



THE HON IAN MACFARLANE MP
Minister for Industry

MEDIA RELEASE

15 August 2014

A STRONGER VOICE FOR INDUSTRY ON VET REFORM

The Australian Government is further strengthening the links between industry and the skills sector, with the appointment of a five-member Vocational Education and Training Advisory Board that will provide feedback to the Government as it continues reforms to the sector.

Minister for Industry Ian Macfarlane said the Australian Government was focussed on ensuring industry has a stronger voice in the vocational education and training (VET) system, in order to ensure it is efficient and effective in delivering the job-ready workers that industry needs.

The Board will work with the Government's VET Reform Taskforce to help advance national reform priorities.

The Board is made up of:

- **John Hart (Chair)** - Chief Executive of Restaurant and Catering Australia and a member of the Prime Minister's Business Advisory Council,
- **Patrick McKendry (Deputy Chair)** - CEO Careers Australia Group and former Chairman of the National Quality Council and TVET Australia,
- **Tara Diamond** - Executive Director, Industry Services at the Australian Mines & Metals Association,
- **Dominique Fisher** - Executive Chairman and Managing Director of CareerLounge,
- **Jodie Hughson** - Manager for Quality, Learning and Workplace Development for Anglicare, Southern Queensland.

"Board members bring a depth of experience across the industry sector, in particular from areas where the need for highly skilled and productive workers is essential," Mr Macfarlane said.

"The Government is working with business and the VET sector on a series of reforms to unwind Labor's convoluted and bureaucratic mess that has created a system that fails to deliver on its most important objective – training the skilled and productive workers that industry needs to fill real jobs.

“The era of training for training’s sake is over. The VET sector must deliver training that can deliver students into a job and meet the changing skills needs of Australian industry in a fiercely competitive global environment.

“As Australia transitions to new industries of the future, the most important asset will be access to a skilled and productive workforce.”

Other reforms underway include:

- A \$476 million Industry Skills Fund that will provide employers up to 200,000 training places and support services, including literacy and numeracy training and mentoring
- Introduction of the Trade Support Loans
- Improved VET FEE-HELP arrangements
- Streamlining the boards and committees and consolidating a number of Commonwealth programmes
- Expanded access to Commonwealth supported places to students studying at all higher education providers and for sub-bachelor qualifications (including diplomas, advanced diplomas and associated degrees)
- An independent review of the training regulator the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)
- New draft provider and regulator standards due to come into effect on January 1
- Working with the state and territory Governments to implement the reforms agreed to at the COAG Industry and Skills Council’s inaugural meeting last April – this includes the establishment of a new industry-led body (to replace the NSSC) which will be appointed soon.

The reforms are based on a comprehensive round of consultations with more than 5000 engagements with stakeholders, including businesses, training providers and students.

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