

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

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially Confidential

29 July 2015

1. I have been teaching TAFE part time for 20 years. I started back in 1983 teaching the Electrical Engineering certificate at St George TAFE. For the last 10 years I have been teaching part time at Petersham, St George and Ultimo. I was teaching subject in the Electrical Engineering diploma but since the increase in TAFE fees has resulted in lack of students so
2. Historically the State Governments of the 1960's and even earlier in the 1880's realised the vital importance of having a skilled workforce and made engineering courses easily affordable and available in the majority TAFE colleges in NSW. The colleges also encouraged people who left school early to go back to TAFE to be retrained or to complete their Higher School Certificate.
3. As a baby boomer I was encouraged after completing my Electrical Trade Course to do the TAFE Electrical Engineering Certificate (Certificate IV) in the 1970. The course fee was only \$26 a year which is equivalent in today's money is \$300. While doing the course I was encouraged by the dedicated TAFE teachers to go on to university. The course gave me the skills, knowledge and desire to complete an Electrical Engineering Degree at UNSW.
4. Under the Mike Baird TAFE Smart & Skilled program the fee for Certificate IV in engineering has gone up to \$20, 000 while the fee to do a trade course is \$11,830 and 95% of TAFE colleges are not running Certificate IV in engineering. This hike in TAFE fees has resulted in a 30,000 drop in student intake in 2015 and consequently the sacking of 2500 TAFE teachers.
5. The beginning of the year all part time TAFE teachers at St George, Petersham and Ultimo were sacked. In addition the electrical trade section at Ultimo lost their clerical staff consequently putting more stress on the head teacher.
6. Three weeks ago due a teacher suddenly becoming ill I was called up to take his class. The students complained that they have three different teachers for that subject
7. At Petersham TAFE the manager of TAFE did not renew the contract of electrical trade teacher who had been teaching for five years consequently I was called in to take over three of his classes

8. You don't have to be a brain surgeon to realise that closing down courses at Petersham TAFE that at the end of this year Petersham TAFE will close.
9. The new computer system installed is a complete failure. Not user friendly
10. Baird Government prefer training option is for young people to seek private providers who are conducting a mass advertising campaign to sign up disadvantaged students under pretense that don't have to pay up front but can access the VET FEE Help . I was recently contacted by a private provider asking whether I would like to do a course but when I told her that I was 67 years old she hung up. One private provider is offering a course to become a Licensed Builder in 3 months. As revealed in recent current affair program private providers able to offer HEC loans has jumped from 7 in 2008 to 247 in 2014. One private provider enrolled 38,213 students and only 2,058 completed their course
11. Because of the increase fees the younger generation are turning their back on TAFE and have no desire to do a part time six year engineering course at the University of Technology Sydney This has resulted in our younger generation being denied the opportunity of gaining further knowledge and skills in their respective trade. Consequently employers have been forced to go overseas for technical staff on 457 Visa and our young people are being denied the opportunity of having a meaningful and challenging job
12. Our society is going to pay dearly for the 457 Visa as we should be training our younger generation. These 457 Visa Technicians are not as competent as in house trained technicians. This has been clearly demonstrated when talking to a power station operator in the Hunter Region. The operator advised that since the power stations have taken on technical staff on 457 visa there has been more generator unit trips. Each generator unit trip cost the taxpayers over \$100,000 in fuel oil as the boiler has to be purged and fired up on oil.
13. I really think we should follow the German example. They don't put a university course above a TAFE course and they are really fanatical about maintaining the highest professional standards.
14. The German Government know and try to ensure that their citizens are efficient and super trained. Only a productive and efficient workforce can maintain productivity and profits. That is why they can sell cars to the Chinese and pay their workers \$40 an hour. They sell more to the Chinese than the Chinese buy from them.
15. If we want to have an expanding economy in 21's century we must increase productivity and this can only be achieved by having an educated workforce. Increasing TAFE fees and abolishing courses is not the solution

Regards