



Australian Council for Private Education and Training ABN 63 054 953 758

National Office: Box Q1076, QVB PO, Sydney NSW 1230  
Suite 12, Level 14, 329 Pitt Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Ph: 02 9264 4490 Fax: 02 9264 4550



## **Media Release**

26 August 2008

### **Skills Reform – a step in the right direction**

The Australian Council for Private Education and Training, Australia's largest and most representative education industry association, has welcomed the Victorian Government's move to introduce a skills guarantee for all Victorians. ACPET supports the principle that learners and employers deserve genuine choice in meeting their skills needs and the announcement of the Securing Jobs for Your Future reform is an important step toward achieving this goal.

Through its training reforms the Government has recognised the need for greater investment in education and training. It is critical that this substantial investment in Victoria's human capital creates skills that lead to employment in the real economy.

If Victoria is to secure its future economic prosperity through skills reform then individuals and businesses must be given to access government-supported places at a broader range of public, private or community training providers. In particular, educationally disadvantaged students should be equally supported in their desire to choose the provider that best meets their needs through a fair and transparent funding mechanism.

A more user focused, demand driven system is strongly supported by ACPET, especially the idea that all people who need training will be provided with training places. Strong and continued growth in the private training sector demonstrates that greater access to public funding for training undertaken in this sector already has strong backing from students and businesses.

Private providers play a significant role in creating new futures for Victorians, including for some of the most educationally disadvantaged members of the community, this contribution should be recognised through access to government funded places for students and a fair and transparent mechanism for determining appropriate levels of government support. Funding levels should reflect the true costs experienced by private providers in delivering quality education outcomes, further reform that reflects the needs of students rather than institutions is needed to fully realize the potential of Victoria's workforce.

Reforms designed to reduce barriers to entry faced by students and businesses wanting to access the training system are a positive step in meeting the shortfall of skilled workers in Victoria. The introduction of HECs style loans to help students overcome financial barriers to access and improved information about up-front costs, the benefits of undertaking training and workforce development tools will all contribute to the development of a more skilled workforce.

The reforms announced today are a vital first step in achieving genuine choice for all Victorians, ACPET looks forward to working with Government to implement these reforms and to build on these significant achievements for the benefit of all Victorians.

For further information:

Andrew Smith Chief Executive Officer

03 9416 1355 / 0419 653 093

*ACPET represents over 1,100 providers of school, vocational and higher education in every State and Territory and in all fields of education and training. Our members educate close to 1 million domestic and overseas students at institutions that range from large multinational organizations to hundreds of small and medium businesses*