

# TVET AUSTRALIA

*supporting the national training system*

## SUMMARY OF KEY POLICY DRIVERS FOR VET IN 2009-2010

NOVEMBER 2009



AUSTRALIA

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## Purpose

This paper summarises recent Australian Government and other stakeholder policy documents and initiatives in order to provide TVET Australia and its stakeholders with a snapshot of key drivers for the national Vocational Education and Training (VET) agenda in 2009-2010. TVET is a company owned by the members of the Ministerial Council for Tertiary Education and Employment (MCTEE). In 2009, TVET's responsibilities include the provision of secretariat support services to the following key decision making bodies of the national training system:

- the National Quality Council (NQC)
- the National Industry Skills Committee (NISC)
- the Flexible Learning Advisory Group (FLAG)
- the National VET Equity Advisory Council (NVEAC).

TVET Australia is also responsible for providing the national training system with access to a range of catalogues listing quality teaching, learning and assessment resources, including nationally endorsed training packages. Through its TVET Product Services arm, TVET Australia also offers a centralised point of reference for Commonwealth and State-owned training resources, together with a comprehensive selection of materials from private publishers.

Finally, TVET Australia has responsibility for the National Audit and Registration Agency (NARA) which manages the audit and registration of multi-jurisdictional training organisations under delegation from States and Territories.

## Context

The July 2009 realignment of the former Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education to the new Ministerial Council for Tertiary Education and Employment signals the shift to a new agenda for VET in the context of a broader tertiary education sector for Australia. The key drivers for the agenda can be mapped through recent reviews, policy documents, frameworks and initiatives across policy portfolios as diverse as education, skills and workforce development; ICT, communications and broadband; energy and the environment; social inclusion; and innovation and industry. Current global issues such as climate change and the economic downturn continue to influence government decisions and actions which in turn rely on a flexible and responsive training system to provide opportunities for retrenched workers, apprentices and youth; increase access and engagement for equity groups; and equip the workforce with the necessary technical skills for the future, including higher level and green skills.

The summary represents a snapshot in time as at November 2009. Further policy developments may have occurred since November which may not be reflected in the summary. For further information please contact TVET Australia on (03) 9832 8100 or [enquiries@tvetaustralia.com.au](mailto:enquiries@tvetaustralia.com.au).

## Implications for TVET and its stakeholders

The context, agenda and drivers present questions and challenges for TVET and its stakeholders as they consider strategic directions and planning decisions for 2010. This paper aims to provide TVET and its stakeholders with a reference of the key themes in order to inform thinking and facilitate discussion. Questions for TVET and its stakeholders to consider might be:

- *What are the high level messages of the national agenda and how can these be reflected in planning for 2010?*
- *Are there other (new, existing or emerging) stakeholders with which TVET or its stakeholders may wish to engage? What other engagement strategies might TVET and its stakeholders use?*
- *What are TVET and its stakeholders' value propositions and their key messages? How can the work of TVET and its stakeholders be recognised as adding value and linking to the key themes of the current agenda?*
- *What are the risks for TVET and its stakeholders?*
- *What are the best mechanisms for TVET and its stakeholders to stay abreast of emerging policy developments and initiatives, and engage with the initiators of these?*

## Note to the Summary

*The information in this summary draws from a range of sources, including COAG and Ministerial Council communiqués, departmental websites, media releases, reports, discussion papers and announcements. The summary is provided as a guide only and is not intended to replace the source documents or overlay any commentary or analysis. The messages and views presented in this document are not necessarily the views of TVET Australia.*

## 1. SKILLS AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

(Please note that all items marked with an asterisk (\*) are also addressed under Section 5: Social inclusion, equity and disability)

Oversight	Title, description and funding	Key messages, findings and next steps	Key themes
Council of Australian Governments (COAG)	<p><b>1.1 National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development (\$6.7 billion)*</b></p> <p>The Agreement identifies the long term aspirational targets of the Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments in the areas of skills and workforce development. The Agreement is a schedule to the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations.</p> <p>2009-2012</p>	<p>The Agreement outlines Governments' shared objectives, outcomes, outputs and policy reform directions for skills and workforce development; governance arrangements; principles underpinning the national training system; and funding arrangements. It includes:</p> <p><u>Targets:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Halve the proportion of Australians ages 20-64 without qualifications at Certificate III level and above between 2009 and 2020.</li> <li>Double the number of higher qualification completions (diploma and advanced diploma) between 2009 and 2020.</li> </ul> <p><u>Policy and reform directions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reforming training products, services, information systems and regulation to meet a more demand and client driven system.</li> <li>Driving further competition in current training arrangements and strengthening capacity of providers and businesses to build the foundation and deeper and broader skills required by the 21<sup>st</sup> century labour market.</li> <li>Creating an investment environment and settings that optimises investment from all sources (governments, individuals, business and industry) including funding for delivery, tax policy, employment programs and incentives.</li> <li>Renewal of governance framework to reinforce the role of industry and maximise effectiveness and efficiency in intergovernmental relations.</li> <li>Ensuring that skills are fully utilised and wastage of human capital is reduced.</li> <li>Identify barriers and implement changes needed in the structure and operation of the training system (both nationally and locally) to improve qualification completions and participation in higher level qualifications by Indigenous Australians.</li> </ul> <p>Review: There will be a review of the achievement of the outputs two years from the commencement of the agreement.</p>	<p>Higher qualifications</p> <p>Training package reform</p> <p>Increased competition</p> <p>Client driven system</p>
COAG	<p><b>1.2 National Partnerships*</b></p> <p>National Partnership (NP) payments fund specific projects and facilitate and/or reward States that deliver on nationally-significant reforms. Relevant NPs for VET include:</p>	<p>The <b>Productivity Places Program NP</b> targets areas of current skill shortage and emerging skill needs. Through this Agreement (and a separate agreement with Victoria), the States agreed to deliver additional course enrolments and qualifications commencements for job seekers and existing workers. <i>Note: please see entry 1.13 Productivity Places Program for further details.</i></p>	<p>Skills shortages</p> <p>Access and equity</p> <p>Response to GFC</p>

- NP on Productivity Places Program (1 January 2009 – 30 June 2012)
- NP on Youth Attainment and Transitions (2 July 2009 – 31 December 2013)
- Closing the Gap: NP on Remote Indigenous Public Internet Access (2 July 2009 – 30 June 2013)
- Market Reform for the VET Sector NP (still to be considered)

The **Youth Attainment and Transitions NP** will deliver the *Youth Compact* (see entry [1.3 Compacts](#)) and implement strategies for increased numbers of young people attaining Year 12 or higher qualifications; more young people engaged in education and training; and young people having the skills required to participate in the labour market as the economy recovers. The NP is supported by \$100 million in reward funding for increased participation and Year 12 attainment rates and \$623 million over five years for youth careers and transitions programs. Responsibility for youth careers and transitions programs will be progressively transferred to the States and Territories.

Under **Closing the Gap: NP on Remote Indigenous Public Internet Access**, the Commonwealth will provide \$6.97 million over four years to New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia and the Northern Territory to improve public internet access and provide basic computer training in remote indigenous communities.

Recognising the impact of the global financial crisis and the looming recessions in many nations and the implications for Australia's economy, the **VET Market Reform NP** was not considered at the COAG meeting on 29 November 2008. However, at the 20 November 2008 MCVTE meeting, Ministers agreed to work together to develop reform options around market design for future consideration.

**Youth transitions**

**VET reform**

**Closing the Gap**

**COAG**

**1.3 Compacts\***

- Compact with Young Australians (from 1 July 2009 for 15-19 year olds, and from 1 January 2010 for 20-24 year olds, until 31 December 2011 (agreed April 2009))
- Compact with Retrenched Workers (1 July 2009 – 31 December 2011 (agreed July 2009))

The **Compact with Young Australians** aims to maximise youth engagement, retention and attainment in training by outlining that:

- young people aged 15-19 years will have an entitlement to an education or training place for any government-subsidised qualification, subject to admission requirements and course availability; and
- young people aged 20-24 years will have an entitlement to an education or training place for any government-subsidised qualification which would result in the individual attaining a higher qualification, subject to admission requirements and course availability.

At its 2 July 2009 meeting, COAG agreed to the NP on Youth Attainment (see [1.2 National Partnerships](#)) to deliver the Youth Compact.

To complement the Youth Compact, from 1 July 2009, retrenched workers aged 25 years and over will be entitled to a training place for a government subsidised VET qualification, which would result in the individual achieving a higher qualification. As part of the **Compact with Retrenched Workers**:

- Job Services Australia providers will assist retrenched workers to identify their skills and training needs and will work with the States and Territories to implement the training entitlement; and
- States and Territories will prioritise training places to support the Compact.

**Higher qualifications**

**Skills shortages**

**Access and equity**

**Response to GFC**

<p><b>COAG</b></p>	<p><b>1.4 Vocational Education and Training Reform</b></p> <p>At its meeting on 2 July 2009 COAG agreed to a work plan for future reforms to the VET system.</p>	<p>The workplan will address a number of major reform areas including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• developing models for a national regulatory body for VET;</li> <li>• ensuring the Australian Apprenticeship system is responsive to the needs of individuals and enterprises, especially during the downturn and into recovery;</li> <li>• increasing the level of investment in nationally-accredited training;</li> <li>• providing timely, relevant and easy to navigate information to individuals and enterprises; and</li> <li>• ensuring the training system, and the products of the training system, are responsive to the needs of individuals, businesses and industry.</li> </ul> <p>COAG agreed at its 30 April 2009 meeting that a report on operational VET models, including for a national regulatory body, will be provided to COAG by December 2009.</p>	<p><b>National regulator</b></p> <p><b>Response to GFC</b></p> <p><b>Client driven system</b></p>
<p><b>Australian Government (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (DIISR))</b></p>	<p><b>1.5 Transforming Australia's Higher Education System (\$5.4 billion)*</b></p> <p>The Commonwealth's response to the Bradley Review in the 2009-10 Budget.</p> <p><i>May 2009</i></p>	<p>The statement announces \$5.4 billion for higher education and research and structural changes, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A student centred funding system.</li> <li>• \$57 million over four years to establish the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA). TEQSA will build its capacity over the medium term with the aim of expanding to cover the entire tertiary sector from 2013.</li> <li>• A target of 40 per cent of all 25 to 34 year olds will hold a qualification at bachelor level or above by 2025.</li> <li>• A target of 20 per cent of higher education enrolments at the undergraduate level will be of people from a low SES background by 2020.</li> <li>• A new partnership program worth \$108 million over 4 years to link universities with schools and VET providers to increase education attainment of low SES, Indigenous, regional and remote students.</li> <li>• Announcement of Round 2 EIF projects, as well as a nominal \$500 million for EIF Round 3 and \$650 million for a sustainability round of EIF. The \$2.5 billion planned allocation to the EIF was instead redirected to the Clean Energy Initiative (see <a href="#">1.7 Education Investment Fund</a>).</li> <li>• The establishment of the Ministerial Council for Tertiary Education and Employment.</li> <li>• The commissioning of the AQF Council to improve the articulation and connectivity between the higher education and VET.</li> <li>• Affirmation of the commitment to VEN (see <a href="#">6.2 Vocational Education Broadband Network</a>) and the TLCF for VET (see <a href="#">1.12 Teaching and Learning Capital Fund</a>).</li> </ul> <p>In addition, the statement responds to each of the recommendations of the Bradley Review. (See <a href="#">1.6 Review of Australian Higher Education Final Report</a> for a description of the recommendations):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rec 43: The Government will work with states and territories to develop strong</li> </ul>	<p><b>National regulator</b></p> <p><b>Client driven system</b></p> <p><b>Tertiary education system</b></p> <p><b>Improving low SES participation</b></p> <p><b>Infrastructure</b></p>



cohesive national regulatory arrangements for VET. This work will progress alongside arrangements for TEQSA.

- Rec 44: Deferred pending future consideration.
- Rec 45: To be progressed through new Tertiary Education Ministerial Council.
- Rec 46: The Australian Government will progress arrangements for a single tertiary sector Ministerial Council. Skills Australia will have its ambit expanded to cover labour market advice in the higher education sector. The purpose and role of the NCVET are currently under consideration.

**Expert Panel,  
chaired by  
Professor Denise  
Bradley AC**

### **1.6 Review of Australian Higher Education Final Report\***

The 'Bradley Review' considered whether the higher education sector is structured, organised and financed to position Australia to compete in a global economy.

*December 2008*

The review found that while the higher education system has great strengths, it faces significant, emerging threats which require decisive action. The review recommended reform to financing and regulatory frameworks and, while most of the recommendations applied to higher education institutions and students, the following recommendations also applied to the VET system. Recommendations included that the Australian Government:

- negotiate with the states and territories to expand the national regulatory and quality assurance agency to cover the entire tertiary sector (including VET and higher education) and that the Australian Government assume full responsibility for the regulation of tertiary education and training in Australia by 2010. (Rec 43)
- negotiate with states and territories to introduce a tertiary entitlement funding model across higher education and VET commencing with the upper levels of VET (diplomas and advanced diplomas) and progressing to other levels as soon as practicable. (Rec 44)
- negotiate with the states and territories to extend income contingent loans to students enrolled in VET diplomas and advanced diplomas. (Rec 45)
- along with the governments of states and territories agree to:
  - establish a single ministerial council with responsibility for all tertiary education and training;
  - improve the scope and coordination of labour market intelligence so that it covers the whole tertiary sector and supports a more responsive and dynamic role for both VET and higher education; and
  - expand the purpose and role of the NCVET so that it covers the whole tertiary sector. (Rec 46)

In addition, the following recommendations also impact on the VET sector less directly:

- That the Australian Government set a national target of at least 40 per cent of 25- to 34-year-olds having attained a qualification at bachelor level or above by 2020.
- That the Australian Government set a national target that, by 2020, 20 per cent of higher education enrolments at undergraduate level are people from low socio-economic status backgrounds.

Other pertinent messages also included:

**National regulator**  
**Client driven system**  
**Tertiary education system**  
**Access and equity**  
**Skills shortages**  
**Seamless pathways**

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VET and higher education providers should continue to enhance pathways for students through the development and implementation of common terminology and graded assessment in the upper levels of VET.</li> <li>• The panel concluded that although distinct sectors are important, it is also vital that there should be better connections across tertiary education and training to meet economic and social needs which are dynamic and not readily defined by sectoral boundaries.</li> <li>• The panel considers that the case is stronger than ever for primary responsibility for regulation and funding of tertiary education to be located at the national level.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Australian Government (DEEWR, DIISR) / EIF Advisory Board</b></p>	<p><b>1.7 Education Investment Fund (EIF) (\$350 million for both Round 3 and a special Sustainability Round (both in 2009))</b></p> <p>The role of the EIF is to build a modern, productive, internationally competitive Australian economy by supporting world-leading, strategically-focused infrastructure investments that will transform Australian tertiary education and research.</p> <p><i>Announced May 2008</i></p> <p><i>Round 1 successful projects announced December 2008</i></p> <p><i>Round 2 successful projects announced May 2009</i></p>	<p>The EIF provides funding for projects that create or develop significant infrastructure in higher education institutions, research institutions and VET providers, in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• transform Australia’s knowledge generation and teaching capabilities</li> <li>• boost participation in tertiary education</li> <li>• position Australia to meet domestic skills needs now and into the future</li> <li>• enhance Australia’s innovation capacity</li> <li>• invigorate the growth of Australia's research capabilities</li> <li>• enhance Australia's international competitiveness in education and research.</li> </ul> <p>The EIF is one of three Nation-building funds established by the Government, along with the Building Australia Fund and the Health and Hospitals Fund.</p> <p>Applications for Round 3 of the EIF (excluding the \$200 million structural adjustment component) and the Sustainability Round (excluding the \$400 million Clean Energy Initiative – see <a href="#">3.7 Clean Energy Initiative</a>) opened on 4 August 2009 and closed on 8 September 2009.</p> <p>Funding for EIF Round 3 and the Sustainability Round was adjusted on 2 November 2009 following release of the Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook. \$200 million of the funding will be returned to the EIF for allocation in the future.</p>	<p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <p><b>Tertiary education</b></p> <p><b>Skills needs</b></p> <p><b>Innovation and research capacity</b></p> <p><b>Productivity</b></p> <p><b>Sustainability</b></p>
<p><b>Skills Australia</b></p>	<p><b>1.8 Foundations for the Future: Proposals for Future Governance, Architecture and Market Design of the National Training System</b></p> <p>A wide ranging paper proposing reforms to the way the national training system is governed and operates. The paper outlines Skills Australia support for an integrated tertiary sector, a more aligned and streamlined governance model for this sector, and major reforms to the regulation of the sector.</p>	<p>Skills Australia outlines models for reform that would result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The integration of the VET and the higher education sectors’ regulatory arrangements -one national regulator across both sectors, as proposed by the Bradley report. (The Skills Australia model proposes that two national regulatory bodies – one for VET and one for higher education – work together to establish consistent national frameworks for each sector. The bodies will merge when this initial stage is robust enough to do so. Skills Australia proposes existing regulatory and quality structures at the national level, including the NQC and NARA, be absorbed into any new national VET regulatory body).</li> <li>• A new governance framework, central to which is industry advice garnered from a proposed formalised national network of industry and other stakeholder</li> </ul>	<p><b>Governance of the training system</b></p> <p><b>Tertiary education sector</b></p> <p><b>National regulator</b></p> <p><b>Skills shortages</b></p>

	<p><i>June 2009</i></p>	<p>representatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Strategic Industry Forum - a nation-wide network of skills planning and advisory arrangements – being formalised.</li> <li>• The AQTF having an improved ability to apply sanctions to poorly performing RTOs.</li> <li>• The harmonisation of currently varied purchasing frameworks across states and territories, and to develop agreed core standards for purchasing targets.</li> <li>• The proposed national VET regulator working closely with the NCVET to make publicly available VET provider performance and outcomes to assist users and inform quality reforms.</li> <li>• RTO eligibility for public funding being linked to an introduced national approach to checking the financial viability and track record of RTOs as quality providers.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Australian Apprenticeships Taskforce</b></p>	<p><b>1.9 Discussion Paper</b></p> <p>The Taskforce was established to undertake urgent work supporting participation in Australian Apprenticeships during the current economic downturn, with an action plan to be provided to COAG in July 2009.</p> <p><i>June 2009</i></p>	<p>The Discussion Paper identifies some action areas and proposals categorised into three broad areas: Maximising commencements and increasing completions; Retaining apprentices through the downturn; and Supporting out of trade/retrenched apprentices.</p>	<p><b>Response to GFC Engagement and retention of Australian Apprentices</b></p>
<p><b>MCVTE / NQC &amp; COAG Joint Steering Committee</b></p>	<p><b>1.10 VET Products for the 21<sup>st</sup> century</b></p> <p>The project aimed to ensure that nationally recognised training products within the VET sector are flexible and responsive to changing industry, business and individual needs and workplace practices. Improving outcomes for clients included work on improving the design of units of competency, Training Packages, VET qualifications, accredited courses, credit systems and recognition arrangements to support reforms for a more client and demand driven system.</p> <p><i>Report released April 2009</i></p> <p><i>Implementation: April 2009 – July 2010</i></p>	<p>The project found unanimous support for the key pillars of Australia’s VET system: one single national system, with industry-determined outcomes relevant to work, reflected in nationally portable qualifications.</p> <p>The project proposed a policy framework for VET products and also made recommendations for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• definition of competency</li> <li>• qualifications</li> <li>• assessment requirements</li> <li>• credit arrangements</li> <li>• language, literacy and numeracy</li> <li>• new design for Training Packages and Accredited Courses</li> <li>• industry engagement and professional practice.</li> </ul> <p>The report was endorsed by MCVTE in June 2009 and is being implemented by an Action Group of the NQC between now and mid 2010. A Joint Coordinating Group of COAG and the NQC will also oversee this stage of the project.</p>	<p><b>Training Package reform Industry engagement</b></p>
<p><b>AQF Council</b></p>	<p><b>1.11 Strengthening the AQF: An Architecture for Australia’s Qualifications</b></p>	<p>The May 2009 proposal (Stage 1) proposed strengthening the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• realigning the objectives of the AQF</li> </ul>	<p><b>Australian</b></p>

	<p>A proposal for a strengthened AQF architecture.</p> <p><i>Stage 1 consultation period May-June 2009.</i></p> <p><i>Stage 2 consultation period September-October 2009.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a taxonomy of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, competencies)</li> <li>• explicit reference levels</li> <li>• a measure of the volume of learning (credit points).</li> </ul> <p>Following stakeholder feedback, the AQF Council developed a strengthened AQF architecture for further stakeholders consideration (Stage 2). It features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a levels structure with ten levels expressed as learning outcomes</li> <li>• revised qualification type descriptors for each of the existing qualification types expressed as learning outcomes</li> <li>• a measurement of notional duration of learning for each qualification type</li> <li>• an integrated set of qualification types positioned on the levels structure.</li> </ul> <p>The AQF Council will finalised its advice in 2010.</p>	<p><b>qualifications</b></p> <p><b>Student needs, mobility</b></p>
<p><b>Australian Government (DEEWR)</b></p>	<p><b>1.12 Teaching and Learning Capital Fund (VET) (\$500 million)</b></p> <p>The TLCF (VET) was a one-off investment which is being distributed through initiatives focused on modernising and improving the quality of teaching and learning across the VET sector.</p> <p><i>Announced December 2008.</i></p>	<p>Funding for this initiative is being provided through the following three program elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better TAFE Facilities (BTF): \$200 million</li> <li>• Training Infrastructure Investment for Tomorrow: \$200 million for eligible applicants and consortia led by eligible applicants</li> <li>• Investing in Community Education and Training: \$100 million for community education and training providers to develop or enhance infrastructure which will allow them to maximise VET delivery or facilitate expansion into VET delivery.</li> </ul> <p>A full list of successful institutions and their planned projects is now available on the DEEWR website.</p>	<p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <p><b>Quality</b></p> <p><b>Response to GFC</b></p>
<p><b>Australian Government (DEEWR)</b></p>	<p><b>1.13 Productivity Places Program (PPP)</b></p> <p>Under the Skilling Australia for the Future initiative, the Australian Government has funded the PPP which will deliver 711,000 training places over 5 years.</p>	<p>The PPP assists job seekers to acquire skills and gain lasting employment and assists existing workers to update or upgrade their skills. The training places are delivered in an industry-driven system, ensuring that training is more responsive to the needs of enterprises and individuals. The Australian Government delivered mainstream PPP job seeker training places from April 2008 to 30 June 2009. The state and territory governments have progressively assumed delivery of mainstream job seeker and existing worker PPP training places through 2009. This is in accordance with the COAG negotiated National Partnership (NP) Agreement for PPP (see <a href="#">1.2 National Partnerships</a>) which was signed by seven state and territory governments. The delivery of job seeker and existing worker training places by the state and territory governments from 1 July 2009 will incorporate the training commitments identified by the Compact with Young Australians and the Compact with Retrenched Workers (see also <a href="#">1.3 Compacts</a>). From 1 July 2009, the Australian Government's role in the PPP is to provide direct funding for two sub-elements of the PPP. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10,000 Structural Adjustment Places to support groups of recently retrenched workers; and</li> </ul>	<p><b>Productivity</b></p> <p><b>Responsiveness</b></p> <p><b>Client driven system</b></p>

- 18,900 New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS) training places over 3 years.

At the 20 November 2009 MCTEE meeting, Ministers agreed to continue negotiations to ensure that the PPP is refined to better meet the needs of local jobseekers, Job Services Australia providers and Local Employment Coordinators. Ministers also agreed that the formal review of the PPP will be brought forward to commence immediately.

**Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)/ Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI)**

**1.14 Systemic Innovation in the Australian VET System: Country Case Study Report**

The report is one of a series of country reports prepared as part of the OECD's study on systemic innovation in VET. It examines systemic innovation in VET by focusing on three case studies in the Australian VET system – (i) research and statistics in VET with a focus on the NCVER, (ii) raising the status of VET; and (iii) the Australian Flexible Learning Framework.

*Visit to Australia April 2008.*

*Report released February 2009.*

The report defined systemic innovation as *any kind of dynamic, system-wide change that is intended to add value to the educational processes and outcomes*. The report posited the following key features that seem to hinder systemic innovation:

- short-term policy making and a weak evaluation culture
- the continuous auditing of the system through planning instruments and accountability, and tensions around funding
- the potential vested interest of state and territory government officials as planners, purchasers, and also in some instances owners of training provider institutions.

For the three case studies, the report identified lessons learned (both positives and problematics) and other findings including:

Research and statistics in VET:

- NCVER has created a robust and internationally respected statistical evidence base to support the VET system, it has developed a cadre of highly skilled VET researchers, and it disseminates its research widely and provides open access.
- NCVER's dual role of funder and competitive research organisation raises concerns about possible conflict of interest and may also be restricting the allocation of funds to research projects focused on government priorities and may limit the possibility of blue sky research.
- A substantial part of the VET system lies off the official statistical radar, as the statistical evidence that NCVER can collect from private training providers is limited.

Raising the status of VET:

- VET must be communicated from the user's perspective, rather than that of the RTO.
- The report also looked at Australian Technical Colleges and considered the aim of raising the status of VET through quality delivery that is tuned to and led by industry through an integrated monitoring and support system.

Australian Flexible Learning Framework:

- The Framework is perceived as innovative in its open architecture and has created a repository of knowledge that can be used for both social and economic purposes; and is evidence that it is possible to have successful nation-wide collaborations with all jurisdictions involved.
- The Framework's research does not identify how effective the Framework has been, for whom, and why (or why not).
- There is a need to communicate to decision makers in understandable terms what is essentially very technical information, and the need to focus on benefits and the

**Systemic innovation in VET**

**Raising the status of VET**

**Research and statistics in VET**

**Flexible learning**

**Tertiary education**

variations in learning environments and learning requirements and what it will bring rather than the technology itself.

## OECD

### 1.15 Learning for Jobs: OECD Reviews of Vocational Education and Training – Australia

The review of VET in Australia was part of “Learning for Jobs”, the OECD policy study of VET, which was a programme of analytical work and individual country reviews designed to help countries make their VET systems more responsive to labour market needs.

*Interviews conducted April 2008.*

*Report releases November 2008.*

The review assesses the strengths and challenges of the VET system and presents policy recommendations.

#### Strengths

Australian has a very well developed VET system, which enjoys a high degree of confidence. In particular:

- The engagement of employers is strong.
- The national qualification system is well established and understood.
- The VET system is flexible and allows for a fair amount of local autonomy and innovation to adapt learning to local circumstances.
- The data and research on most VET issues are good.

#### Challenges

- The division of responsibilities between the Commonwealth and state and territory governments is unclear.
- Principles underpinning funding are not apparent and are inconsistent with human capital policies and principles.
- The use of forecasting creates some difficulties.
- There are some weaknesses and gaps in the relevant data.
- Apprenticeships are rigid and seem to depend on duration rather than competence.
- Training package development and implementation processes are inefficient.
- The ageing of the teacher labour force is a serious problem.

#### Among the review’s recommendations:

- Agree on common principles for VET funding and provision and achieve as much administrative consistency as possible. Quantify costs and benefits arising from duplication of responsibilities and from local variation.
- Encourage student choice of providers.
- Ensure that a range of provision is available to all and that information about providers to users is of good quality.
- Encourage part-time work of trainers in VET providers.
- Develop innovative strategies to sustain the number and skills of the VET teacher and trainer labour force.
- Replace training packages by simple and much briefer statements of skill standards.

**Flexibility and responsiveness**

**Data and research**

**VET teacher workforce**

**Skills needs**

**Training package reform**

**And watch this space...**

- COAG agreed at its 30 April 2009 meeting that a report on operational VET models, including for a national regulatory body, will be provided to COAG by December 2009. At the Ministerial Council for Tertiary Education and Employment (MCTEE) meeting on 20 November 2009, the majority of Ministers agreed to a new independent national regulator for the VET sector through a limited referral of powers to the Commonwealth. Victoria and Western Australia supported the consideration of other models to achieve national regulation and the retention of the principles of State accountability.
- MCTEE also agreed on 20 November 2009 to the establishment of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) and its location in Melbourne. Ministers agreed that TEQSA will be an independent body and noted that the Commonwealth Minister intends to establish TEQSA as a statutory authority. Ministers will further discuss the governance arrangements for the authority in the coming months.
- In line with the expansion of MCTEE to a tertiary focus, the governance arrangements for MCTEE have been reviewed and proposed changes agreed. At its meeting on 20 November 2009, Ministers noted the complexity of these changes and will receive further advice from officials in early 2010.
- In March 2009, the Deputy Prime Minister commissioned the AQF Council to 'improve the articulation and connectivity between the university and the VET sectors to enable competency-based and merit-based systems to become more student-focused'. The Steering Committee, chaired by John Dawkins, will report to the Deputy Prime Minister on the outcomes of the project towards the end of 2009.
- Skills Australia has released for consultation its proposals for a new approach to workforce development in Australia. The detailed discussion paper, *Workforce Futures*, goes beyond planning for future skills shortages, and recommends a broader more multifaceted response from federal, state and territory governments, business and industry to future workforce challenges. Submissions closed on 6 November 2009. These views will be used to inform Skills Australia's advice and recommendations to the Minister for Education.
- The next COAG meeting will be on 7 December 2009 in Queensland.

## 2. INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Oversight	Title, description and funding	Key messages, findings and next steps	Key themes
COAG	<p><b>2.1 Review of the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Baird Review)</b></p> <p>The Review will look to ensure Australia's regulatory framework delivers the best consumer protection and maintains rigorous standards for education providers wishing to enter and deliver courses in the international education sector.</p> <p><i>Review announced 8 August 2009</i></p> <p><i>Issues paper released 23 September 2009</i></p> <p><i>Submissions due Friday 30 October 2009</i></p>	<p>The Review will consider the need for enhancements to the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) legal framework in four key areas:</p> <p><u>Supporting the interests of students</u> This will include a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the adequacy and accuracy of information for students</li> <li>• protection of students as consumers</li> <li>• consistent treatment of students regardless of location or provider</li> <li>• provider accountability</li> <li>• broader support for students.</li> </ul> <p><u>Delivering quality as the cornerstone of Australian education</u> This will include a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• nationally consistent quality</li> <li>• quality of providers entering the market</li> <li>• mechanisms for ongoing monitoring, quality assurance and quality improvement of registered providers.</li> </ul> <p><u>Effective regulation</u> This will include a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clarity of roles and responsibilities under the framework</li> <li>• identification and management of risks</li> <li>• efficient and streamlined regulatory arrangements which minimise the regulatory burden on providers</li> <li>• timely and effective enforcement of compliance.</li> </ul> <p><u>Sustainability of the international education sector</u> This will include a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provider sustainable business strategies</li> <li>• preparing for the transfer of the ESOS regulatory functions to TEQSA by 2013</li> <li>• transition arrangements for any industry adjustments required in response to this Review.</li> </ul>	<p><b>International Students</b></p> <p><b>Quality</b></p> <p><b>Regulation</b></p>
Minister for Education	<p><b>2.2 Education Services for Overseas Students Amendment (Re-registration of</b></p>	<p>Amendments proposed in the Bill include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-registration of all institutions currently registered on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) by</li> </ul>	<p><b>International Students</b></p>



	<p><b>Providers and Other Measures) Bill 2009</b></p> <p>The Bill is described as the first in a series of measures the Government is taking to ensure Australia continues to offer world class quality international education in this challenging and changing environment.</p> <p><i>Introduced in Parliament 19 August 2009</i></p> <p><i>Amendments agreed 19 October 2009</i></p> <p><i>Introduced to Senate 26 October 2009</i></p> <p><i>Second reading moved 26 October 2009</i></p>	<p>31 December 2010.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two new registration requirements for education providers:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the principal purpose of the provider is to provide education; and</li> <li>○ the provider has demonstrated capacity to provide education of a satisfactory standard.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Providers to be required to list the names of education agents who represent them and promote their education services and to require providers to comply with any matters prescribed in the regulations concerning their agents.</li> <li>• Discretionary removal of the prohibition on education providers collecting monies from studying students when a course has been suspended.</li> <li>• Conditions imposed by states and territories on education providers to be recognised by the Commonwealth.</li> <li>• Exemptions from punitive provider default refund requirements for providers changing their legal entity.</li> <li>• Clarify the definition of “suitable alternative course”.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quality Regulation</b></p>
<p><b>COAG</b></p>	<p><b>2.3 COAG National International Students Strategy</b></p> <p>COAG has committed to improve the quality of education for international students and their well-being, through the development of a comprehensive National International Students Strategy to be put in place during the 2010 academic year.</p> <p><i>July 2009 – June 2010</i></p>	<p>The purpose of the National International Student Strategy is to improve the experience of international students in Australia and in turn benefit all of Australian society. The Strategy will promote a broader vision of international education to encompass the broader benefits to Australia and the home nation and place Australia's international education on a more sustainable basis. It will also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve the international student experience through improved pre- and post-arrival information and engagement with the ethnic and broader Australian community;</li> <li>• enhance general educational offerings that develop cultural understanding, tolerance and language skills;</li> <li>• achieve a clearer articulation between international education and migration policies; and</li> <li>• consider the quality of education providers.</li> </ul> <p>Development of the strategy would proceed in parallel with the Baird Review (see <a href="#">2.1 Review of the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000</a>) to enable alignment of amended legislation and the new strategy by June 2010.</p> <p>A COAG Senior Officials Working Group is responsible for development of the Strategy.</p>	<p><b>International Students Quality Regulation</b></p>
<p><b>Minister for Education</b></p>	<p><b>2.4 International Student Roundtable</b></p> <p>The Roundtable brought together 31 international students to discuss issues affecting their study experience in Australia such as accommodation, welfare and safety.</p>	<p>The Roundtable concluded that international students coming to study in Australia face a number of challenges in the following six areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pre-arrival information and visa status</li> <li>• quality of education provision</li> <li>• access to basic life services</li> <li>• social integration in Australia</li> <li>• fair treatment</li> </ul>	<p><b>International students</b></p>

Roundtable 14 & 15 September 2009

- cost of education.

The outcomes from the Roundtable will inform the development of COAG's National International Students Strategy and the review of the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (see also [2.1](#) and [2.3](#)).

#### And watch this space...

- An interim report from the Baird Review will be considered by COAG in December 2009. A final report is expected in early 2010.
- It is likely that COAG will discuss the International Student Strategy at their December meeting. COAG have committed to implementing the strategy by June 2010.
- At the press conference after the International Student Roundtable Julia Gillard was asked if there are plans to set up a more permanent student advisory body and she indicated that an ongoing voice for international students was being considered.
- At its meeting on 20 November 2009, MCTEE noted that the new National Foundation Programs Standards scheduled to commence 1 January 2010, will, for the first time, provide nationally consistent standards for the programs that prepare international students for entry to Australian universities. Under these arrangements, all providers must ensure their Foundation Program courses meet national standards in key areas such as curriculum, entry level for students, English language proficiency, assessment procedures and teacher qualifications.

### 3 ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY, SUSTAINABILITY AND GREEN SKILLS

Oversight	Title, description and funding	Key messages, findings and next steps	Key themes
COAG	<p><b>3.1 National Strategy on Energy Efficiency</b></p> <p>The draft Strategy is designed to substantially improve minimum standards for energy efficiency and accelerate the introduction of new technologies through improving regulatory processes and addressing the barriers to uptake of new energy-efficient products and technologies. The Strategy aims to encourage and support innovation in energy efficiency technologies and approaches.</p> <p><i>April 2009 (draft)</i></p>	<p>The measures in the Strategy are framed around the following four key themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assisting households and businesses to transition to a low-carbon future</li> <li>2. Reducing impediments to the uptake of energy efficiency</li> <li>3. Making buildings more energy efficient</li> <li>4. Government working in partnership and leading the way.</li> </ol> <p>Under Theme 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One key element to support this transition is the development of a trained and fully engaged workforce to provide sufficient numbers of skilled people to achieve Australia's energy efficiency potential.</li> <li>• The skills and knowledge requirements for the transition to a low carbon economy are many, from professionals in engineering, architecture, industrial design, energy services including audit and advice, environmental sciences, planning and policy, to technical skills in a wide range of trades and industries.</li> </ul> <p>Measure 1.2.1 is "develop for approval in 2009 and implementation in 2010, a national Energy Efficiency Skills Initiative as a comprehensive strategy to provide for the future skill requirements of a low carbon economy and the implementation of sustainability strategies."</p> <p>Measure 1.2.2 is "strengthen national capability in energy auditing and assessment."</p> <p>The draft Strategy notes that the development of the Strategy will be further progressed over the coming months. This will include the development of specific measures, implementation plans and targeted consultation with stakeholders. The final Strategy will be presented to COAG in mid-2009.</p>	<p><b>Environmental sustainability</b></p> <p><b>Green skills</b></p>
<p><b>MCVTE/National VET Sector Sustainability Action Group</b></p>	<p><b>3.2 National VET Sector Sustainability Policy and Action Plan 2009-2012</b></p> <p>The Plan provides a national framework for the VET sector to support the development of a productive workforce as industry, government, individuals and the wider community move to a sustainable economy.</p> <p><i>June 2009</i></p>	<p>The Action Plan notes that in addition to skilling those workers already in environmentally sustainable jobs, the economy will require other workers to acquire new skill sets and values sympathetic to the environment and to the society generally. The Plan also asserts that industry has a role in identifying skills for sustainability to ensure that the VET sector invests in designing, developing and delivering new training programs and retooling existing training programs to meet the existing and expected demands.</p> <p>The key results areas for the Action Plan are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a workforce skilled for sustainability</li> <li>• Providing VET system products and services that support skills for sustainability</li> </ul>	<p><b>Emerging skills</b></p> <p><b>Environmental sustainability</b></p> <p><b>Industry engagement</b></p> <p><b>Workforce development</b></p>

- Encouraging the adoption of sustainability values, principles and practices by VET leaders, partners and champions
- Reducing the VET sector carbon footprint.

Actions in the Plan of particular relevance to the work of the National Quality Council include:

- Action 2.3.2.1: Incorporate sustainability skill elements and/ or competencies into all training products (i.e. Training Package qualifications and accredited courses) and relevant learning support materials, particularly in key trade qualifications that reflect the skills needed in a sustainable economy and, to maintain currency, ensure continuous monitoring of the training product content.
- Action 2.3.2.2: Offer bridging training to meet priority needs using available accredited competencies while skills for sustainability are being included within Training Packages.
- Action 2.3.2.3: Build the capacity of VET sector trainers and assessors to deliver and assess the competencies and qualifications required for skills development for a sustainable economy, including providing appropriate student support and outreach services aligned with sustainability values and principles.
- Action 2.3.2.4: Develop standards for voluntary certification of RTOs as providers of skills for sustainability.
- Action 2.3.2.6: Ensure all new accredited courses incorporate the key sustainability skill elements and competencies.

Actions of the Plan of particular relevance to the work of the Flexible Learning Advisory Group include:

- Action 2.3.2.7: Increase utilisation of flexible delivery modes, including e-learning, onsite delivery and the integration of formal and informal learning. This can address barriers to delivering training in niche or thin markets and in rural and remote locations. (Key results are take up of flexible delivery options and growth in the availability of flexible options.)
- Action 2.5.3.3: Introduce measures that minimise the need for transport by VET sector workers and clients through making use of public transport, low emissions vehicles, and communications delivery technologies and use of online/flexible training delivery methods.

**Flexible delivery**

**National Council on Education for Sustainability and the Department of Environment,**

**3.3 National Action Plan for Education for Sustainability**

The plan's mission is to engage the community in sustainability through education and lifelong

The plan is based on four strategies that address the issues identified through community consultation:

1. Demonstrating Australian Government leadership
2. Reorienting education systems to sustainability
3. Fostering sustainability in business and industry

**Environmental sustainability**

**Sustainability skills**

<p><b>Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA)</b></p>	<p>learning.  <i>April 2009</i></p>	<p>4. Harnessing community spirit to act</p> <p>In respect of Strategy 2, the plan affirms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A transformative approach to education is needed, involving whole-of-institution engagement, innovative teaching and learning, and changes to curricula</li> <li>• Managing the campus in line with what is learnt in the classroom reinforces formal learning and demonstrates the importance of the issues.</li> </ul> <p>Strategy 2's objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The VET sector incorporates sustainability in all national training packages; and implements sustainable campus management.</li> </ul> <p>The Strategy's actions for VET are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of a sustainability policy framework with strategies for integrating sustainability into qualifications, delivery and campus management</li> <li>• Embedding competency standards for sustainability</li> <li>• Development of a professional development strategy</li> <li>• Examination of the feasibility of incentives in funding criteria for including sustainability in training delivery and incentives for all educational institutions to implement a whole-of-organisation approach to sustainability, encompassing campus management and curricula</li> <li>• Practical mechanisms to support sustainability in VET will be considered and may include, for example, developing a network of industry, government and training stakeholders</li> <li>• A sustainability audit: Industry needs for sustainability skills will be researched and an audit conducted of the current state of sustainability training in VET and its effectiveness. The project will map the availability of resources to support the delivery of existing training and identify gaps.</li> </ul>	<p>and values</p> <p><b>Sustainable campus management</b></p> <p><b>Training package reform</b></p> <p><b>Incentives</b></p>
<p><b>MCTEE</b></p>	<p><b>3.4 Reference from Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education</b></p> <p>Reference to the NQC regarding Green Skills and Skills for Sustainability</p> <p><i>20 November 2008</i></p>	<p>A its 20 November 2008 meeting the Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education (MCVTE) agreed that the NQC would, through its 2009 Work Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• give priority to developing flexible and responsive training products that include embedding sustainability in all training packages, sustainability skill sets and customised short accredited courses</li> <li>• develop appropriate standards as part of the Australian Quality Training Framework for voluntary certification of Registered Training Organisations as providers of Green Skills</li> <li>• provide a report on progress to MCVTE at its next meeting.</li> </ul> <p>At its February Planning Day the NQC established the Skills for Sustainability Action Group to complete this work.</p> <p>A progress report outlining the NQC's Skills for Sustainability Strategy, and an</p>	<p><b>Sustainability</b></p> <p><b>Green Skills</b></p> <p><b>Training Packages</b></p> <p><b>AQTF</b></p> <p><b>Excellence</b></p> <p><b>Recognition</b></p>

		<p>accompanying action plan was noted by Ministers at their June meeting.</p> <p>The NQC is conducting two projects to enact the Minister's reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A stocktake and Gap Analysis of Skills for Sustainability in Training Packages and Accredited Courses</li> <li>• Developing voluntary AQTF standards for providers of Green Skills.</li> </ul> <p>The Council will consider recommendations from these projects at their December meeting and report to MCTEE in early 2010.</p>	
<p><b>Prime Minister</b></p>	<p><b>3.5 Clean Sustainable Skills Package (\$94 million)</b></p> <p><i>Announced 30 July 2009</i></p>	<p>The announcement on 30 July 2009 includes the following separate elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10,000 member National Green Jobs Corps – long term unemployed youth will take part in 26 weeks of green job training and work experience.</li> <li>• 30,000 apprentices trained with new Green Skills – tradies will complete their training with practical job ready green skills.</li> <li>• 4,000 training places for insulation installers – to help long term unemployed or disadvantaged people into the workforce through extra training and short term - stimulus funded - insulation installation jobs.</li> <li>• 6,000 new local green jobs - 6,000 new jobs contributing to environmental sustainability in priority local economies.</li> </ul> <p>To ensure all tradespeople in Australia possess the green skills of the future, the Commonwealth will negotiate a new National Green Skills Agreement (see <a href="#">3.6 National Green Skills Agreement</a>).</p>	<p><b>Sustainability</b></p> <p><b>Green skills</b></p> <p><b>Economic stimulus</b></p>
<p><b>MCTEE / COAG</b></p>	<p><b>3.6 National Green Skills Agreement</b></p> <p>Agreement is to ensure all tradespeople in Australia possess the green skills of the future.</p> <p><i>Green Skills Forum 23 October 2009</i></p> <p><i>MCTEE meeting November 2009</i></p>	<p>A Green Skills Forum hosted by the Deputy Prime Minister was held in Melbourne on 23 October 2009 to consider a draft National Green Skills Agreement. Components of the agreement announced by the DPM included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and update Training Packages to include sustainability principles and competencies. Green skill gaps in Training Packages will be identified by the end of March 2010 and the revision of the suite of Training Packages, including the necessary industry consultation and validation processes, will be substantially completed by the end of 2010. The Government will make additional resources available to ensure this work proceeds.</li> <li>• Develop national standards of sustainability practice and teaching in vocational training. This may involve the addition of specific criteria or the adjustment of current standards to reflect sustainability practice and teaching in vocational education. The review of the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) to be conducted by the NQC in 2010 will 'consider the addition of specific criteria or the adjustment of current standards to reflect sustainability practice and teaching in vocational education.'</li> <li>• The best available national and international evidence to modernise the skills of</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sustainability</b></p> <p><b>Green skills</b></p>

the VET workforce will be considered to ensure that sustainability training provided by teachers and instructors is useful, relevant and applicable.

- Workers will be provided with the pathways and options that they need to work in emerging green jobs and the jobs of tomorrow.

MCTEE agreed the National Green Skills Agreement at its meeting on 20 November 2009 with a recommendation that it be considered by COAG in December.

**Australian Government**

**3.7 Clean Energy Initiative**

This is a \$4.5 billion initiative to:

- support the growth of clean energy generation and new technologies
- reduce carbon emission; and
- stimulate economic activity in a sector that will support thousands of new green-collar jobs.

2009/10 – 2018/19

The Clean Energy Initiative will support clean technologies and industries and assist Australia’s transition to a lower emissions path. This objective is supported by the Renewable Energy Fund and the Energy Innovation Fund, and by efforts to encourage deployment including through the Solar Homes and Communities Plan.

The Government will work with the private sector to position the Australian economy for a low-carbon, high-skilled future.

Targets

- 20 per cent of Australia’s electricity to come from renewable sources by 2020.
- The Solar Flagships program will aim to create an additional 1,000 MW of solar generation capacity. This ambitious target is three times the size of the largest solar energy project currently operating anywhere in the world.

Next Steps

- The Government will establish the Global Carbon Capture and Storage Institute and the Flagships program to ensure that Australia continues to be a world leader in the development of low emissions coal technology.
  - The Institute supports the G8 target for 20 industrial-scale CCS projects to be operating around the world by 2020.
  - The Flagships program supports the demonstration of large industrial scale projects in Australia, and may include a carbon dioxide storage hub.
- The Government will establish Renewables Australia to promote the development, commercialisation and deployment of renewable technologies. It will operate at arm’s length from government, using a strategic investment approach under an expert board.
- The Solar Flagships program will seek to develop up to four individual generation plants on the national grid. These may demonstrate both solar thermal and solar photovoltaic (PV) technologies, and have electricity generation capacity equal to or greater than a current coal-fired power station.

**Clean technologies**

**Green collar jobs**

**Low-carbon, high skilled future**

**Australian Government (DEEWR)**

**3.8 Skills for the Carbon Challenge (\$25.7 million over 4 years)**

Announced April 2009

The *Skills for the Carbon Challenge* initiative was announced as part of the Government response to the 2020 Summit held during 2008. The initiative provides incentives to support the take up of skills for sustainability and provides national leadership in building the capacity of the tertiary education sector to supply the skills needed to implement Government climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies.

**Skills for sustainability**

The initiative will involve the creation of a pilot incentive program which will provide support for Australian Apprentices in selected National Skills Needs List occupations undertaking a threshold level of sustainability skills-related training. The initiative will also support:

- developing and trialling qualifications and training resources in key industries such as plumbing, heating, ventilation and air conditioning
- establishing a voluntary certification program to recognise RTOs providing training in skills for sustainability
- green training awards to encourage excellence.

A key initial step of *Skills for the Carbon Challenge* is already underway. A robust understanding of the training issues that are likely to stem from climate change mitigation and adaptation policies is being gained through analysis and modelling of the skills needs across key industry sectors. A sound research base will assist Government and industry to respond to Australia's emerging skills needs and support the transition to a low carbon economy.

#### **And watch this space...**

- The National Green Skills Agreement it is likely to be considered by COAG at their December meeting. The intention is that the Agreement will be implemented in 2010.
- The final National Strategy on Energy Efficiency is to be considered by COAG later this year.
- The Education Investment Fund special Sustainability Round is currently underway. Successful projects are expected to be announced in early 2010.



## 4. INNOVATION, INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

Oversight	Title, description and funding	Key messages, findings and next steps	Key themes
<p><b>Australian Government (DIISR)</b></p>	<p><b>4.1 Powering Ideas: An Innovation Agenda for the 21st Century</b></p> <p>The Australian Government’s response to the Cutler Review, this initiative aims to accelerate the growth of high-tech jobs and industries through a significant \$3.1 billion investment in public and private sector research and development over the next four years. This investment will lift the Australian Government’s investment in science and innovation by almost 25 per cent between 2008-09 and 2009-10, from \$6.9 billion to \$8.6 billion.</p> <p>2009/10 - 2012/13</p>	<p>Innovation is vital to accelerating Australia’s economic recovery in the short term and opening up new pathways to prosperity in the long term. <i>Powering Ideas</i> sets out a vision for a national innovation system in 2020.</p> <p><i>Powering Ideas</i> will provide more support for world class university research, a Super Science Initiative focusing on national research strengths, a new Research and Development Tax Credit and other measures to boost business innovation.</p> <p><u>Targets</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of Australian research groups performing at world-class levels.</li> <li>• Boost international research collaboration by Australian universities.</li> <li>• Significantly increase the number of students completing higher degrees by research over the next decade.</li> <li>• Double the level of collaboration between Australian businesses, universities and publicly-funded research agencies.</li> <li>• A 25 per cent increase in the proportion of businesses engaging in innovation.</li> <li>• Continue to increase the number of businesses investing in R&amp;D.</li> </ul> <p><u>Policy and reform directions</u></p> <p>The Government’s targeted investment in innovation capacity will boost Australia’s research and innovation capacity at a critical time and directly support the Government’s longer term vision and policy ambitions by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reforming university research funding arrangements and boosting investment, with a focus on excellence and transparency, and increased support for postgraduate research students</li> <li>• investing in infrastructure and fellowships to ensure Australia stays ahead of the game in the three priority science fields of marine and climate, space and astronomy, and future industries – each reflecting Australia’s research strengths and helping to address challenges like climate change, rising health costs, and increasing global economic competition</li> <li>• boosting business research and delivering better outcomes for the nation by replacing the R&amp;D Tax Concession with a new, simpler R&amp;D Tax Credit; and taking an innovative approach to the commercialisation of research through the Commonwealth Commercialisation Institute.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Boosting Australia’s research &amp; development capacity</b></p> <p><b>Business innovation</b></p> <p><b>High-tech industries and jobs</b></p> <p><b>Higher qualifications</b></p>
<p><b>Expert Panel, chaired by Dr Terry Cutler</b></p>	<p><b>4.2 Venturous Australia: building strength in innovation (Review of the National Innovation System)</b></p>	<p>The review was tasked with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying a set of principles to underpin the role and participation of the public sector in innovation.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Innovation</b></p>

The “Cutler Review” was charged with identifying gaps and weaknesses in the innovation system and developing proposals to address them.

*Announced January 2008*

*‘Green paper’ released September 2008*

- Developing a set of national innovation priorities to complement the national research priorities, ensuring the objectives of research programs and other innovation initiatives are complementary.
- Identifying regulatory and other barriers to innovation and recommend ways to minimise these.
- Examining the scope for simplifying and reducing program duplication and ensuring that any support provided is well-targeted and easy to access.
- Considering the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of the Research and Development (R&D) Tax Concession Scheme in promoting innovation and make recommendations to improve innovation outcomes.
- Considering ways to improve the governance of the national innovation system to support higher expectations of government agencies and industry.
- Assessing the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of the Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) Program and make recommendations to improve innovation outcomes.

The report includes many recommendations including for supporting business innovation, expanding and consolidating current programs, aligning innovation policy with immigration policies to ensure access to the global talent pool, fully funding the cost of research in universities, strengthening publicly funded research agencies, enhancing capacity to engage internationally, research quality, supporting research training students and early career researchers, reviewing patent law, establishing a National Research Infrastructure Committee, and amending the R&D Tax Concession.

The Government has taken a holistic approach in responding to the recommendations of both the Bradley Review (see [1.6 Review of Australian Higher Education Final Report](#)) and the Cutler Review. A complete response to both reviews was made in the 12 May 2009 Budget (see [1.5 Transforming Australia’s Higher Education System](#) and [4.3 Super Science Initiative](#)) and the Government’s innovation agenda Powering Ideas: an innovation agenda for the 21st century (see [4.1 Powering Ideas](#)).

**Research capability**  
**Market design**  
**Human capital**  
**International engagement**

**Australian Government (DIISR)**

**4.3 Super Science Initiative**

This initiative will provide a \$1.1 billion boost for critical areas of scientific endeavour in Australia, including astronomy, climate change, marine and life sciences, biotechnology and nanotechnology.

*2009-2012*

The Government’s \$1.1 billion investment includes cutting-edge research infrastructure to give Australia’s top researchers the tools they need to get on with the job in three areas of world-leading scientific capability:

- Space science and astronomy
- Marine and climate science
- Future industries.

This investment will stimulate economic activity, supporting new jobs and building the platform for high-skill, high-wage jobs in the future.

The Super Science Initiative will support:

- Space and Astronomy (\$160.5m) - A new Australian National Centre of Square Kilometre Array Science in Perth; additional funding for the Anglo-Australian

**Boosting Australia’s research & development capacity**  
**Business innovation**  
**High-tech industries and jobs**  
**Higher qualifications**

- Observatory; and funding for an Australian Space Research program and a Space Policy Unit that will provide advice to the Government on national space policy.
- Marine and Climate (\$387.7m) - A state-of-the-art marine research vessel to replace the 38-year-old RV Southern Surveyor; extensions of the Integrated Marine Observing System network; new tropical marine infrastructure investments at the Australian Institute of Marine Science; an upgrade to Australia's peak high-performance climate change computing capacity; distributed infrastructure for terrestrial ecosystems, groundwater depletion, sustainable energy and water, and energy use in built environments.
  - Future Industries (\$504.0m) - New facilities for biological discovery and biotechnology development including funding for a European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL) Australia Partner Laboratory; new National Enabling Technologies Strategy; nuclear science facilities for ANSTO; facilities to support nanotechnology research; and advanced ICT platforms.
  - 100 Super Science Fellowships (\$27.2m) – These will be offered across the targeted disciplines. The three-year post-doctoral fellowships will allow promising young researchers to work in areas of national significance, with 50 fellowships to commence in 2010 and 50 in 2011.
  - Questacon (\$11.3m) - Questacon's science and education facilities will be strengthened and improved, including a boost for the highly successful outreach and communications program.

All the projects are highly collaborative, with infrastructure to be developed at many of the nation's universities, CSIRO, Australian Institute of Marine Science, ANSTO, and other public research agencies.

#### And watch this space...

- A Reference Group comprising representatives from the university sector, the National Tertiary Education Union, peak industry groups, government departments and statutory bodies, professional organisations and societies, the National Academies Forum and postgraduate student associations has been established to support the development of the Research Workforce Strategy. Work on the Research Workforce Strategy is expected to be completed by mid 2010.
- The Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research is undertaking an evaluation of the International Postgraduate Research Scholarships program as part of its 2009-2010 work program. The evaluation is being undertaken from August 2009 and is expected to be completed by November 2009.

## 5. SOCIAL INCLUSION, EQUITY AND DISABILITY

*(Please note that all items marked with an asterisk (\*) are also addressed under Section 1: Skills and workforce development)*

<i>Oversight</i>	<i>Title, description and funding</i>	<i>Key messages, findings and next steps</i>	<i>Key themes</i>
COAG	<p><b>5.1 National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development (\$6.7 billion)*</b></p> <p>The Agreement identifies the long term aspirational targets of the Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments in the areas of skills and workforce development.</p> <p>To reach many of the aspirational targets, specific targeting of disengaged and equity groups will be needed.</p> <p>The targets set out in the agreement have an equity focus.</p> <p>The Agreement is a schedule to the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations.</p> <p>2009-2012</p>	<p>The Agreement outlines Governments' shared objectives, outcomes, outputs and policy reform directions for skills and workforce development; governance arrangements; principles underpinning the national training system; and funding arrangements. It includes:</p> <p><u>Targets</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Halve the proportion of Australians ages 20-64 without qualifications at Certificate III level and above between 2009 and 2020.</li> <li>• Double the number of higher qualification completions (diploma and advanced diploma) between 2009 and 2020.</li> </ul> <p><u>Policy and reform directions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify barriers and implement changes needed in the structure and operation of the training system (both nationally and locally) to improve qualification completions and participation in higher level qualifications by Indigenous Australians.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Higher qualifications</b></p> <p><b>Access and equity</b></p> <p><b>Client driven system (including equity clients)</b></p> <p><b>Improved Transitions</b></p> <p><b>Improving equity participation</b></p>
COAG	<p><b>5.2 National Indigenous Reform Agreement (Closing the Gap)</b></p> <p>The Agreement Identifies the long term aspirational targets of the Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments in the area of Closing the Gap against Indigenous Disadvantage.</p> <p>The Agreement is a schedule to the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations.</p> <p>2009-2012</p>	<p>The agreement outlines COAG's shared view that overcoming Indigenous disadvantage will require a long-term, generational commitment that sees major effort directed across a range of strategic platforms or 'Building Blocks' which support the reforms aimed at Closing the Gap.</p> <p><u>There are six specific objective against which Closing the Gap is aimed:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• closing the life expectancy gap within a generation</li> <li>• halving the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five within a decade</li> <li>• ensuring all Indigenous four year olds in remote communities have access to early childhood education within five years</li> <li>• halving the gap for Indigenous students in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade</li> <li>• halving the gap for Indigenous students in Year 12 attainment or equivalent attainment rates by 2020</li> <li>• halving the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Access and Equity</b></p> <p><b>Improved Transitions</b></p> <p><b>High qualifications and attainment levels</b></p>

<p><b>COAG</b></p>	<p><b>5.3 National Disability Agreement</b></p> <p>The Agreement Identifies the long term aspirational targets of the Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments in the area of provision of disability support services.</p> <p>All aspects of the National Disability Agreement contribute to, or measure progress towards: <i>“People with disability and their carers have an enhanced quality of life and participate as valued members of the community.”</i></p> <p>The Agreement is a schedule to the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations.</p> <p>2009-2012</p>	<p>The Agreement should be read in conjunction with the National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development (see <a href="#">5.1</a>).</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People with disability achieve economic participation and social inclusion</li> <li>• People with disability enjoy choice, wellbeing and the opportunity to live as independently as possible</li> <li>• Families and carers are well supported.</li> </ul> <p>The Agreement will contribute outputs in support of the outcomes. The most relevant output is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services that provide skills and supports to people with disability to enable them to live as independently as possible.</li> </ul> <p>Performance Indicators have been developed. There are indicators where data needed to assess the measure is not currently available and will need to be developed.</p> <p><u>Performance Benchmarks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An increase in the proportion of people with disability in employment.</li> </ul> <p>The Parties have agreed to concentrate efforts in several priority areas, one relevant priority area is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase Workforce Capacity: A national workforce strategy will be developed to address qualifications, training and cross sector career mapping issues and establishing the disability sector as an ‘industry of choice’ by the end of 2010.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Access and Equity</b></p> <p><b>Skills creation</b></p> <p><b>Improved Transitions</b></p>
<p><b>COAG</b></p>	<p><b>5.4 National Partnerships*</b></p> <p>National Partnership (NP) payments fund specific projects and facilitate and/or reward States that deliver on nationally-significant reforms. Relevant NPs for VET include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NP on Productivity Places Program</li> <li>• NP on Youth Attainment and Transitions</li> <li>• NP on Indigenous Economic Participation</li> </ul>	<p>The <b>Productivity Places Program NP</b> targets areas of current skill shortage and emerging skill needs. Through this Agreement (and a separate agreement with Victoria), the States agreed to deliver an additional 506,750 qualifications commencements for job seekers and existing workers over 4years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implicit in this is targeting of equity groups. To overcome any current and future skill shortages, inclusion of equity learners into PPP’s will be essential.</li> </ul> <p>The <b>Youth Attainment and Transitions NP</b> will deliver the Youth Compact (see below) and implement strategies for increased numbers of young people attaining Year 12 or higher qualifications; more young people engaged in education and training; and young people having the skills required to participate in the labour market as the economy recovers. The NP is supported by \$100 million in reward funding for increased participation and Year 12 attainment rates and \$623 million over five years for youth careers and transitions programs. Responsibility for youth careers and transitions programs will be progressively transferred to the States and Territories.</p> <p><u>National Participation Requirement</u></p>	<p><b>Skills shortages</b></p> <p><b>Access and equity</b></p> <p><b>Youth transitions</b></p> <p><b>VET reform</b></p> <p><b>Improving equity participation</b></p>

- a mandatory requirement for all young people to participate in schooling (meaning in school or an approved equivalent) until they complete Year 10; and
- a mandatory requirement for all young people that have completed Year 10, to participate full-time (defined as at least 25 hours per week) in education, training or employment, or a combination of these activities, until age 17.

The **Indigenous Economic Participation NP** has funding of \$228.8 million over five years which has been committed to create sustainable Indigenous employment opportunities.

- Up to 13,000 Indigenous Australians will be assisted into employment over four years through the creation of waged market jobs from Community Development Projects (CDEP) program positions that have subsidised government service delivery.

**COAG**

**5.5 Compacts\***

- Compact with Young Australians

Compact will ensure that Youth at risk of social exclusion and equity learners will be able to maximise their engagement, retention and attainment in training.

The Compact will increase transitions for Youth at risk and young equity learners.

The Compact with Young Australians aims to maximise youth engagement, retention and attainment in training by outlining that:

- young people aged 15-19 years will have an entitlement to an education or training place for any government-subsidised qualification, subject to admission requirements and course availability; and
- young people aged 20-24 years will have an entitlement to an education or training place for any government-subsidised qualification which would result in the individual attaining a higher qualification, subject to admission requirements and course availability.

At its 2 July 2009 meeting, COAG agreed to the NP on Youth Attainment (see above) to deliver the Youth Compact.

**Expert Panel,  
chaired by  
Professor Denise  
Bradley AC**

**5.6 Review of Australian Higher Education  
Final Report\***

The 'Bradley Review' considered whether the higher education sector is structured, organised and financed to position Australia to compete in a global economy.

*December 2008*

The Review's following recommendations and messages are pertinent for the social inclusion agenda for VET:

- Expand the purpose and role of the NCVER so that it covers the whole tertiary sector. (Rec 46)
- That the Australian Government set a national target of at least 40 per cent of 25- to 34-year-olds having attained a qualification at bachelor level or above by 2020.
- That the Australian Government set a national target that, by 2020, 20 per cent of higher education enrolments at undergraduate level are people from low socio-economic status backgrounds.
- VET and higher education providers should continue to enhance pathways for students through the development and implementation of common terminology and graded assessment in the upper levels of VET.
- The panel concluded that although distinct sectors are important, it is also vital that there should be better connections across tertiary education and training to meet economic and social needs which are dynamic and not readily defined by

**Access and equity  
Improved Transitions  
Improving equity  
participation**

**Improved Transitions  
Performance reporting  
Improving equity  
participation**

<p><b>Australian Government</b></p>	<p><b>5.7 Transforming Australia's Higher Education System*</b></p> <p>The Commonwealth's response to the Bradley Review in the 2009-10 Budget.</p> <p><i>May 2009</i></p>	<p>sectoral boundaries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The panel considers that the case is stronger than ever for primary responsibility for regulation and funding of tertiary education to be located at the national level.</li> </ul> <p>The statement announces \$5.4 billion for higher education and research and structural changes, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A target of 40 per cent of all 25 to 34 year olds will hold a qualification at bachelor level or above by 2025</li> <li>A target of 20 per cent of higher education enrolments at the undergraduate level will be of people from a low SES background by 2020</li> <li>A new partnership program worth \$108 million over 4 years to link universities with schools and VET providers to increase education attainment of low SES, Indigenous, regional and remote students</li> <li>The commissioning of the AQF Council to improve the articulation and connectivity between the higher education and VET.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Improved Transitions</b></p> <p><b>Breaking down barriers</b></p> <p><b>Improving equity participation</b></p>
<p><b>Australian Government</b></p>	<p><b>5.8 Closing the Gap on Indigenous Disadvantage: The Challenge for Australia Report</b></p> <p>Closing the Gap on Indigenous Disadvantage highlights the Commonwealth Governments approach to addressing Indigenous Disadvantage.</p> <p>The Government is determined to drive real improvements, focused on outcomes and guided by evidence.</p> <p>This report should be read in relation the National Indigenous Reform Agreement.</p> <p><i>February 2009</i></p>	<p>The report discusses that many Indigenous Australians experience unacceptable levels of disadvantage in living standards, life expectancy, education, health and employment.</p> <p>The report highlights that COAG has set specific and ambitious targets to address Indigenous disadvantage.</p> <p>The six key targets set out that form the Closing the Gap objective are those found in the National Indigenous Reform Agreement (see <a href="#">5.2</a>).</p> <p>To halve the gap by 2020, Indigenous year 12 completion rates (or equivalent) would need to increase by up to two percentage points each year.</p> <p>VET is essential to fulfilling year 12 (or equivalent) attainment and creating pathways into further education. Successful education is the means to employment and economic independence.</p> <p>To halve the gap in employment rates within 10 years, around 100,000 more Indigenous Australians would need to be employed. This represents a more than 60 percent total increase in the number of Indigenous people employed at mid-2006.</p> <p>Indigenous Employment Program (IEP), beginning 1 July 2009, will ensure more Indigenous Australians have the skills they need to get and keep a job.</p>	<p><b>Access and equity</b></p> <p><b>Improved transitions</b></p> <p><b>Skill creation</b></p>
<p><b>Australian Government</b></p>	<p><b>5.9 National Mental Health and Disability Employment Strategy</b></p> <p>The Australian Government has developed a National Mental Health and Disability Employment Strategy to address barriers to</p>	<p>Many people with a disability want to work but are hampered by inadequate education and training opportunities. Six action have been designed to address the issue:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaging people with disability</li> <li>Improving disability employment services</li> <li>Providing better access to education and training</li> </ol>	<p><b>Engaging people with a disability</b></p>

employment faced by people with disability, including mental illness.

September 2009

- 4) Supporting and encouraging employers
- 5) Improving public sector employment of people with disability
- 6) Pursuing innovative strategies

**Action 3: Providing better access to education and training**

Actions:

National Disability Coordination Officer Program:

- NDCO program helps people with disability make the transition from school and further education to employment.
- The program targets barriers that make it difficult for people with disability to enter and complete post-school education and training and then obtain employment.
- The program has three objectives:
  - Improved transitions for people with disability between school and/or VET, higher education and employment
  - Improved participation by people with disability in higher education and VET leading to employment
  - Improved linkages between schools, higher education and VET providers and providers of disability programs and assistance.

**Access and equity**

**Transitions**

**And watch this space...**

- In July 2009, COAG agreed to the development of a *Closing the Gap Indigenous Education Action Plan*. The Plan is currently being developed by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) in consultation with Indigenous education leaders.
- At its meeting on 20 November 2009, MCTEE endorsed the National VET Equity Advisory Council's plans to develop an 'equity blueprint' for driving the changes necessary to improve outcomes for disadvantaged learners.



## 6. DIGITAL EDUCATION, ICT AND BROADBAND

Oversight	Title, description and funding	Key messages, findings and next steps	Key themes
DEEWR / AICTEC / PAWG	<p><b>6.1 Digital Education Revolution (DER) (\$2.2 billion over 6 years)</b></p> <p>The DER will prepare students for further education and training, jobs of the future and to live and work in a digital world.</p> <p>2008-2013</p>	<p>The aim of the DER is to contribute sustainable and meaningful change to teaching and learning in Australian schools that will prepare students for further education, training and to live and work in a digital world. The DER will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide for new ICT equipment for all secondary schools with students in years 9 to 12 through the <i>National Secondary School Computer Fund</i></li> <li>support the deployment of high speed broadband connections to Australian schools</li> <li>collaborate with states and territories and Deans of Education to ensure new and continuing teachers have access to training in the use of ICT that enables them to enrich student learning</li> <li>provide for online curriculum tools and resources that support the national curriculum and specialist subjects such as languages</li> <li>enable parents to participate in their child's education through online learning and access</li> <li>support mechanisms to provide vital assistance for schools in the deployment of ICT.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Digital education</b></p> <p><b>ICT in education and training</b></p>
Australian Government (DEEWR)	<p><b>6.2 Vocational Education Broadband Network (VEN) (\$81.9 million over 2 years)</b></p> <p>Infrastructure to support a high speed broadband network for the training sector.</p> <p>Announced April 2009</p>	<p>The VEN will provide the infrastructure that will allow TAFEs access to a high quality broadband network that is tailored to the specific requirements of the training sector. The VEN will complement the recently announced National Broadband Network initiative and extend the DER to the training sector. High speed network connectivity will enable students to experience a technology rich learning environment which will equip them for a technology rich work environment. High bandwidth network access will enable the use of interactive e-learning materials, virtual classrooms and real time access to content collections for TAFEs and learners. The VEN will support collaboration across the training sector and deliver a range of significant benefits including increased flexibility in the place and pace of learning, speedy access to resources no matter where they are located and greater collaboration and resource sharing between institutions.</p>	<p><b>Digital education revolution</b></p> <p><b>National Broadband Network</b></p> <p><b>Faster broadband</b></p>
AEEYSOC	<p><b>6.3 National eLearning Business Model Concept Paper</b></p> <p>The National eLearning Business Model concept paper has been developed by the eLearning Business Model Working Group established by AESOC in October 2008.</p>	<p>The concept paper proposes that the National eLearning Business Model will enable educators to discover, use and share resources, and to create, communicate, collaborate and learn through an intuitive web interface, powerful ICT enabled teaching and learning tools and enabling architecture. The model will align with an Australian curriculum and identify services to support student learning, innovative practice and meaningful interactions in a digitally rich context.</p> <p>The Business Model will outline:</p>	<p><b>National collaboration</b></p> <p><b>E-standards</b></p> <p><b>E-portfolios</b></p> <p><b>Access to resources</b></p>

June 2009

- a national eLearning architecture plan for digital resource discovery, development, storage and sharing
- a framework for collaboration which provides a range of value-adding services to schools and jurisdictions
- alignment of existing entities and related programs under a single coordinated vision and direction.

The Model is intended to support initiatives including the Digital Education Revolution (DER), Australian Curriculum (AC) and the Australian Information and Communications Technology in Education Committee (AICTEC) as part of the overall national education reform agenda.

The concept paper also proposes the creation of a single National eLearning/Digital Education Governance Board or entity for all eLearning programs and services which will be led by jurisdictions and the commonwealth, not ministerial companies.

As part of completing the model in the second half of 2009, the proposal notes, among other things, the need for consultation with the VET and non-state sectors to define what services are valued and required to support eLearning/Digital education now and into the future.

The National eLearning Business Model concept paper was considered at the 30 July Australian Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs Senior Officials Committee (AEEYSOC) meeting. AEEYSOC endorsed the concept paper regarding the national eLearning business model; agreed that further discussion was required on the governance model for all eLearning programs and services; and requested that a more precise costing be provided for work to finalise the business, commercial and technical arrangements associated with the proposed eLearning model and the framework.

The model will be completed by December 2009 and operational by June 2010.

**Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy (DBCDE)**

**6.4 Australia’s Digital Economy: Future Directions**

The paper connects the dots between the National Broadband Network, the Digital Education Revolution, the Digital Regions Initiative and the National Energy Efficiency Initiative. and explains why they are important for Australia’s future economic growth and social wellbeing.

July 2009

- A successful digital economy is essential for Australia’s economic growth.
- The digital economy presents Australia with a unique opportunity to shrink the distances that have historically dominated our domestic and international relationships, opening up new markets for engagement and growth.
- The Australian Government is committed to maximising opportunities for all Australians to benefit from the digital economy.
- The key elements to a successful digital economy are a Government that is digitally aware and enabling; industry that is digitally confident, innovative and skilled; and a community that is digitally empowered and literate.
- The Government will work with the independent Government 2.0 Taskforce and promote IT-enabled innovation in the wider community through the Information Technology Industry Innovation Council (established in May 2009).

**Promoting the benefits of a digital economy**

**Open access to government information**

**Effective regulation**

**Digital skills**

**Industry engagement**

- To assist with training Australians in the skills that digital economy participants will require, industry can provide input through the Government's Productivity Places Program...and play an active role in contributing to priority-setting and curriculum development for vocational ICT courses by advising Innovation and Business Skills Australia (IBSA) of their needs.
- Many of the submissions received as part of the consultation process argued that basic ICT skills and digital media literacy training should be included in most non-ICT study. This suggests that industry may also need to work with Skills Councils other than IBSA to ensure ICT skills are included in non-ICT qualifications.
- One marker of Australia's success in maximising our participation in the digital economy will come when distinctions are no longer made between digital and non-digital skills. Or, when education and training programs seamlessly integrate instruction about how to engage with technology as part of the regular course of discussion.

**Environmental impact of ICT**

**Privacy & security**

**Digital inclusion**

**Benchmarking**

**DBCDE**

**6.5 National Broadband Network: Regulatory reform for 21st Century Broadband - Discussion paper**

The paper outlines the proposed regulatory reforms that the Government will progress to facilitate the roll-out of the NBN, and, in light of the announcement of the enhanced NBN, to consult on the options for broader reforms to make the existing regulatory regime more effective in the transition period before the network is fully rolled out.

*April 2009*

In addition to proposing regulatory reform options for discussion, the paper notes that:

- in considering changes to the existing telecommunications regulatory regime in the transition to the NBN, the Government will have regard to its ongoing policy commitment to: *improving productivity across the economy; competition; consumer protection; rural, regional and remote Australia, and reducing unnecessary regulation.*  
The Government also recognises that community safety and national security objectives are integral to its telecommunications policy settings.
- The NBN company will be required to offer services on a wholesale-only basis. Legislation will prevent it from providing retail services. Operating as a wholesale-only provider, the National Broadband Network company will have no incentive to engage in anti-competitive behaviour, such as unfairly discriminating between retail providers. This will promote equivalence. The NBN will be required to operate on an open access basis. It will be required to provide non-discriminatory and fair access to all wholesale customers. Access to the NBN will be provided to all retailers on an equivalent basis.
- To ensure that all developers install networks for the future using fibre optic technology, the Government will mandate the use of fibre optic infrastructure to the home and workplace in greenfield estates across Australia that are approved after 1 July 2010.
- The Government is considering submissions on the regulatory reform options identified in the discussion paper. Submissions closed on 5 June 2009 and are available online. The Government has commenced consultation on the roll-out of fibre in greenfield estates and will consult on the facilitation of fibre roll-out.

**National Broadband Network**

**Telecommunications regulatory regime**

**And watch this space...**

- To assist Australia's research community and commercial sector to fully map the applications and business models which will thrive in Australia's high-speed future, the Government will host a *National Broadband Network: Realising the Vision* forum before the end of 2009.

**Contacts**

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