MEDIA STATEMENT
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Greens wrong - reform vital for NSW

Greens NSW MP, John Kaye, has once again shown his lack of understanding of the reality of the NSW vocational education and training (VET) sector with his inaccurate attack on Australia’s private training providers.

ACPET CEO, Claire Field, said Mr Kaye’s description of the Victorian VET reforms as "throw(ing) TAFE into competition with low cost, low quality private providers" was utterly incorrect and a slur on high quality independent training providers.

"Mr Kaye should check his facts before making such wild claims and consider all of the evidence available. If he did he’d see the evidence clearly shows the success of the Victorian student entitlement model.

“The fact is that since the funding reforms were introduced in Victoria, the State’s training market has grown by 35%, delivering more than 200,000 additional nationally accredited qualifications in 2010 than were awarded before the changes."

“Training reforms are underpinning Victoria’s response to skills shortages. In the last 12 months, Victoria has seen a 23% growth in government-funded training enrolments related to industries experiencing shortages, including health, social services and construction,” Ms Field said.

"Importantly the reforms are also offering significant new opportunities to people from disadvantaged backgrounds to undertake training."

"The Victorian reforms have seen substantial increases in enrolments by students from language backgrounds other than English (enrolments up 26%), particularly in areas of high unemployment such as Greater Dandenong and Hume; increased enrolments by students with a disability (up 22%); a 16% increase in enrolments by Indigenous students, more young people enrolling in training who have not previously completed Year 12 (24% increase); and increased enrolments in foundation courses (basic language, literacy/numeracy) are up 67%.

Ms Field said "the reality of the Victorian experience is that in today's world not all students want to study at TAFE. When offered a choice many students opted for a private or not-for-profit provider to meet their needs."

“Make no mistake, ACPET is not calling for the abolition of TAFE but reform of the NSW VET sector cannot and should not be avoided because it might lead students or employers to choose a non-TAFE provider. The challenge for government is to define a clear role for TAFE NSW, to allow the TAFE Institutes to compete with independent providers, and then allow students and employers real choice in their training provider.”

"ACPET has taken numerous steps in the past eighteen month to lift the quality bar for VET delivery. The time is right for the NSW government to show its commitment to expanding the provision of high quality VET to increase access to training and increase productivity in New South Wales."

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