

## Federal Government slow to respond on TAFE report

March 29, 2018

The Federal Government has paid little more than lip service to a raft of recommendations for TAFE made by the Standing Committee on Education and Employment in a report it tabled three-and-a-half years ago.

Of the report's seven recommendations the Government response was to "note" three, reject two and support two.

The Coalition Government's response in February this year to the House of Representatives committee's *TAFE an Australian asset: Report of the inquiry into TAFE and its operation* can be found [here](#).

"Many of the recommendations of the report are outside the scope of the Australian Government as states and territories manage the delivery of VET within their jurisdictions," the Government states in its introduction.

Government funding cutbacks and fee increases have led to steep declines in enrolments with one third of the TAFE workforce losing their jobs over recent years, with more set to go.



Federation calls on the Australian Government to make a value statement comprehensively defining the role of TAFE and guaranteeing recurrent funding for TAFE.

The Government simply "notes" Recommendation 1, which called on the Government "through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), [to] make a value statement comprehensively defining the role of TAFE within the VET sector together with its future direction in the competitive training market, from a national perspective".

It supports Recommendation 2 that the Government addresses ongoing concerns about the highly variable quality of training.

Federation is opposed to the contestable funding model that has seen the rise of low-quality training. The union supports recurrent funding for TAFE to increase quality and remove the burden of compliance from the workload of TAFE teachers.

The Government "notes" Recommendation 3 that relates to TAFE pathways to employment and university. TAFE has always been a vital role in Australia's adult education to work or further education. Federation will continue to demand TAFE as the preeminent vocational education organisation.

The Government supports Recommendation 4 about TAFE in the competitive training market, and take

suitable action to address loopholes allowing high-risk and unscrupulous practices to endanger the experience of students and the reputation of training provision.

Federation will continue to campaign for guaranteed TAFE funding and that private for-profit training organisations should not have access to federal or state public funding.

It does not support Recommendation 5, which states the Government should put in place reporting that captures the exact federal financial contribution made to TAFE and its application by state and territory governments.

Federation will continue to demand transparent reporting of Federal funding for vocational education.

The Government does not support point 6 that recommended it seek to ensure that VET funding takes into account TAFE capital requirements.

Federation is concerned about the reduction in capital investment in plant and equipment and the current pressure for NSW TAFE to sell assets to fund capital expenditure.

The Government “notes” Recommendation 7 that states it should, via COAG, seek to ensure that VET funding takes into account the particular role of TAFE in providing opportunities for those in positions of disadvantage and vulnerability.

Federation will continue to demand that all students in NSW have access to high-quality vocational education delivered by qualified TAFE teachers.

The original 2014 report can be found [here](#).