

28 February 2011



Committee Secretary  
Senate Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Committees  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Dr Holland

**Re: Senate Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Legislation Committee enquiry into the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Bill 2010 [2011], and related legislation**

The Australian Council for Private Education and Training is the peak body representing private education and training providers in Australia, with more than 1,000 members in all States and Territories. The majority of our members deliver vocational education and training and a growing number are dual or multi sector institutions, also delivering higher education, English language courses for overseas students (ELICOS) and secondary school courses. More than half of our members are involved in international education as well as also delivering training to domestic students.

While ACPET strongly supports appropriate parliamentary oversight of reforms and initiatives which will have a substantial impact on the education sector, we are concerned that after the time spent on agreeing to establish a national regulator for the vocational education and training sector and its underpinning legislation, that this critical initiative not be further delayed as a result of this inquiry.

While ACPET has previously expressed its concerns about the introduction of reforms to the sector without proper or effective government consultation, this has largely not been the case with the establishment of the national VET regulator. ACPET has been consulted on both the draft legislation and periodically on progress towards the establishment of the new regulator.

ACPET considers that the proposed legislation significantly strengthens the ability of the regulator to take action against seriously non-compliant providers. The legislation will therefore serve to improve the quality of vocational education and training being delivered in Australia, by making it easier for the regulator to deal with those providers not committed to high quality education and training.

Since 2005-2006 there has been a growing chorus within the vocational education and training sector for more appropriate, more streamlined and more effective regulation. The lack of national consistency within the current state-based regulatory arrangements remains a major cause for concern across ACPET's members and across the sector more broadly. (A copy of a position paper developed by ACPET that examines these issues is included as an attachment to this letter.)

Employers, students and their parents need confidence in the quality arrangements underpinning the vocational education and training sector. ACPET believes that only a national and more proportionate/risk-based approach to regulation can deliver that confidence. It is therefore imperative that the legislation be passed, so that the quality bar within the sector can be raised and seriously non-compliant providers dealt with.

ACPET would be pleased to meet with the Senate Committee should that be necessary to discuss any issues raised in this letter and the attachments, or in relation to any other issues as they emerge during the Committee's deliberations.

Yours sincerely

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Claire Field  
**Chief Executive Officer**

**Attachments:**

Attachment One:       Position Paper: Future options – Vocational Education and Training Regulation