MEDIA RELEASE
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Cabinet reshuffle ensures continued growth in tertiary education

ACPET CEO, Claire Field, today welcomed the announcement of the new Gillard Ministry, praising the decision to ensure Senator Evans continued as the Minister for Tertiary Education and Skills.

"At a pivotal time of change in Australia's tertiary education sector the Prime Minister has got it right by delivering certainty to the sector," Ms Field said.

"The rebuilding of Australia's international education sector following the release of the Knight Review requires strong leadership. It is critical that the commitment Senator Evans and Minister Bowen have shown to the sector in recent months, following a number of very difficult years, is continued. Keeping these two senior ministers in their respective portfolios ensures that rebuilding effort is not compromised," she said.

Ms Field commended the emphasis by the Prime Minister on skills reform in 2012 as a key driver in Australia's economic prosperity.

"Senator Evans is to be applauded for the consultative approach he has taken to setting the agenda for skills reform in next year's critical Commonwealth-State partnership agreement for the vocational education and training sector. His continuing leadership of this important reform issue will ensure all Australians benefit from access to a greater number of high quality training options," Ms Field said.

Acknowledging the progress made in the reform of the university sector, Ms Field noted that the more than 100 ACPET members offering degree courses in the higher education sector looked forward to working with the government on further higher education reforms.

"Expanding student choice beyond universities to the entire higher education sector is the next challenge. It is a challenge on which I look forward to engaging with government and the sector."

"As 2011 draws to a close the Prime Minister has made substantial changes to her Ministry. At a time when continuity and consistency are pivotal in the ongoing reform of the tertiary sector, the Prime Minister has got it right. She has ensured that a Minister in whom the sector has confidence will continue to lead the changes the sector needs."

Media Contact: Ben Eade, 0406 641 881