TAFE investment would fuel future workforces



Critical industries like childcare, ICT, carpentry and plumbing are at risk of significant workforce shortages, which would undermine the strength of Australia's COVID-19 economic recovery according to the Australian Education Union.

Investment in TAFE would help ensure a sustainable supply of highly trained workers and support people to gain the skills they require to get good jobs, Australian Education Union Deputy Federal President Meredith Peace said.

"TAFE has suffered over $3 billion in federal government funding cuts since 2013. Instead of adequate TAFE investment, the Federal Coalition has used taxpayers' funds for poor quality private training colleges and the failing job network.

"TAFE is the centre of our vocational education system. Public TAFE institutions are ideally placed to train the workforces our nation needs to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic."

The Federal Government's Skills Priority List shows 153 professions with current workforce shortages and projects an additional 144 will experience moderate to strong levels of future demand by 2025.

Analysis of federal government's Labour Market Information Portal shows a shortage of more than 207,600 workers in the next five years in critical industries including childcare, aged and disability care, hospitality, carpentry, plumbing and ICT.

"In order to ensure these industries have the highly trained workforce they require to function effectively, Australia requires a properly funded TAFE system," Ms Peace said.

"Today, on National TAFE Day, the AEU is inviting the community to support our Rebuild with TAFE campaign and sign an open letter to the prime minister calling for a guaranteed minimum of 70 per cent of total government funding for the public TAFE system.

"Without proper investment in TAFE, the federal government will fail to provide the education and training workers need to get real jobs. They will also fail to ensure critical industries have the highly skilled workforces they need to deliver the services we all rely on."

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
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