MEDIA RELEASE
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Interstate Reform Partnership a welcome step for skills development
High quality private training providers vital to boosting international student numbers

The Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) today commended NSW Premier, Barry O’Farrell, and Victorian Premier, Ted Ballieu, for establishing the Interstate Reform Partnership to fast track economy-boosting projects in Australia’s two largest states.

ACPET CEO, Claire Field, praised the Premiers’ focus on skills and apprenticeships reforms, saying that a high quality, diverse, education and training sector was vital to combating skills shortages and driving economic productivity on both sides of the Murray River.

“ACPET and its members applaud Premiers O’Farrell and Ballieu for putting skills and apprenticeships at the heart of the reform agendas in NSW and Victoria,” Ms Field said.

“ACPET stands ready to work with the Premiers towards a vocational education and training (VET) sector that it is more responsive to the skills needs of industry and students alike, reduces bureaucratic or jurisdictional red tape between States and, ultimately, offers students more opportunities to study with a diverse range of high quality training providers,” she said.

Ms Field said the State Premiers’ were right to outline continued international education reform, particularly in light of new data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics showing that declining international students numbers have delivered a $1 billion hit to the economies of both NSW and Victoria in the past year.

But Ms Field added that she was disappointed the Premiers had not recognised the vital role high quality, low risk, private providers play in delivering education to overseas students.

“92% of international VET students in NSW choose a private provider, as do more than 80% of international VET students in Victoria. High quality private providers are vital to the success of international education and Australia’s reputation as a destination of choice for international students, Ms Field said.”

“Through this ambitious and forward-thinking reform partnership, I urge Premiers O’Farrell and Baillieu to move beyond outdated divisions between private and public institutions and support diversity and competition across the education and training sector.”

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