

**INQUIRY INTO VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND
TRAINING IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Name suppressed

Date received: 7/08/2015

Partially Confidential

Submission put forward concerning the inquiry into Vocational Education and Training in New South Wales by the General Purpose Standing Committee No.6.

I wish to highlight my observations and concerns with regards to some of these terms from the perspective of Vocational Education and Training delivery within TAFENSW.

Term (f.) Smart and Skilled reforms:

Since the Smart and Skills funding model was introduced to Vocational Education and Training in January 2015, a decrease in available funding for training Certificate III Engineering apprenticeships within TAFENSW has been apparent. Pressure has been placed on management to find ways to reduce costs as a result. Reducing delivery hours and/or supplementing practical skills development with lower cost theoretical deliveries are some of the budget correction measures being implemented. From the perspective of a trainer, both of these cost cutting measures reduce the quality of skills and knowledge required by the apprentices to succeed as qualified tradesmen.

Term (b.) Role played by public and private vocational education providers and industry in the development of skills in the New South Wales economy.

The excellence in delivery by TAFENSW with regards to vocational education and training has been its cornerstone. Delivering a quality level of education has developed an exceptional skill level among tradesmen in New South Wales. These high standards have led to a sound economy and promoted a safe working environment. Maintaining these standards involves considerable funding. The introduction of private providers into the vocational education industry has led to some well documented cases of the lowering of the standard of learning being delivery to students, by reducing delivery content in order to sustain profits.

The current environment is producing a situation in which TAFENSW, a public educator, must compete against these private companies. With budgetary constraints being implemented in TAFENSW, I am fearful this will cause a reduction in the quality of delivery in public vocational education.

This 'lowering of the bar', when it comes to the standard of training, will lead to a reduction in both the skill levels of tradesmen in New South Wales and the safety practices they use. This dilution of learning will result in unsafe work practices and a growing occurrence of industrial accidents.

Although I'm sure private vocation education providers play a role in the development of industry in New South Wales, I am concerned that a lowering of standards for learners is an inevitable consequence in the current climate. A well-funded public vocation education system will maintain the standards of vocational education and training in New South Wales.