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## **What are society's expectations of TAFE?**

On National TAFE Day, the TAFE Community Alliance is launching a new campaign to run up to the 2015 State elections. The campaign is entitled 'What do you reckon? What are society's expectations of TAFE?' The State Government has used this budget to make further cuts to TAFE, but the Alliance believes that this continual undermining of the TAFE system in NSW does not represent community views

During 2013, the NSW Government released a paper entitled 'Statement of owner expectations – TAFE NSW.' This paper outlined what the NSW Government expected of TAFE in a competitive training market. The TAFE Community Alliance believes that governments have a much broader responsibility to education than that outlined in the Government's paper. This is the focus of the new campaign, an opportunity for the people of NSW who are the real owners of TAFE, to have their say.

Today the Alliance releases a discussion paper that outlines the significant issues facing TAFE as a result of cuts to funding by both State and Federal Governments, and the introduction of a competitive training market that will syphon off further funds to 'for-profit-training providers'. The Alliance has been collating information about the operations of some private providers that depend on public funding and some that target disadvantaged students to encourage them to sign up to expensive and inappropriate VET qualifications. This information will be used as part of the campaign.

"Many members of the public do not know about these changes to TAFE and are not aware of the impact on the accessibility of quality vocational education and training courses in the future," said Linda Simon speaking on behalf of the Alliance. "We will be holding discussion groups around the state."

"We want to give the people of NSW the opportunity to say what they expect of TAFE, and we will then be campaigning around these issues. We don't think that students, industry or community want just any old TAFE or a cut-down qualification that will not enable students to gain the skills industry wants or a satisfying career. We think they want the best TAFE possible with professional teachers, accessible student support services and strong quality qualifications. This is what we think the NSW Government should commit to and fund."

For further information or a copy of the discussion paper, contact [tafecommunityalliance@gmail.com](mailto:tafecommunityalliance@gmail.com) or Linda Simon on 0411550439.