The Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) is concerned and disappointed by comments reported to have been made by the Tertiary Education Minister Chris Evans regarding a large drop in international education revenue in Australia in 2011.

ACPET CEO, Claire Field, said Senator Evans’ lack of concern about the 20 per cent drop in international education revenue in one year showed a disregard for businesses within his portfolio.

“Senator Evans says the drop in revenue is simply the effect of government reforms targeting rogue providers in the VET sector,” Ms Field said.

“This is far from the truth. Right across the international education sector English language, private and public VET providers have seen student numbers drop substantially.

“ACPET’s quality providers are feeling the pain of this huge drop in student enrolments and in their revenues. The government should support these businesses, not be dismissive of their tough times.

“If any other industry had suffered a drop of such magnitude, government would be concerned about it and its impact on our economy as a whole. Losing $3 billion in one year is no laughing matter.”

Last year, the Knight Review urged a new approach for international education which rewards providers committed to high quality education.

“The implementation of the Knight Review recommendations is critical to ensure the international education sector doesn’t continue to suffer.

“Government needs to work with peak bodies such as ACPET to engage with overseas governments to promote the excellent work being done in the sector.

“International education in Australia needs a kick-start not a kick in the guts from the government. We call on the government to show strong support and leadership for a sector undergoing change, to ensure more good businesses don’t close their doors and to revitalise and rebuild an industry Australia should be proud of.”

Claire Field is available for comment.

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