access to low cost, high quality training for people whether they are getting ready for their career, retraining or just looking to improve their skills.

It is not sufficient for the Federal government to argue that it is only the states who have a role in determining policy for TAFE when successive federal governments have actively pursued policies which encourage states and territories to privatise their systems.

The Federal government must not require further privatizing of TAFE as a condition of federal funding, and it must use the upcoming negotiations around a new National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development and National Partnership to support the states in increasing funding for the public TAFE system

Tougher regulations and scrutiny of private for profit VET providers

The federal government has been the major architect of the new national regulatory system, having established both the Australian Skills Quality Agency and the National Skills Standards Council. It must now support tougher regulations and higher standards to ensure that any private provider that has access to government funding is up to standard and will put their students' needs before their own profits. Following the disastrous events in the Victorian system, it must also provide adequate funding to resource increased scrutiny of private providers.

What you can do:

- Encourage the Tertiary Education Minister, Senator Chris Evans to support conditions which would guarantee funding for the TAFE system in each state and territory in the next National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development and the National Partnership for Reform of TAFE
- Urge Senator Evans to support and resource much greater and effective regulation and scrutiny of the activities of private providers