

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2004-2005 ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 2

Output Group: 2.1 – Funding for Vocational Education and Training

DEST Question No. E792_05

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Refers to DEST Question No E398_05

Question:

In answer E398_05 it was indicated that:

“it would not be appropriate for the Department to collect this information regarding TAFE waiting lists from TAFE institutions. Under the Constitution States and Territories are responsible for all aspects of training in their jurisdiction ... “

Do the constitutional responsibilities of the Commonwealth and the States differ between education (such as school and higher education) and training (such as TAFE)? If so, how?

Why is it appropriate for the Commonwealth to gather data on schools and not TAFE?

Is it not the case that in both instances the States have constitutional responsibility and funding is provided by both tiers of government?

Why is it good enough for the commonwealth to collect data for planning and accountability purposes from schools and universities but not from TAFEs?

Answer:

TAFE course waiting lists

- (i) The Commonwealth does not have a specific head of legislative power under the Constitution which allocates it general responsibility for education. However it is able to provide funding for education at all levels. This is done in conjunction with the States and Territories.
- (ii) The Commonwealth's role in education and training data collection is determined under separate national authorising arrangements between jurisdictions, and is not independently decided by the Australian Government.

Data on government schools are supplied to the Australian Bureau of Statistics by State/Territory school education authorities. Data on non-government schools are supplied to the Australian Bureau of Statistics by the Department of Education, Science and Training, which collects data direct from the schools through the annual Census of Non-Government Schools. These data are compiled by the Australian Bureau of Statistics on behalf of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs. One important use of the data is to generate the Commonwealth funding contribution.

In relation to vocational education and training, including delivery through TAFE colleges, the data collection arrangements are authorised by the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) Ministerial Council. Data collection is conducted through the

National Centre for Vocational Education Research, an independent research body, under contract to ANTA. Data on training is collected according to the nationally agreed Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS). This data standard is not directly comparable to the agreed standard for the schools data collection. The national data agreement specifies that, 1) data is not to be made available outside the States, and 2) which data is available nationally. TAFE waiting list data is not part of the agreed national collection.

(iii) Yes, see answer at (i).

(iv) Refer answer at (ii).