

June 2008

A Chronology of TAFE

Rudd *and the Education Revolution*

April 2008

Rudd government releases *Skilling Australia for the future* discussion paper – argues for ‘greater competition ... including contestability for government funding’.

Boston Consulting Group Report released – advocates the creation of a completely open competitive training market for vocational education and training through the contestable allocation of all government funds to public and private providers. Minister Gillard’s office says the BCG Report is “one of a range of contributions to be considered.”

Victorian government releases *Securing our future economic prosperity* – recommends ‘student entitlement scheme’ and income contingent loans. Full competition in Victoria TAFE system.

March 2008

South Australian government releases *A Skills Strategy for South Australia’s Future*. Recommends a move to full contestability of 50% of TAFE funding in SA by 2012.

Nov 2007

Rudd announces *Skilling Australia for the future* – 820,000 additional VET places over six years ‘delivered in a comprehensively reformed system which meets the concerns of industry groups such as ACCI’. Argues that the Rudd government ‘will act to promote effective competition between public and private, for profit and not-for-profit providers.’

The Howard Years

June 2007

Tasmanian government releases *Shaping a thinking future – Qualifications and skills for Tasmania Tomorrow*. Abolishes public TAFE system in Tasmania effective 2009.

2005 – 2008

The Commonwealth’s Skilling Australia’s Workforce agreements with the states provide an “additional” \$215m. No growth funding, Commonwealth Government ties funding to a number of industrial relations conditions, including the offering of AWAs.

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2005	ANTA abolished; responsibility for the national training system centralised in DEST; Institute of Trades Skills Excellence; rollover of 2004 funding agreed for period to July; Government moves to establish Australian Technical Colleges (ATCs) as alternative VET providers, committing \$343.6m over five years.
2004	Rollover of 2003 funding with no indexation of 2003 "growth" funds and Commonwealth direct purchase of priority places under the Australians Working Together programs (\$20.5m).
2001 – 2003	Limited growth funding restored, states required to match the growth funds; total growth funding \$460m over three years, about half of what was required.
1998 – 2000	Commonwealth funding freeze, "Growth through Efficiency", further accelerating-regulation of the training market.
1996 – 1997	Howard Government elected, cuts funding, reducing the funding base for 1998 ANTA Agreement.

The Training Market and the Keating Years

1996	<i>Review of ANTA Agreement Report</i> , released after the Howard government elected, recommends that "Governments have a responsibility not to rely on a single service provider and should therefore make use of market mechanisms to stimulate competition and efficiency."
1995	MINCO decides to accept recommendations of its 1994 implementation group around devolution of authority and greater flexibility, including user choice mechanisms. All States and Territories allocate \$21M or 30% of Commonwealth growth funds through competitive tendering.
1994	ANTA published <i>Towards a Skilled Australia</i> – a national strategy for VET – signaled an acceleration of reforms concerned with "what individuals can do as a result of their training, rather than how long they spend doing it". It also proposed that VET must be based on "an open and competitive training market consisting of both public and private providers."

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1992	<p>ANTA Agreement – provided framework for “a national cooperative system of training management” and for implementation of funding increases proposed by the Commonwealth. ANTA established as a Commonwealth statutory authority by the ANTA Act in 1992, and commenced operation in 1993. New system fully operational by 1994. ANTA required to provide advice to the MINCO. Commonwealth agrees to provide an additional \$100M in the Economic Statement of 1991, and “growth funds on a continuing basis, including \$70M nationally each year of the 1993 – 95 triennium”. ‘Maintenance of effort’ was a key feature of the agreement.</p>
21 July 1992	<p>Keating and Beazley announce establishment of ANTA as a compromise.</p>
May 1992	<p>Keating announces that if States wouldn’t agree to Commonwealth takeover of funding and control of TAFE, Commonwealth would establish its own vocational education system. Joan Kirner suggests a compromise, the establishment of a tripartite body of industry, Commonwealth and State representatives to run a national TAFE system.</p>
1992	<p>One Nation released, contains Commonwealth takeover proposal, including an offer of an additional \$720M over the 1993-5 triennium to upgrade the system and increase participation. States reject offer, arguing “that ‘(TAFE) is vital to the development of regional economies, which facilitate distinctive State/Territory social policies.’¹</p>
1991	<p>Dawkins proposes that the Commonwealth Government assume full financial responsibility for all post secondary education and training, including TAFE. The Commonwealth offered an additional \$100M to the states to fund approximately 40,000 places in 1992 to reduce unmet demand.</p>
1990	<p>Conference of Commonwealth and State Labour Ministers establishes the Training Costs Review Committee to review future training costs. Their report, <i>the Deveson Report</i>, introduced the concept of a vocational education and training sector. It proposed a target of 15 – 20% of TAFE recurrent funding to come from industry within five years.</p> <p>Training Guarantee Scheme established which required employers to spend 1% increasing to 1.5% in 1992 on employment related training. The Finn Committee proposed a target of 95% of 19 year olds should have completed Year 12 by 2001. Training Costs Review Committee indicated fee-for-service activity comprised 6% of recurrent funding nationally.</p>

¹ ACTU 1993

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1987
and
1989

The introduction of the 'training market, the push to competency based training and 'skills formation' rather than the broader notions of vocational education and training.² In Minister Dawkins released *Skills for Australia* and the ACTU released *Australia Reconstructed*. Both hastened a move towards the notion of a vocational education and training system harnessed to the drive for structural changes to the economy. This effectively launched the National Training Reform Agenda.

1987

Australia moved into an era of recession and high unemployment levels.

The Early Years

1986

CTEC funding review reasserted the need to maintain a broader social focus for TAFE, while arguing against fee-for-service and purchaser provider models for funding TAFE because they would "distort educational processes away from conferring broad based adaptive skills towards the job-specific end of the scale."³

1982 – 1983

The Commonwealth provided 76.8% of capital funding. (ABS 5510.0)

1977 – 1980

Commonwealth capital funding increased by 75% in real terms.

1975

There were 430,000 students enrolled in 367 training institutions across the country. About 23,000 or 5.4% of them were full time, and they were mostly adult males aged between 18 and 24.

1974

The Kangan Committee, established in this year, first used the acronym 'TAFE'. Even at this time, the dichotomy of modern TAFE was acknowledged. Without overlooking TAFE's vital manpower role, Kangan gave priority to the "educational and social purpose of technical and further education".⁴ Commonwealth recurrent funding for TAFE began.

1964 – 1965

The Commonwealth Government made its first, modest, contribution to capital funding for TAFE.

² Goozee 1993 p92,102

³ CTEC 1986, 121 quoted in Learning from History p.2)

⁴ Quoted by Fleming, 1994, p.50);