

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT & WORKPLACE RELATIONS

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE – QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2008-09 SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome 2

DEEWR Question No. EW839_09

Senator Fierravanti-Wells provided in writing.

Question

Australian Technical Colleges

If an expression of interest was provided to the ATC that would underwrite it financially, would the Department allow time for this option to be explored?

Answer

No. Colleges have had ample time to explore all options. Further delaying the process would preclude students from enrolling in 2009 as there would be no certainty about arrangements for 2010.

The Deputy Prime Minister wrote to the ATCs on 20 December 2007 confirming the Government's commitment to existing funding agreements with ATCs and signalling that funding would cease on 31 December 2009 and that the Department would be commencing a broad consultations process in 2008 to ensure the best possible future arrangements are put in place for each college.

During the course of consultations, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations wrote to Colleges in early April 2008 requesting a proposal from each college outlining their preferred future management model.

The Department evaluated proposals against the Deputy Prime Minister's Objectives for ATCs future management arrangements and requested additional information as required.

A period of intense liaison between the Department and each ATC followed.

On 15 October 2008, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations wrote to Australian Technical Colleges that had not yet submitted a final proposal. Those ATCs were notified of a 24 October deadline to submit a final proposal which meets the Deputy Prime Minister's objectives for future management arrangements.