MEDIA STATEMENT
Thursday, April 14th, 2011

Trade Reform Welcomed by International Education Sector

The Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) today congratulated the Federal Government on the release of its Trade Policy Statement, Trading Our Way To More Jobs and Prosperity, with the peak body saying the principles of trade liberalisation provide a sound platform for Australia’s trading industries including international education.

ACPET CEO, Claire Field, said Australia’s high quality education and training providers would welcome the new trading policy’s focus on non-discriminatory trade, and in particular, its encouragement for Australian industry to push ahead with trade reform rather than wait for other countries to reform their policies.

“International education is Australia’s largest services export, delivering more than $18 billion in value to the Australian economy each year,” Ms Field said.

“As such, ACPET members rely on trade policy that encourages innovation, supports bilateral and multilateral trade agreements and doesn’t wait for competitor nations to finalise their own trade negotiations before we implement our own.”

Ms Field said more than 600,000 students from 190 countries study in Australia, making international education one of Australia’s great social, economic and diplomatic success stories.

But that success is under threat because Australia’s policy settings remain out of step with key competitor nations.

“The past few years have taught us how fiercely competitive international education is globally,” Ms Field said.

“To remain a leader in international education, Australia must also be a leader in international trade,” Ms Field said.

“This policy platform will help Australian industry to remain innovative and pioneering in international trade, to boost our nation’s productivity and to remain competitive in an increasingly liberalised trading environment.”

“ACPET looks forward to working with the Minister for Trade, the Hon Dr Craig Emerson MP, to identify new opportunities for education and training in Australia’s trade agenda.”

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