

Senate Standing Committee on Economics
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio
Additional Estimates Hearing 2011-12
15 February 2012

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

TOPIC: Roundtable Meetings

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard, 15 February 2012, Page 81)

QUESTION No.: AI-36

Senator Chris Evans: This is obviously a negotiation with the states, so there is some sense of confidentiality although the Commonwealth has made its objectives very clear both through the Prime Minister, me and through Mr Griew. But I can say that I was concerned about the lack of transparency about these processes in the past, particularly the lack of engagement with key stakeholders in these things. The public service or the Commonwealth and the states meet in what used to be smoke-filled rooms—of course, they are now smoke-free rooms—and batter out a deal and they all come out and claim victory either for the Commonwealth or the states without much input from others.

I have engaged with industry, as has the department, including people like TAFE directors and the TAFE unions, to have a few roundtables to try to engage people as we develop our position, which is not to say they will be at the final negotiation. But as Mr Griew can outline, we have had a range of engagements to try to make sure that whatever the final negotiated agreements are it actually meets industry's needs and protects the vital public investment in things like the TAFE system, which I am very keen to preserve, because I always acknowledge the fact that the TAFEs provide means of access for rural and regional students, low socioeconomic students, women and migrants in a way that many others do not. They also provide access for capital intensive courses and they are a bedrock of our vocational education system. I want to make it very clear that this government is not at all interested in downgrading or reducing the role of the TAFE system, but we are keen to make sure that we make improvements in the training system if we are going to meet the needs of our emerging economy and make sure we have enough skilled people. Quite frankly, there is need for a reform agenda, and we will be pursuing that.

Senator RHIANNON: You mentioned that there have been meetings with some of the groups involved. Could you provide details of those meetings and who attended?

Senator Chris Evans: We can give you some of them. Obviously, my office is constantly in touch with a range of groups as well in a more informal sense. Did we formally call them roundtables?

Mr Griew: The minister convened a roundtable, which had not individual sectors but all of them together—all the ones he just mentioned—and we have backed that up with that group again a couple of times. Skills Australia convened a very large meeting of industry stakeholders and senior officers from states and ourselves have held meetings in most capital cities now with regional—

ANSWER

The following meetings have been convened to discuss vocational education and training reform. Details include date and time of meeting and a list of those who attended or were invited to attend:

Time/ Date	Meeting	Attendance
3pm to 5pm 20 February 2012	Skills and Workforce Development Roundtable convened by DIISTRE	Representatives from: Minister Evans' office; Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education; Skills Australia (DIISTRE); Australian Industry Group; Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Business Council of Australia; TAFE Directors Australia; Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET); Australian Education Union (AEU); Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) and Australian Manufacturing Workers Union.
9.00 am to 12 noon 10 February 2012	VET Reform Forum jointly convened by DIISRTE and Western Australian Department of Training and Workforce Development	Representatives from: ACPET – WA; Chamber of Commerce and Industry of WA; Group Training Australia (WA); Housing Industry Association (WA); WA Council of Social Services Inc; WA State Training Board; Australian Petroleum Production Exploration Association Ltd; AMA Services WA Pty Ltd; College of Electrical Training; WA Department of Corrective Services; Central Institute of Technology; Challenger Institute of Technology; CY O'Connor Institute; Durack Institute of Technology; Great Southern Institute of Technology; Kimberly Training Institute; Polytechnic West; South West Institute of Technology; West Coast Institute of Training; Construction Training Council; Electrical, Utilities and Public Administration Training Council Inc; Engineering and Automotive Training Council; Financial, Administrative and Professional Services Training Council Inc; FutureNow – Creative and Leisure Industries Training Council Inc; Logistics Training Council Inc; Resources Industry Training Council; Retail and Personal Services Training Council Inc; Department of Training and Workforce Development; VET in Schools; Catholic Education Office; Chamber of Commerce in WA; Vocational Training and Education Centre and DIISRTE.
9.30 am -12.30 pm 14 December 2011	VET Reform Forum jointly convened by DIISRTE and New South Wales Department of Education and Communities	Representatives from: NSW Business Chamber; Australian Industry Group; Master Plumbers Association of NSW; NSW Farmers Association; AEU - NSW Teachers' Federation; Arts, Communications, Finance Industries and Property Services Ltd; ACPET; Enterprise RTO Association (ERTO); Group Training Association of NSW; NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training; Catholic Education Commission NSW; Association of Independent

Time/ Date	Meeting	Attendance
		Schools of NSW; NSW Department of Education and Communities; Community Colleges Australia; NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group; Disability Council NSW; Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW; Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation and DIISRTE.
9.30 am -12.30 pm; 13 December 2011	VET Reform Forum jointly convened by DEEWR and Skills Tasmania	Representatives from: Tasmanian Automobile Chamber of Commerce; Tasmanian Seafood Industry Council; Tasmanian Small Business Council; Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Tasmanian Building and Construction Industry Training Board; Tasmanian Building and Construction Industry Training Board; Skills Tasmania; VET students; ACPET Tasmania; Group Training Tasmania; Tasmanian Polytechnic; Tasmanian Skills Institute; Tasmanian Department of Education; Learning and Information Network Centre; Tassal Operations Pty Ltd; Tasmanian Department of Premier and Cabinet; Tasmanian Qualifications Authority; AEU; Independent Schools Tasmania; Tasmanian Hospitality Association and the Department of Employment , Education and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)
12.30-4 00 pm 24 November 2011	VET Reform Forum jointly convened by DEEWR and Queensland Department of Education and Training	Representatives from: Queensland Public Sector Union; Queensland Council of Unions; Queensland Teachers Union; Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union; Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland; Australian Industry Group; Queensland Resources Council; Health and Community Services Workforce Council; Skills Queensland; Constructions Skills Queensland; Queensland Master Builders Association; Atlas Heavy Engineering Pty Ltd; Ramsey Health Care Ltd; Hutchinson Builders; Australian Council for Private Education and Training; Group Training Association of Queensland and Northern Territory; Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation; Queensland Council for Adult Literacy ; Southbank Institute of Technology; Queensland VET Development Centre; Office of the Training Ombudsman; Brisbane North Institute of TAFE; Southbank Institute of Technology; SkillsTech Australia; Queensland University of Technology; University of Southern Queensland; Skills Queensland; Department of Education and Training; Department of Premier and Cabinet; Queensland Treasury; Griffith University Mt Gravatt

Time/ Date	Meeting	Attendance
		Campus and DEEWR.
10:30 am 18 November 2011	VET Reform Forum jointly convened by DEEWR and SA Department of Further Education; Employment Science and Technology (DFEEST)	Representatives from: Business SA; Australian Industry Group; Australian Education Union SA Branch; Public Service Association of SA Inc; SA Unions; Australian Training and Employment Centre SA; PEER VEET (both a Group Training Organisation (GTO) and a Registered Training Organisation (RTO)); The University of Sydney; Workplace Research Centre; SYDAC Pty Ltd; ACPET (SA); Group Training Australia (SA) Inc; MTA Group Training; Catholic Education SA; Department of Education and Child Development; VET students; College of Indigenous Education and Research; Community Centres SA; TAFE SA; Regional Institute Council; Bio Innovation SA; Association of Independent Schools of SA (AISSA); Catholic Education SA and DEEWR.
10am-1.00pm 10 November 2011	VET Reform Forum jointly convened by DEEWR and Victorian Skills Commission	Representatives from: Victorian Skills Commission; Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Adult Community and Further Education Board; Victorian Registration and Qualification Authority; Group Training Australia (Victoria); Boeing Aerostructures Australia; AEU; Victorian TAFE Association; ACPET Victoria; Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc; Master Builders Association (Victoria); Victorian Primary Industries Training Board; Transport and Distribution Industry Training Board (Victoria); Building Industry Consultative Council Industry Advisory Body and DEEWR.
9.45 am -1 pm 2 November 2011	Industry forum to discuss priorities for the next Skills and Workforce Development Agreement convened by Skills Australia	Representatives from: Minister's Evans' Office; Skills Australia; TAFE Directors Australia; ACPET; RMIT University; Holden Australia Agilent; Qantas Engineering; Energex; CSG Technology Solutions; Department of Transport VIC; Toyota Australia; Innovation & Business Skills Australia; Community Services & Health Industry Skills Council; Skills DMC; AgriFoods, Transport and Logistics Industry Skills Council; Manufacturing Skills Australia; Business Council of Australia; Australian Industry Group; Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Master Builders Australia; Minerals Council of Australia; Victorian Skills Commission; SA Training and Skills Commission; Australian Services Union NSW; ACTU; Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union; AEU and DEEWR.
9.30 am – 1.00 pm;	Skills and Workforce	Representatives from: Minister's office; Skills

Time/ Date	Meeting	Attendance
26 August 2011	Development Roundtable convened by DEEWR	Australia; Australian Industry Group; Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Business Council of Australia; TAFE Directors Australia; ACPET; Australian Manufacturing Workers Union and DEEWR. Apologies from AEU and ACTU.
9.00 am – 1.00 pm; 27 June 2011	Skills and Workforce Development Roundtable convened by Minister for Tertiary; Skills; Jobs and Workplace Relations	Minister for Tertiary; Skills; Jobs and Workplace Relations and representatives from: Minister's office; DEEWR; Skills Australia; Australian Industry Group; Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Business Council of Australia; TAFE Directors Australia; ACPET; AEU; ACTU and Australian Manufacturing Workers Union.