



Annual Report

For the period
January 2016 to June 2017

TAFE Directors Australia

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS

Introduction	1
About us	2
National Board	3
The Chair's Report	5
Chief Executive Officer's Report	7
Performance Across TDA's Strategic Plan (2016-2018)	11
Tuition Assurance Scheme	25
Member Communications	29
TDA National Scholarships Foundation – Chairman's Report	31
TDA National Secretariat	34
Case Studies Of TAFE Industry Partnerships	35
Company Information	37



INTRODUCTION

TAFE Directors Australia has changed its reporting period to a financial-year effective from the July 2017. This annual report reflects the activities and achievements of TDA for the period January 2016 to June 2017.

“The core business of TDA is to support its members with policy and advocacy for the important role of TAFE.”

ABOUT US

TAFE Directors Australia (TDA) is the peak national body incorporated to represent Australia’s technical and further education (TAFE) providers. The public provider (TAFE) network delivers a diverse and integral series of technical and further education services for individuals, enterprises and communities in the tertiary education sector in Australia. TAFE operate in metropolitan, regional and remote locations, providing vocational and higher education programs and services on campus, online, in workplaces and increasingly in international markets.

The core business of TDA is to support its members with policy and advocacy for the important role of TAFE under state and territory jurisdictions to meet Australia’s need for increased productivity, participation and skills in the workforce. TAFE also has an important role in meeting community obligations, particularly across remote and regional Australia.

Our purpose is to:

- Provide services for members to meet current and emerging priorities;
- Position TAFE nationally as the major provider of high quality skills training;
- Advance technical and further education policy in Australia;
- Lead advocacy for improved outcomes for students, both domestic and international; and
- Facilitate opportunities for growth, collaboration and partnerships in national and international settings.

VISION

TDA will serve the interests of its members by advocating for higher quality outcomes for learners and employers in competitive vocational education and training markets, by leading policy development for the TAFE sector and by providing value-added products and services.

MISSION

TDA will promote the development, resourcing and growth of TAFE Institutes in all jurisdictions across Australia and will promote TAFE Institutes as leaders in the provision of high quality technical and further education.



NATIONAL BOARD

MEMBERS

- Mary Faraone, Chair (*appointed 1 January 2017*)
CEO, Holmesglen Institute
- Jodi Schmidt, Deputy Chair (*appointed 1 January 2017*)
CEO, TAFE QLD
- Leanne Cover, Board Member (*appointed 27 January 2016*)
CEO, Canberra Institute of Technology
- Christine Robertson, Board Member (*appointed 12 October 2015*)
Pro-Vice Chancellor (VET) of Charles Darwin University NT
- Duncan Anderson, Board Member (*appointed 6 May 2016*)
WA
- Nick Burrows, Board Member (*appointed 1 January 2017*)
Chair, TAS TAFE
- Terry Charlton, Board member (*appointed 1 January 2017*)
Chair, TAFE NSW
- Peter Vaughan, Board Member (*appointed 1 January 2017*)
Chair, TAFE SA
- Stephen Conway, Chair (*appointed 2010 until October 2016*)
Board member (*appointed 25 January 2016; Resigned 5 June 2017*)
CEO, TAS TAFE
- Dianne Murray, Deputy Chair (*resigned 31 December 2016*)
Institute Director of TAFE NSW – Illawarra Institute
- Mary Campbell, Board Member (*resigned 31 December 2016*)
Institute Director, TAFE QLD
- Robin Murt, Board Member (*resigned 31 December 2016*)
SA
- Warren Tapp, Board Member (*appointed 6 October 2016; resigned 2 December 2016*)



EXECUTIVE STAFF

Malcolm White, Ex Officio, CEO TDA *November 2014-September 2015*
Currently Chair, National Scholarship Foundation (*appointed May 2015*)

Martin Riordan, Ex Officio, CEO TDA (*December 2005–April 2017*)

Craig Robertson, CEO TDA (*April 2017- current*)

Craig Robertson commenced as CEO of TAFE Directors Australia in April 2017.

Prior to joining TDA Craig worked in the Victorian Government in 2015 and 2016 with responsibilities for the operation of vocational education and working with Victorian universities. During this time, the Victorian Government implemented a new approach to vocational education and training with a priority on quality delivery with funding aligned with the expected costs of delivery. Central to the reform was dedicated public funding which recognised the unique role TAFEs play in tertiary education and workforce development across the state, as well as outreach to businesses and industry to support innovation and productivity improvements in their production models.

Craig also worked for over 30 years in the Commonwealth Government with responsibilities in national policy and program delivery relating to employment services, funding for schools and most aspects of vocational education and training. Craig has represented the Australian Government in G20 meetings of Labour and Employment ministers and the OECD, and bi-laterally with a range of foreign governments. In Australia, Craig has led work at the federal level on joint Commonwealth-State policies and funding agreements, introducing income contingent loan arrangements for the VET sector, instigated apprenticeship reform and reformed regulation policy and VET qualifications. Craig was also an inaugural member of the Australian Qualifications Framework Council formed in 2011.

Craig holds an Executive Masters in Public Administration and Bachelor of Education (Primary).

"The VET sector's operating and external environment remain challenging and complex, with considerable upheaval resulting in changing market dynamics and players."

THE CHAIR'S REPORT

MESSAGE FROM MARY FARAONE

I am pleased to present the TAFE Directors Australia 2016/17 Annual Report. The VET sector's operating and external environment remain challenging and complex, with considerable upheaval resulting in changing market dynamics and players. The TDA is supportive of the Commonwealth Government's strategies to counter quality issues in the sector and we look forward to continuing to work with Senator the Hon. Simon Birmingham, Minister for Education and the Hon Karen Andrews MP, Assistant Minister for Vocational Education and Skills to ensure TAFE's contribution and role to a vibrant and responsive VET sector is recognised.

The past 12 months has seen considerable change at the TDA with our CEO of 11 years, Martin Riordan resigning in early April to pursue other business opportunities. On behalf of past and present Board directors and all our members I thank Martin for his work and the significant contribution he made in positioning TDA as the peak TAFE body and we wish him well in the future.

In addition, the Board composition changed significantly in 2016/17. Retiring Directors in the reporting period included:

- Robin Murt (South Australia)
- Mary Campbell (Queensland)
- Stephen Conway (Tasmania)
- Dianne Murray (NSW)
- Warren Tapp (Chair's Council representative)

On 1 January 2017, a new Board was constituted. Current directors are:

- Mary Faraone (Victoria) Chair
- Jodi Schmidt (Queensland) Deputy Chair
- Duncan Anderson (Western Australia)
- Nick Burrows (Chair's Council representative)
- Terry Charlton (NSW)
- Leanne Cover (ACT)
- Christine Robertson (Northern Territory)
- Peter Vaughan (South Australia)

"TDA continues to work for its members in positioning TAFE in the VET sector and advocating on behalf of the sector."

There is currently a vacancy for Tasmania and the constitution also allows for two co-opted positions which are currently vacant.

The new Board commenced its CEO search in early 2017 and we are pleased to have Craig Robertson join as CEO in April 2017. Craig has significant experience in the VET sector and has worked in senior policy and leadership roles in both the Commonwealth and Victorian governments. Craig joins a talented and committed team at the TDA and I thank them for their work and continued passion for TAFE and the sector. The secretariat has officially moved offices from Sydney to Canberra and is located on the Reid campus of Canberra Institute of Technology.

The TDA Convention in Melbourne in October 2016 was extremely successful with over 440 delegates, and planning is underway for the 2017 convention in Adelaide in early September.

TDA continues to work for its members in positioning TAFE in the VET sector and advocating on behalf of the sector. The Board and CEO regularly meet with Commonwealth department representatives and appropriate Ministers and the TDA is invited on a number of ministerial and or department committees, such as the VSL Implementation Committee and the Review of the Vocational Education and Training Act Committee.

I am proud of the work TDA has undertaken and look forward to greater engagement and advocacy with key stakeholders in the future.

I thank the CEO and the dedicated team at TDA, and thank the directors for their time, commitment and continued passion for the sector.



Mary Faraone
Chair

"TDA is extremely proud to acknowledge it has distributed \$1.2 million in scholarship funds to over 800 students since 2012."

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

MESSAGE FROM CRAIG ROBERTSON

In transitioning from calendar to financial year reporting, I am pleased to cover an eighteen-month period of significant achievements for TDA and TAFEs. Even though change has come to be regarded as normal for the VET sector in Australia, these last eighteen months stand out.

Highlights over the period for TDA activities include:

- A record of 443 delegates at the 2016 TDA National Convention;
- An Innovation and Applied Research Roundtable in March 2016 hosted by TDA and the LH Martin Institute to promote the role of TAFE in Australia's National Innovation and Science Agenda;
- The *ADF Skills and Apprenticeship Forum* in Canberra in March 2017 designed to explore the challenges for ADF personnel successfully transitioning into civilian employment;
- Strong representations to the Commonwealth government to achieve automatic approval of TAFEs for the new VET Student Loans scheme;
- Involvement of TAFEs from seven states and territories in TDA's national quality projects covering teaching and learning, ICT and early childhood education;
- Hosting over 20 delegations from over 10 countries to promote the value of the technical and further education model for economic prosperity and advancement of citizens;
- Continuing strong interest from China with over 200 Chinese institute leaders and policy makers visiting Australia;
- Supporting over 9,000 non-TAFE students whose training college has collapsed to continue their training with TAFEs around Australia;
- Training over 140 Indian VET institute leaders in the Vocational Education Leadership Training program; and
- Promoting TAFEs in international conferences in China, India, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Brazil, USA and Canada.

TDA is also proud that it has distributed over \$1.2million in scholarship funds to over 800 students since its establishment of the National Scholarships Foundation in 2012.

"Of more significance is the cessation of obligations on states and territories of the entitlement and open contestability principles to frame subsidy for formal training."

Our Political Landscape

In the broad VET sector, the rapid growth of the VET FEE-HELP scheme was curtailed, and the VET Students Loan scheme passed into legislation in late 2016 for a 2017 start.

Between 2014 and 2015 VET FEE-HELP loan payments to providers increased 67 per cent to a total of \$2.9 billion, with a handful of private providers accounting for \$2.46 billion of the loans. The TAFE share was 14 per cent.

The cessation of the scheme and stringent conditions of entry to the new VET Student Loans arrangement and caps of loans amounts has resulted in many of the colleges closing, displacing a large number of students. The damage to the reputation of the sector as a result, and the questioning in the sector about how such poor behavior was tolerated for so long is giving rise to calls for a major re-think of the sector. The basic premise of vocational education and training, the role of industry in prescribing all qualifications, who provides and for what purpose and how public funding should be distributed deserve serious attention. TDA is up for that challenge!

In the 2017 Budget the Government announced the replacement of the National Partnership on VET Reform with the Skilling Australians Fund to focus on bringing back apprenticeship and traineeship numbers and to grow pre-apprenticeship pathways and higher-level apprenticeships. The new partnership requires states and territories to bring forward projects for approval along with matched funding.

Of more significance is the cessation of obligations on states and territories of the entitlement and open contestability principles to frame subsidy for formal training. How states and territories move forward in funding arrangements is yet to be seen.

The changeover to VET Student Loans has contributed to the closure of two VET private providers which were members of TDA's Tuition Assurance Scheme. As a direct result of these closures, TDA has been working since February 2017 with over 9,000 students to transition them to new providers, or determining loan recredits. This has been a large task that has concentrated the bulk of TDAs resources. The actions for TDA are expected to be completed by the end of 2017.

The trend across Australia has been for State and Territory Governments to amalgamate TAFE governance. This is the case in NSW, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia.

"TDA itself has changed."

Our Influence

The arrangements for industry advice, especially on Training Packages and training products has also changed with the establishment of the Australian Industry Skills Committee, Industry Reference Committees and Skills Service Organisations.

Over the period TDA has been well represented on national policy bodies especially the Provider Reference Group of the Australian Skills Quality Authority and Industry Skills Councils (now Industry Reference Committees).

The Commonwealth's proposed higher education reforms risk giving further advantage to universities by expanding demand-driven funding to sub-bachelor level courses which could substitute TAFE Diploma and Advanced Diploma courses. With TAFE and VET students required to pay a loan fee and university students not, a further risk is the unwarranted flow of students away from TAFEs. However, TDA has been clear in its representations that it is not opposing the reform package but has impressed on the Government the unintended consequences that would flow from changes in higher education funding without regard to the VET sector. The reforms await Senate passage.

TDA Now

TDA itself has changed. I write this annual report, having commenced in the CEO role in April 2017. In coming into the position, I am most grateful for the tireless effort of Martin Riordan, the previous CEO, in promoting the critical role of TAFEs in Australia in supporting economic growth and progress of individuals, and the role technical and further education can play in economic and diplomatic relations with other countries, especially our Asian neighbours.

The TDA office has relocated to Canberra, primarily to be well placed to engage with federal ministers and parliamentarians and with Commonwealth officers. Ease of access to engage with these key players in the sector has proven most worthwhile already.

Of course, TDA relies heavily on the guidance of its board of directors. Stephen Conway lead the board for the period 2011 to 2016 and I welcome Mary Faraone as the new chair.

*"Change...
it opens
opportunities to
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TAFE
perspective
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been available."*

The board composition has also been changed to assist TDA move into a new phase of operation. Landmark changes to the constitution have brought TAFE chairs of boards into the governance of TDA, and opportunity exists for other independent members. This restructure is timely as TDA contemplates a very busy time of policy advocacy and renewed support to TAFEs.

TDA's revenue base is under pressure given the costs arising from tuition assurance actions.

Our Future

Change is good. It opens opportunities to prosecute the TAFE perspective, which otherwise may not have been available. I sense that the period up to and past the next federal election is going to offer those opportunities.

TDA seeks to be nimble, responsive as the opportunities arise, but committed to research, analysis, policy development and promotion for a longer-term substantial change in TAFEs in Australia. In addition, our goal is to provide an ambitious framework within which we can ensure a prosperous future for students, employers, and TAFEs.

I am excited about the opportunities available for TAFE and feel privileged to be a part of shaping its future.



Craig ROBERTSON
Chief Executive Officer



PERFORMANCE ACROSS TDA'S STRATEGIC PLAN (2016-2018)

1. ADVOCACY – POSITIONING TAFE IN COMPETITIVE TRAINING MARKETS

TAFE institutes across Australia are now operating in competitive markets. TDA has supported members by advocating to government for greater national consistency in the implementation of competitive vocational and education training markets.

TDA's Strategic Plan 2016-18 'Quality and Trust' outlines our advocacy strategy along 5 pillars. TDA has taken action to establish a TAFE brand nationally based on the proven merits and cumulative experience of TAFE. To this end, we have engaged members, key stakeholders, and governments to develop and advance evidence-based policy positions, which support the key role played by TAFE.



2. LEADERSHIP IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

TDA Publications

Throughout 2016 and early 2017, TDA continued with an active publications portfolio, developing policy papers and submissions, as well as targeted media releases. Papers, submissions and media releases are available on TDA's website: www.tda.edu.au

TDA Policy Papers and Submissions 2016-17

TITLE	DATE
An Even Playing Field for Tertiary Education in Australia - Senate Education and Employment Committee	June 2017
Driving innovation, fairness and applied learning in Australian Higher Education	Sept 2016
Quality of Assessment in VET – Response to the discussion paper	April 2016
TDA submission to the Department of Education & Training	Sept 2016
TDA submission to the 457 Integrity Review	Aug 2016
TDA response to Commonwealth Higher Education reform discussion paper	July 2016
Driving Innovation, Fairness and Applied Learning in Australian Higher Education - Department of Education and Training	July 2016
TAFE: A National Asset for Australia's Economic and Social Prosperity	June 2016
Why a National Industry Policy & Innovation and STEM Strategy Needs Quality Training	June 2016
Quality is the Hallmark of a Well-Regulated VET System	June 2016
Rural and Remote Vocational Education and Training relies on TAFE	June 2016
Ending Discrimination in Australia's Tertiary Education System	June 2016
Let's lift Australia's National Apprenticeships	June 2016
The Regional Paradox: Undersupply of Skilled Workers & Over-Representation of Unemployed and Disengaged Youth - prepared by Escalier McLean Consulting	April 2016
Quality of Assessment in Vocational Education and Training – Discussion Paper - Department of Education and Training	Apr 2016



Media Releases 2016

TITLE	DATE
Xenophon team Senators torpedo safeguards for TAFE and open a loophole for unscrupulous training colleges <i>Attachment: Tabled letter from the Minister for Education and Training, Senator Hon Simon Birmingham to NXT Senator Stirling Griff, South Australia</i>	1 Dec
Martin Riordan to step down as CEO	23 Nov
TDA announces new Chair, Deputy Chair and Board appointment	10 Oct
Redesign of VET FEE HELP student loan program welcome but more details required	5 Oct
Financial certainty critical for vocational education quality	26 Sep
TAFE welcomes new minister for skills and training	19 Jul
TAFE welcomes new minister for skills and training	27 Jun
TAFE calls for long term funding for VET	27 Jun
Time is right for joining up agencies on youth unemployment	27 Jun
Budget Reply 2016-17	6 May
TAFE Directors Australia Budget reaction	4 May
Response to international education strategy	1 May
TAFE Directors Australia appoints new Director of International Education	27 Apr
New analysis reveals major mismatch between federal VET student loan funding and skill priorities across states and territories	11 Apr
New report reveals TAFE's national community and education role eroded in the name of efficiency	3 Apr
TDA congratulates Senator Scott Ryan on his promotion to the Vocational Education and Skills portfolio	14 Feb



Media Releases 2017

TITLE	DATE
TAFE mobilises to assist Careers Australia students affected by the appointment of administrator	29 May
Reassurance for students affected by Careers Australia's appointment of administrators	26 May
TDA welcomes federal opposition's pledge for a stronger TAFE system	12 May
TAFE welcomes Federal Budget measures to support a national training effort	11 May
Concern over lack of genuine student choice in higher education reform plan	3 May
TAFE NSW skills centres aim to generate the jobs of the future	26 Apr
TDA announces new CEO	27 Mar
TAFE sector outlines policy priorities at national skills summit	19 Mar
TAFE sector welcomes plan for a National Skills Summit	31 Jan

Media Contact: Bob Bowden: 0412 753 298



Strengthening Industry Partnerships

Collaboration and partnering with members - has included engaging in partnerships with members to conduct joint activities and research on domestic and international issues, as they affect vocational education and training, in particular TAFE.

Collaboration and partnering with external bodies – TDA’s engagement strategies included connecting with important stakeholders across the VET sector, especially industry, for advice on industry expectations, priorities and trends in the economy and workforce development.

Industry peak bodies - the 2016 TDA conference featured a plenary session with senior representatives from the Business Council of Australia (BCA), Australian Industry Group, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Australian Council of Trade Unions on industry and business goals.

LH Martin Institute, University of Melbourne – An Innovation and Applied Research Roundtable was hosted by TDA and the LH Martin Institute in March 2016 to promote the role of TAFE in Australia’s National Innovation and Science Agenda;

Peak VET Providers Representative Bodies – TDA has worked collaboratively with peak VET representative bodies including: the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET), Enterprise Registered Training Organisation Association (ERTO), the National Apprentice Employment Network (NEAN) on national vocational education and training issues of mutual interest.

Victorian TAFE Association (VTA) – TDA has collaborated with its affiliate organisation, the Victorian TAFE Association, representing the 12 Victorian TAFE Institutes, on a number of joint submissions.

National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) – TDA has collaborated on a range of projects including stewardship of UNEVOC Centres, a joint UNEVOC seminar and a project to examine international regulatory models.

Australian Vocational and Training Research Association (AVETRA) – following TDA’s Memorandum of Understanding with AVETRA in late 2013 the ‘TAFE Innovation Scholarship’ has been established to provide \$6,000 to an individual or group of TAFE practitioners to research innovative ways to meet industry or community skill needs.



Quality and Innovation

Quality

TAFE institutes should be able to use quality as a means differentiation in the sector.

For TAFEs quality is, on the one hand, a function of enabling learners from a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds to achieve positive labour market outcomes, and on the other hand, the ability to meet the knowledge and skills needs of a range of employers. As publicly-owned entities, TAFE institutes are also accountable to their state and territory governments for meeting their legislated mandates.

TDA National Quality Initiative

At the February 2016 meeting of TDA's board, it was agreed that TDA would undertake a national quality initiative. Developed in the second quarter of 2016, in three subject areas are: training and education (TAE), early childhood education and care (CHC), and information and communication technology (ICT).

The CHC and ICT projects focus on developing, implementing and validating more holistic delivery and assessment methods, whereas the TAE project focuses on VET teaching capabilities. Initial interest in the three projects grew with six member-institutes participating in ICT, four in TAE, and four in CHC.

The final reports of the TAE and CHC projects are in preparation; the ICT report is expected to be published in the final months of 2017.

Training and Assessment Working Group

In response to the Department of Education's Discussion paper on the quality of assessment in VET, TDA submitted a series of recommendations to inform the Training and Assessment Working Group's final report, which was published in June 2017. The response recommended that high-quality providers, including TAFE institutes, should be awarded delegation; that regulatory action should focus on high-risk providers; and that units of competency should be more consistent across training packages.

"And, whether Australia needs, or the sector actually delivers, nationally consistent qualifications to assist labour mobility via mutual recognition of qualifications needs serious evaluation."

ASQA

TDA was able to make representations on behalf of its members at the quarterly meetings of the ASQA Provider Roundtable on topics such as the administrative impost on TAFE institutes of constant changes to Training Packages; the reputational damage to the VET sector of disreputable providers; TDA reported on ASQA activity to its members via the weekly newsletter.

Training Packages

TDA has advocated for some time for a fundamental examination of qualifications in the sector. The COAG Council for Industry and Skills has undertaken to examine the case for change to training products (training package qualifications and accredited courses) to ensure vocational education and training remains contemporary for the demands of the economy and society.

TDA contends that the case for change should seek to determine the purpose and scope of formally recognised training in the sector, the essential elements of qualifications and methods of assuring delivery against the expected outcomes from training and learning programs.

Governments need to consider whether the high number of bespoke qualifications against individual occupations matched to industry structures and award and wage arrangements is a reasonable trade-off for the sector to carry. Whether organised industry alone is best suited to determine the content of the large majority of qualifications in the sector given the major changes in and across sectors, is worthy of consideration. The extent of qualification capture to industry demands and employer rent seeking versus the smooth passage to work these qualifications offer, also needs fundamental examination.

And, whether Australia needs, or the sector actually delivers, nationally consistent qualifications to assist labour mobility via mutual recognition of qualifications should be evaluated.

Once these basic issues are resolved, key questions on the role of VET qualifications need to be answered. At the core is whether qualifications prepare people simply for work tasks or whether they pursue deeper learning and skills that empower them for future work, and for entrepreneurship vital to establishing innovate small businesses and start-ups, as well as bring new skills and technologies into firms.

"TDA members continued to play a major role in the provision of high-quality higher education."

These are clearly big issues. TDA, representing expertise in training and learning embedded within TAFEs, will continue to advocate for an examination of these core issues

Innovation and Applied Research

In a bid to support TDA members to enter into and thrive in the innovation eco-system in Australia, TDA organised events and commissioned research that promote the sharing of national and international good practices.

In March 2016, TDA organised an innovation and applied research roundtable. Attended by approximately 100 TAFE leaders, industry partners, government representatives, stakeholders, and international experts, it sought to promote the role of TAFE in Australia's National Innovation and Science Agenda. The roundtable concluded that further effort was required to highlight the work TAFE is doing across Australia, and to promote the key role that TAFE plays in developing highly qualified technical workers Australia's economy needs.

The roundtable was followed up in November 2016 by a visit from a Canadian delegation to allow TDA members to gain a better understanding of the industry-based applied research being undertaken in Canadian Community Colleges.

To showcase further practices that allow technical education providers to support innovation, TDA commissioned a report from the LH Martin Institute summarising key practices identified over the course of their early 2017 TAFE study mission to Italy and Netherlands. The final report is to be released at the 2017 TDA Convention.

Tertiary Policy Funding and Arrangements

Higher education policy and reform has remained a key focus of TDA in 2016-17, and TDA members continued to play a major role in the provision of high-quality higher education.

In July 2016, TDA submitted a response to the Department of Education and Training Discussion Paper, *Driving Innovation, Fairness and Excellence in Australian Higher Education*, highlighting the important role of TAFE in higher education, despite the deeply inequitable policy and funding settings. The submission made a range of recommendations for a more integrated tertiary education system that better reflects TAFE as a provider of high-quality higher education, as well as of pathways into degree programs.



The 2017 Budget proposed, among other higher education reform initiatives, that Commonwealth Supported Places (CSPs) be extended to include sub-bachelor programs in applied areas of study delivered by universities. TDA argued that this should include TAFE institutes, as equivalent programs are significantly less expensive to deliver in TAFE, and TAFE already has in place the necessary infrastructure – including industry partners – to deliver this type of program across Australia, especially in regional, rural, and remote areas. The approach would move toward a more integrated approach to tertiary education policy and funding. The Bill is still before the Senate.



3. INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Engagement in Asia and Other International Markets

TDA and member institutes continued strong engagement offshore, where partner governments and institutions value the knowledge and expertise that Australian TAFEs bring to international partnerships.

TDA, with the support of member TAFEs, has delivered a number of projects that support international engagement. Highlights include:

- Global Student Mobility Workshops to TAFE institutes in seven states and territories in partnership with Box Hill Institute. Workshops, delivered during August and September 2016, helped TAFE institutes further develop their own student mobility practices, as well as take advantage of the Australian Government funding programs for mobility.
- The 2016 and 2017 Australia India Vocational Education Leadership Training Program where TDA and five Australian TAFEs delivered leadership and capacity development training to over 120 leaders of Indian institutes. Training took place over three phases, two in India, and one in Australia, where TAFE institutes hosted Indian leaders for in-depth mentoring. Several Australian TAFEs have since entered into partnerships with Indian institutes.
- The 2017 Australia Thailand Vocational Education and Training Workshop in Bangkok, where TDA supported TAFE Queensland to deliver workshops to Thai Government and Institute leaders.
- The Taiwan Australia TVET Collaboration Project, where TDA and member TAFEs supported Taiwan to develop a competency based training framework as well as delivering accredited training to Taiwan's TVET trainers.

TDA continued to build partnerships with key international agencies to provide enhanced opportunities for TAFE member institutes and to build the profile of Australia's TAFE system. China, through our ongoing partnerships with the Chinese Education Association for International Exchange (CEAIE) and the Central Institute for Vocational Education and Training Research (CIVTE), remains an important partner. TDA engaged with the CEAIE on issues such as quality, higher technical skills and



applied research, and hosted three delegations from CEAIE. Senior officials from CIVTE also visited Australian TAFEs, with a view to developing joint TVET research. TDA renewed agreements with key partners in Korea, Taiwan and India, and entered into new arrangements in Pakistan. TDA engaged multilaterally, with participation in the World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics (WFCP) and continued to host a UNESCO-UNEVOC centre. TDA CEO, Mr Craig Robertson, will take up the presidency of the WFCP in November 2017.

The Australian TAFE model is much sought after internationally, and TDA and member institutes supported international delegations to countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Indonesia, Pakistan, Taiwan, Chile, Canada, USA and India. TDA member institutes played a pivotal role in the Australia India Skills Mission in April 2017, led by Senator, the Hon Simon Birmingham, minister for education and training with TDA Chair, Ms Mary Faraone, presenting a key note address, and other TAFE and TDA delegates presenting throughout the conference.

TDA member institutes also led the VET components of the recent Indonesia Australia Symposium in Jakarta, in partnership with the International Education Association of Australia. TDA also welcomed delegations from Korea, Taiwan, Japan, Chile, Argentina, Canada, Colombia, India and several visits from China.

TDA continued to represent TAFE interests federally, with active participation in DET's International Education Stakeholders Roundtable and the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) Education Visa Consultative Committee. TDA also represented member views in policy development, including through submissions to the ESOS National Code Review, the revision of the ELICOS standards and the Indonesia Australia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement. TDA's national policy input is shaped by contributions from its Australian TAFE International Network (ATIN), led by TDA and including representatives from all states and territories.

TAFE leaders were keen participants in Minister Andrews' international skills roundtables. TDA looks forward to continued Commonwealth engagement in 2018 in international education for the VET sector, and hopes to increase TAFE representation on bodies such as the Council for International Education. 2018 will also be an exciting year for international dialogue and policy leadership, with TDA and member institutes set to host in October 2018 the World Congress for the WFCP, ***Preparing for the Skills Future, Now.***

"TDA provides members with a forum for cooperation and exchange."

4. MEMBER SERVICES

The National Secretariat provides services for its members in addition to its advocacy role. These services have grown to be a key attribute for members being part of TDA, including certification of Tuition Assurance, a requirement for members registered with the Commonwealth to offer loans to students for vocational and higher education courses. TDA provides members with a forum for cooperation and exchange. It also coordinates national representation of TAFE institutes on key committees and boards and provides a mechanism to support effective national input into policy formation.

TDA Annual Convention 2016



Image X: 2016 TDA Annual Conference Logo

The 2016 National TDA Convention, **Skills Resurgence**, was held at Sofitel Melbourne on Collins, on 4-6 October.

'... create dangerously', wrote Albert Camus, winner of the 1957 Nobel Prize in Literature. Educational institutions, including TAFE institutes, are being challenged to be more productive and creative in a market faced with increasing competition, red tape and funding cutbacks.

Skills Resurgence was attended by 440 delegates who explored ways to increase productivity and 'create dangerously' by considering topics such as future labour markets, what makes a college a global partner, the imperative of having a digital technology strategy, what TAFE institutes will look like in the future, and cultivating an entrepreneurial culture. Outstanding speakers and presenters covered every facet of

"Opportunities for closer collaboration with higher education and further education institutions in the USA, UK, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia and Canada were identified and encouraged."

the TAFE sector, across skills, training quality, apprenticeships, international education and more.

Delegates had the choice of pre-conference workshops on growing international education, the market challenge for regional TAFE institutes, TAFE Boards in a complex environment and data mining for results – topics which helped delegates to consider the future and geared them for growth.

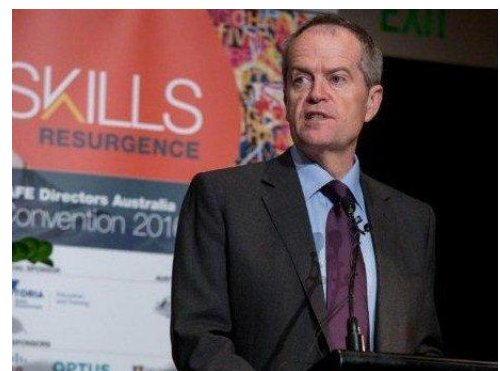
TDA, along with NCVER, hosted a UNESCO-UNEVOC Forum on the Sunday before the conference. We were privileged to have Dr Shyamal Majumdar, the Head of the UNESCO UNEVOC network to lead the Forum. Dr Majumdar also directly supported the attendance of UNEVOC representatives from China, Jamaica, Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Pacific region.

We welcomed presentations by members of state and federal parliaments. Opportunities for closer collaboration with higher education and further education institutions in the USA, UK, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia and Canada were identified and encouraged.

The response to the conference from delegates was overwhelmingly positive with many comments such as, *'Another fabulous conference: a very informative program; a good focus on key issues affecting the sector and so many very good speakers'; 'Great event, fantastic forum ... so many knowledgeable and passionate people'.*



The Hon. **Karen Andrews MP**, Assistant Minister for Vocational Education and Skills
Martin Riordan, TDA CEO,



The Hon. **Bill Shorten MP**
Leader of the Opposition



The Hon. Steve Herbert
Victorian Minister for Training, Skills and
International Education



The Hon. Kate Ellis
Shadow Minister for TAFE and Vocational
Education



Warren Tapp, Chair of TAFE Queensland
Board and Chair of TAFE Chairs Australia



AI Group's **Megan Lilly**



TUITION ASSURANCE SCHEME

TDA operates a Government approved Tuition Assurance Scheme (TAS) which covers members which offer student loans for VET FEE-HELP, VET Student Loans, FEE-HELP and for providers that collect more than \$1500 in advance of training. Tuition assurance is required for Commonwealth approved providers for these schemes. Tuition assurance obligations are set out in covering legislation, ie *Higher Education Support Act 2003*, the *VET Students Loan Act 2016* and the *National VET Regulation Act 2011*, and associated legislative instruments and guidelines.

The TDA tuition assurance is open to applications from TAFEs, other registered training organisations and non-university higher education providers. TDA has admitted non-TAFE providers on the basis that it can offer a degree of protection to students who may find their training or learning journey disrupted because of the poor behavior of a provider or closure precipitated by government actions.

All applicants are assessed against stringent financial criteria and application fees are adjusted accordingly. The scheme runs on-insurance to cover tuition events. TDA continued its association with QBE Insurance Group during 2016 and 2017 as the scheme's insurer. In some circumstances TDA has required other financial securities from providers. In line with risk-pooling inherent in such schemes, members of the scheme are obligated to act as a second provider in the event of a tuition assurance activation.

A pooled-risk scheme such as tuition assurance, which can also involve refund of student loans, relies heavily on the proper administration of the funding schemes according to legislation, guidelines and published guidance.

At 30 June 2017 TDA TAS had 26 TAFE members and 52 non-TAFE members.

In 2016 there were no tuition assurance activations and there were two in the first half of 2017: The Australian College of Hair Design and Beauty, and the Careers Australia Group.



Australian College of Hair Design and Beauty

The activation of the Australian College of Hair Design and Beauty (ACHDB) occurred on 8 February 2017. All domestic students were contacted and offered a second provider, a refund or a re-credit of their student loan for incomplete units of study (as applicable). A large majority of domestic students opted to continue their studies with Chisholm Institute which acted as a second provider. The remaining domestic students opted for a re-credit of their student loans for incomplete units of study which TDA facilitated through the Australian Government Department of Education and Training (DET).

Careers Australia Group

Careers Australia Education Institute Pty Limited (Careers Australia), and other companies in the Careers Australia Group, entered voluntary administration on 25 May 2017 and ceased training. TDA, as the assurance operator for Careers Australia, contacted and assisted domestic students affected by the closure. This also included students enrolled with the Australian School of Management, a higher education provider operating as part of the group.

TDA established a Call Centre in late May through TAFE Queensland, and convened a series of information sessions for domestic students in Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane at the beginning of June 2017.

Think Education (part of the Laureate Group) offered places to enrolled nursing students. Approximately 1,500 domestic students accepted placements with Think Education, a member of the TDA TAS.

TDA continues to work with second providers to ensure all affected Careers Australia domestic students have the opportunity to continue and/or complete their studies, or to seek a re-credit of their student loan and refund of any pre-paid fees for units of study with end dates after the closure.

TDA has operated in the interests of students, however, it is also obligated to its members and insurers to comply with the legislative provisions and other guiding documents. TDA has found that the units of study students signed up for ended well before Careers Australia closed. Careers Australia operated very short units of study, acknowledged by the Commonwealth in making payments for each Census.



The students, in signing up to these units of study (with very short periods within which to access and complete training), did not appear to have understood that the end dates for each unit, readily published by Careers Australia, ended the college's obligation to result the unit(s). Commonwealth guidance to students on studyassist.gov.au website is clear:

3. You are responsible for your own education.
 - Due to privacy requirements, providers cannot disclose information to your spouse, parents, or anyone else about your payment details, VET FEE-HELP loan, attendance or other personal matters. Be sure to base your decision to study on the right information by comparing prices of courses and providers at www.myskills.gov.au before you enrol.
 - If you remain enrolled in a unit past the census date but choose not to attend any classes or hand in any assignments, your provider is not obligated to find out why—and you will be liable to either: pay the tuition fee or incur a VET FEE-HELP debt for that unit.

While TDA has willingly assisted all students who have sought to continue training with another provider, it is not liable for financial restitution to students where the unit ended prior to closure. TDA seeks to work cooperatively with government agencies to fulfil its obligations as an assurance operator, which it has done. The Commonwealth carries ultimate responsibility to assist and work with all displaced students given the scheme was designed, administered and regulated by the government to place all risk on the students.



Corporate Affiliates Program

TDA acknowledges significant support from our two corporate affiliates: ProLearn and TechnologyOne.

Our corporate affiliates receive a range of benefits that demonstrate our appreciation and highlight their commitment across multiple platforms, including branding and acknowledgement at the annual TDA Convention, e-newsletters, advertising in the quarterly TAFE Futures magazine and through the TDA and annual convention websites. They gain greater exposure on campus and have access and visibility to the top VET thought leaders.

Having corporate affiliates of this calibre demonstrates that TDA has strategic partnerships with industry bodies supporting the education sector.



Image: Technologyone, ProLearn and Ellucian logos

"The weekly newsletter is distributed to more than 1,600 member and non-member subscribers, including TAFE and industry leaders, international partners, and government policymakers."

MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

TDA communicates regularly with members, partners and stakeholders using a variety of platforms, including emails, newsletters, meetings, publications, surveys, submissions and press releases. Members are provided with information and support via the TDA newsletter, and email correspondence from the TDA Chief Executive, and the Secretariat team.

The weekly newsletter is distributed to more than 1,600 member and non-member subscribers, including TAFE and industry leaders, international partners, and government policymakers. It shares TDA's national and international ventures, and updates members on the latest industry news, government policies, training reviews and upcoming events.

Communications materials, including TDA newsletters, media releases, submissions and policy documents can be accessed through the TDA website: www.tda.edu.au.

TDA has continued to consult regularly with members to shape TDA's position on a variety of national policy areas, through a range of strategies including:

TDA Representatives – TDA members or their nominated representatives will continue to represent TDA on a number of key external committees and forums, hence providing a TDA voice. Regular reports to the TDA Board support TDA collaboration with stakeholders and support TDA work on implementation of the VET Reform Process.

TDA public presentations - TDA CEO and Secretariat staff have delivered presentations to a range of audiences, both domestic and international. These engagements add to the VET knowledge and debate and hence contribute to VET policy and ongoing conversation/discussion regarding the VET reform processes.



TITLE	DATE
UNESCO's TVET International Conference 2017 – Quality, Innovation & Sustainable Development (Tianjin, China) <i>Keynote Address: Andre Diez De Aux, Director Quality Services</i>	May 2017
How to Engage with Industry, Australia India Skills Mission (Delhi) <i>Address: Mary Faraone, Board Chair</i>	April 2017
Partnering to Meet India's "Triple S" Challenge, Australia India Skills Mission (Delhi) <i>Address: Jen Bahen, International Engagement and Business Development</i>	April 2017
VET Demand in Indonesia and the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Framework, Australia Indonesia Business Week (Jakarta) <i>Address: Jen Bahen, International Engagement and Business Development</i>	Mar 2017
TAFE in the Current National VET Environment – a TDA Perspective AUSTAFE State Conference <i>Keynote Address: Pam Caven, Director Policy and Stakeholder Engagement</i>	Aug 2016
Community Colleges Australia (Sydney) <i>Panel: Andre Diez De Aux, Director Quality Services</i>	Oct 2016
Aged Care Opportunities in China, Australian International Education Conference (Melbourne) <i>Address: Jen Bahen, International Engagement and Business Development</i>	Oct 2016
Building a Regional Framework for Global Mobility, APEC Forum (Taipei) <i>Address: Martin Riordan, CEO</i>	Nov 2016
How TAFEs connect with Industry, Ningbo China VET Forum (Ningbo, China) <i>Address: Martin Riordan, CEO</i>	Nov 2016

"TAFE National Scholarships are prized for their national significance and local accomplishment"

TDA NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS FOUNDATION – CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

MESSAGE FROM MALCOLM WHITE

The fourth full year of operations continued to show steady growth in scholarships disbursed building on previous years' relationships with TAFEs, supporters and sponsors.

Working with TAFEs in Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory and Victoria, the Foundation awarded 342 TAFE National Scholarships with a total value of \$770,019 from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2017. This has brought the total number to 817 worth over \$1.2 million since 2013.

TAFE National Scholarships are prized for their national significance and local accomplishment. TAFEs which embraced the significance of the national brand for their scholarship programs in 2016/17 ensured the Foundation achieved its goals and its principles were realised. It is only with the passion, excitement, cooperation and dedication of TAFE staff that the program has achieved success.

The most significant continuing relationship was with TAFE Queensland which signed a jurisdiction-wide agreement in 2015 and offers scholarships to students throughout its six regions.

Sydney TAFE also continued its relationship with the Foundation following its 2015 agreement and joined North Metropolitan TAFE in WA, South Western Sydney, Illawarra Institute and TAFE Western in NSW, Canberra Institute of Technology in the ACT and The Gordon in Victoria – all of whom fund TAFE National Scholarships in their own Institutes and receive additional funds and managerial administration from the Foundation.

The Blake Beckett Trust continues to support students in Western Sydney and South Australia through its generous sponsorship of Mick Young Scholarships.

"It is only with the passion, excitement, cooperation and dedication of TAFE staff that the program has achieved success."

Foundation directors acknowledge the allocation of funds, time and expertise provided by TAFE Directors Australia in supporting the Foundation's operations. The ongoing financial and strategic support of the TDA Board for the Foundation's continuing development and growth has been invaluable.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the efforts and commitment of my fellow directors and thank David Royle and Martin Riordan who left the Board during the year. I would also like to thank our Executive Officer, Gretchel Trost.



Malcolm WHITE

Chair

TAFE Directors Australia National Scholarships Foundation



PARTICIPATING TAFE INSTITUTES

In the 2016/2017 the Foundation worked with TAFE Institutes and regions in the ACT, NSW, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia.

AUDITORS

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ABN	1 569 7577 363
Executive Officer	Gretchel Trost



TDA NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

Craig Robertson | Chief Executive Officer

Malcolm White | Chair, TDA National Scholarships Foundation

Gretchel Trost | Executive Officer, TDA National Scholarships Foundation | TAS Administrator

Pam Caven | Director Policy and Stakeholder Engagement

Jennifer Bahen | International Engagement and Business Development

Andre Diez de Aux | Director Quality Services

Ronald Jackson | Director TAS and Student Loans

Lyndal Manson | Manager Policy Research and TAS Operations

Rachael Axford | Chief Financial Officer

Janine Clark | Office Administrator

Kathy Zhao | Bookkeeper



CASE STUDIES OF TAFE INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

The Sydney Metro Project

TAFE NSW has played a key role in the coordination of training delivery activities for this critical infrastructure project (+\$20 billion investment). The contractors engaged in the project have specific employment/training obligations as part of their contracts, which include:

- employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- engaging trainees and apprentices
- offering work opportunities for local people facing barriers to employment, and
- up-skilling in building and civil construction works throughout the state.

Robert Adams, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Standards Ltd has been part of the Workforce Advisory Group for a number of years and commented "I know first-hand that TAFE has played a key role in the success of the project." TAFE NSW recently opened a new 'Infrastructure Skills Centre' in an old TAFE site at Annandale which will train workers for Sydney Metro and other large infrastructure projects.

The Moorebank Intermodal Project

The Moorebank Intermodal project is a large logistics development in South West Sydney which, when complete, will deliver 6,800 new jobs and move one million containers by rail from Port Botany to Moorebank each year. This will significantly reduce congestion on the roads in the south west of the Sydney basin. Australian Industry Standards has been engaged to facilitate the Moorebank Intermodal Terminal Workforce Advisory Group (MITWAG). The current membership includes key educational providers TAFENSW, University of Wollongong, University of NSW and Western Sydney University.

The vision for MITWAG is to develop and execute a strategy to connect with the local community to develop skills of the future workforce with a focus on both VET and Higher Education and collaboration between the providers to develop an innovative approach to workforce development (Robert Adams).



Other examples of current TAFE and industry collaboration include:

- The **Mechanical Engineering Centre of Excellence** at TAFE NSW and TAFE SA's **Mining and Petroleum Services Centre of Excellence** are examples of public and private sector cooperation in the form of shared facilities for R&D and support for start-up entrepreneurs.
- Melbourne Polytechnic is engaged in collaborative applied research projects with the **wine industry** as part of its viticulture program.
- Melbourne's Holmesglen and private healthcare provider, **Healthscope**, is creating a health education precinct which leverages cutting-edge health and **education** facilities and includes a 300-bed acute-care hospital.
- Kimberley Training Institute (KTI) works closely with **Buru Energy**, an ASX listed oil and gas exploration and Production Company, focused on the petroleum resources of the Canning Super basin.
- TAFE NSW has been a key partner with **Lend Lease** in the \$6 billion Barangaroo project in Sydney's CBD, providing more than 10,000 accredited qualifications and some 500 apprenticeships.
- Kangan Institute's **Automotive Centre of Excellence** in Melbourne has, over a decade, developed industry partnerships with **Renault, Toyota and Nissan**.
- TAFE SA has recently entered an agreement with **Fincantieri**, one of the world's largest shipbuilders to develop a joint learning and skills development program as part of the company's bid for the \$35 billion future frigates program.
- Melbourne's RMIT and Sydney Institute of TAFE NSW regularly reach top rankings among the world's leading **fashion design schools** and each has extensive partnerships with some of the biggest design and retail companies.
- TAFE NSW on the North Coast has had a key part in the \$5 billion upgrade of the Pacific Highway, through collaboration with the **NSW Civil Contractors' Federation** to provide training for key skilled personnel.
- TAFE SA has entered a five-year agreement with the **Dubai College of Tourism** to provide training in key areas of tourism, hospitality, events and catering, ahead of the 2020 World Expo.



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