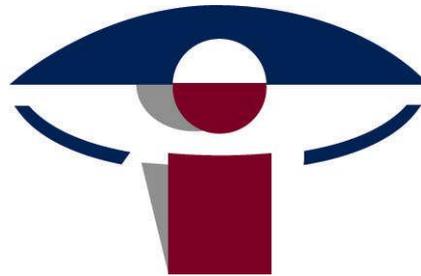


Victorian TAFE
Association



Response

Australian Apprentices Taskforce
Discussion Paper
June 2009

Victorian TAFE Association
Level 3, 478 Albert Street
East Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
July, 2009



VICTORIAN TAFE ASSOCIATION RESPONSE

AUSTRALIAN APPRENTICES TASKFORCE DISCUSSION PAPER 2009

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Victorian TAFE Association (VTA) endorses the establishment of the Australian Apprentices Taskforce to explore opportunities to support participation in Australian Apprenticeships during the current economic downturn and to equip Australian enterprises with the skills to take advantage of opportunities as the economy strengthens.

The key messages to be read from the discussion below are:

- A skilled workforce is critical to Australia's future economic development and the Australian Apprenticeship system is a key enabler to building skills and knowledge. The global economic downturn has refocused the debate and galvanised governments into action with particular interest on short and medium term initiatives.
- Completion of an apprenticeship or progression within an apprenticeship is still rooted in the notion of *time-served* rather than *competency based*. Changing the mindset of employers particularly in SMEs and traditional trades is a longer term proposition but worthy of examination.
- Employers with a track record of taking on apprentices and a history of successful completion and retention should be rewarded. This may occur, for example, through wage subsidies for a period of time post-completion, incentive payments to employers on completion and early completion, as occurs in Victoria, and in conjunction with RTOs.
- Victorian TAFE providers are an untapped source of innovative local industry/VET solutions to encourage apprentice/trainee completions. These are worthy of examination by the Australian Apprentices Taskforce.
- Initiatives that positively impact on employers' cash flow are likely to act as incentives to apprentice employment.
- Barriers to effective implementation of competency based progression include bureaucratic red-tape and inconsistencies between jurisdictions in the treatment of apprentices/trainees.
- Targeting actions to maximise apprentice commencements must also be considerate of employment trends outside this period of economic downturn. Any prioritisation of industries for short, medium and longer term actions must recognise realistic employment opportunities in those industries in the future.
- VTA asks the Apprentice Taskforce to define 'industry' in the broadest sense, initiatives to maximise commencements and increase completions should not be generic across industries. Initiatives, while targeting all industry groups, must be contextualized to industry specific and regional needs. One size does not fit all.
- Pre-apprenticeship programs need to build core skills in literacy and numeracy as well as any apprentice/trainee training to enable confident progression to higher level qualifications.
- Mapping of core competencies across Training Packages in traditional trades could build structural flexibility and allow recognition and mobility/transferability of apprentices to other occupational areas.



- Successful outcomes for school based apprentices are inextricably linked to the level of pastoral care available to the apprentice, high quality industry experiences and where pipeline pathways occur between schools and RTOs.
- VTA supports the efforts of the Commonwealth Apprenticeship Wage Top-up, and Commencement, Recommencement and Completion incentives, and Group Training Australia Targeted initiatives. The Taskforce could explore the benefits of extending the incentive scheme to include a payment to employers who retain apprenticeships for a period, say twelve months, after completion of the apprenticeship.
- Out-of-trade apprentices and trainees need support to continue to develop vocational and educational skills and to motivate them to seek opportunities and focus on the opportunities that may arise from the economic recovery. Occupational skills cannot be allowed to deteriorate and the emotional well-being of the out-of-trade apprentice/trainee must also be considered.



PREAMBLE

The Victorian TAFE Association (VTA) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the trilateral taskforce work supporting participation in Australian Apprenticeships during the current economic downturn. The initiative to develop a joint approach by all levels of government and industry is applauded by Victoria's public TAFE providers.

VTA members include four multi-sector Universities, fourteen stand-alone public TAFE Institutes, AMES and the Centre for Adult Education. Our members deliver training and education across the spectrum of the Australian Qualifications Framework and TAFE is the largest provider of training and education to apprentices in Australia. Apprenticeship delivery occurs in partnership with schools, employers, peak industry bodies and governments' agencies nationally. Victoria's TAFE providers are acutely aware of the importance of retaining apprentices' employment and skills and maximising completions. VTA is well placed to respond to the Australian Apprentices Taskforce Discussion Paper.

This response is made in the context of the COAG Communiqué (July 2, 2009), recent research reports¹, policy directions for VET and Ministerial objectives by the Australian Government, states and territories to stimulate the retention of apprentices and improve completion rates. This response is also framed in the light of the Victorian policy context *Securing Jobs for Your Future* and Victorian specific initiatives.

This response draws on submissions to the VTA on this subject and on the views of Victorian TAFE providers attending a focus group convened July 3, 2009. VTA members may respond individually to the discussion paper to highlight areas of particular interest to their organisations.

The response generally follows the order of the stimulus questions provided in the discussion paper.

MAXIMISING COMMENCEMENTS AND INCREASING COMPLETIONS

A skilled workforce is critical to Australia's future economic development and the Australian Apprenticeship system is a key enabler to building skills and knowledge. Maintaining or increasing apprentice and trainee employment, and improving completion of apprenticeship and traineeship qualifications has been a matter of key interest to Victoria's TAFE providers since the inception of TAFE. The global economic downturn has refocussed the debate and galvanised governments into action with particular interest on short and medium term initiatives.

Competency Based Completion and Progression

Completion of an apprenticeship or progression within an apprenticeship is still rooted in the notion of *time-served* rather than *competency based*. Changing the mindset of employers particularly in SMEs and traditional trades is a longer term

¹ 'Australian Apprenticeships Your Life, Your Career, Your Future', Australian Apprenticeships Roundtable Report, 2008, NCVET; 'Australian vocational education and training statistics: Apprentice and trainee destinations', 2008, NCVET; Bittman, M et al, 'Living Standards of Apprentices', Group Training Australia, October 2007.



proposition but worthy of examination. TAFE providers interact regularly with apprentice employers through work place visits, in the preparation of training plans, reporting and other communications and note that the employers motivation to commence an apprentice is not always a commitment to build skills in that industry. VTA members' interactions with employers lead them to conclude that the lower cost of employing an apprentice can be a significant attraction to an employer. Those employers in this latter category would not be encouraged to embrace competency based completions as it could result in higher wage costs if the employee achieves the competencies faster than the traditional time-served arrangements. Resistance to competency based models is not a phenomenon of one industry. To effect change in the short to medium term, VTA suggests that those employers with a track record of taking on apprentices and a history of successful completion and retention, be rewarded. This may occur, for example, through wage subsidies for a period of time post-completion, incentive payments to employers on completion and early completion, as occurs in Victoria, and in conjunction with RTOs.

Victorian TAFE providers are implementing local initiatives to encourage apprenticeship and traineeship completions including:

- Where an apprentice completes off-the-job competencies, use the 'time' left to progress the apprentice to higher level competencies from higher level qualifications. The outcome will 'value add' to the employer's skills base and the apprentice's skills base.
- Once an apprentice has completed approximately two thirds of the competencies for the Certificate III Building and Construction at University of Ballarat, the apprentice and employer may negotiate for the off-the-job component of the final competencies to be available online thereby saving the apprentice travel time and allowing flexibility for both the employer and employee. The University of Ballarat uses networking tools (wikis/blogs) for interaction between the apprentice and the provider and between apprentices.
- Working closely with the employer to gain buy-in to initiatives and then to resource the supporting mechanisms required for the longer term. As an example Kangan Batman TAFE meets with Toyota Australia on a monthly basis to discuss apprentices' progress, issues arising that may impact on the program or partnership and improvements to the program, such as possible progression to dual mechanical/electrical apprenticeship programs and higher qualifications (Certificate IV, Diploma or Advanced Diploma). It is important to note that, to gain employer buy-in to a total partnership in delivery a number of important elements must be considered and be imbedded into the program; a genuinely negotiated training plan, onsite training mentors, shared delivery meeting business goals, common delivery materials and consistency of trainers.
- Providing the Certificate IV Training and Assessment contextualised to industry and enterprise needs, for apprentice supervisors and the creation of company champions to promote apprenticeships and VET. Kangan Batman TAFE and Toyota Australia, have found that a mandatory mentoring program for apprentices in the workplace has directly contributed to successful apprentice outcomes. Toyota has many workplace mentors qualified with Certificate IV Training and Assessment.
- A mentoring program designed jointly by an enterprise and the training provider to target zero non-completions. Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE has created a position of Apprentice Relationship Manager to regularly liaise with industry and employer groups, assess current training practices for suitability to needs of employers, implement flexibility and negotiate training



plans annually to ensure currency and relevance. In another example, apprentices at a Ballarat manufacturing company are all assigned an “Apprentice Master” (AM). This person oversees all aspects of the Apprentice’s training, who he/she is working with, what he/she is working on and what skills development is to occur. Apprentices are not assigned any worktasks on Fridays and all meet with the AM where they review and consolidate what they have learnt for the week and practice tasks. All apprentices are given a broad experience across the workplace for the first two years with the apprentice specializing more in the third year. These programs have resulted in extremely high apprentice completions and show the importance and value of effective workplace mentoring.

- The Trade-On program at Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE offers customised solutions for employers in the construction and building industries. Employers may choose to mix and match options including a customised up-front construction foundation skills induction, workplace assessments, flexible scheduling arrangements, and fully on-the-job.
- Changed emphasis on achievement of employability skills and that completion is conditional on the explicit sign-off of employability skills. Employability skills are integrated into each unit of competency.

VTA notes that in some jurisdictions employers receive relief from payroll tax (Tasmania, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia) and a temporary rebate of workers’ compensation premiums (Western Australia). Initiatives that positively impact on employers’ cash flow are likely to act as incentives to apprentice employment.

All respondents to VTA noted the importance of customised solutions to individual employers’ needs and simplification of bureaucratic red-tape for effective customised solutions. Other barriers to effective implementation of competency based progression are the inconsistencies between jurisdictions in the treatment of completions. In Queensland an apprentice cannot gain sign-off earlier than the time required, despite the RTO and employer agreeing that competencies have been achieved. The apprentice, having been laid-off, say, in the second year of an apprenticeship, may not be able to gain full recognition of competencies achieved to take up opportunities for apprenticeships that may occur in other states. A national framework would be preferable.

Focussing Attention

The global economic downturn is affecting employment levels across the broad spectrum of industry groups and the impact of the downturn in any individual enterprise will affect the entire workforce; core occupations and supporting occupations. As an example provided to VTA, the announcement by BHP Billiton to suspend the Ravensthorpe nickel mine in Western Australia clearly impacted on apprentice positions in traditional trades in the mine but the action has had effects on the employment of apprentices and trainees in other areas such as cookery, hospitality and grounds staff within the company. The impact will also be felt in communities supported by the mining company’s activities and this ‘knock-on’ affect cannot be ignored. We must be mindful of retaining the full range of domestic skills to support future export activities and any actions to enhance the employment of new apprentices and encourage apprentice completions must consider ‘industry’ in the broadest sense.

Targeting actions to maximise apprentice commencements must also be considerate of employment trends outside this period of economic downturn. Growth in



employment in Australia has been in professional, managerial and service industries and declines in employment in mining, manufacturing and construction. The Discussion Paper notes that forecasts suggest the greatest impacts of the downturn will include manufacturing. Any prioritisation of industries for short, medium and longer term actions must recognise realistic employment opportunities in those industries in the future and the reality that employment in some industries will not return to levels prior to the global economic downturn. Changes in work practices including new technologies mean that a smaller workforce is required may be required in some industries.

While VTA asks the Apprentice Taskforce to define 'industry' in the broadest sense, initiatives to maximise commencements and increase completions should not be generic across industries. Customisation of initiatives to different industries' needs have a greater likelihood of success; a point emphasised by VTA members in their contributions to this response.

VTA acknowledges that prioritisation will occur in rolling out any initiatives and that targeting the areas of most need is obvious. We suggest that the Australian Apprentices Taskforce considers patterns in the regional distribution of effects of the economic downturn as well as specific industries. That way, different regional areas may have different priority targets – manufacturing in Melbourne's South East, automotive component production in the Albury/Wodonga area. Initiatives, while targeting all industry groups, must be contextualized to industry specific and regional needs. One size does not fit all.

Connecting skills development to all government funded infrastructure projects

VTA fully supports the COAG goal to secure at least 10 % of the total contract labour hours for government stimulus and infrastructure projects to be undertaken by apprentices and trainees and those seeking to up-skill. VTA members are beneficiaries of governments' infrastructure expenditure and well placed to ensure that jobs will be created in infrastructure projects for young people/new entrants to the workforce through infrastructure tendering processes and contractual arrangements. The VTA is committed to promoting opportunities for young people/new entrants to the workforce to engage in the workforce through sustainable employment based training opportunities, including apprenticeships and traineeships.

All tender documentation for infrastructure development contracts should be assessed for skills development and employment based training opportunities, and managers of infrastructure funding should embed skills development and employment based training opportunities into the contractors' deliverables.

Encouraging a culture of further learning & Pre-apprenticeship programs

A culture of further learning is best nurtured from a young age. If the apprentice values learning/skills development, there is a high propensity to engage in on-the-job and off-the-job learning opportunities. Home life and educational (principally school) experiences will contribute to the individual's value of learning later in life. Schools play an important role in fostering a culture of lifelong learning. In relation to the task of the Australian Apprentices Taskforce, VTA highlights the following enablers:

- Access to formal pre-apprenticeship programs and/or 'taster' programs in apprentice and trainee occupations provides an opportunity for the young person to make a first assessment about the occupation. Work placement



programs in schools do not provide the depth of experience for the young person to make a first assessment. VTA commends programs like the Victorian Technical Education Centres², and Senior Secondary School Certificate Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning³ to the Australian Apprentices Taskforce. VTA proposes incentives to employers for structured placements for pre-apprentices equivalent to at least one month (i.e. one sixth of the typical duration of a pre-apprenticeship program). An early decision not to pursue a particular occupational pathway before entering an apprenticeship may lead to fewer non-completions.

- Access to career advice and career development in schools. Designated advisors in schools must be highly knowledgeable regarding apprentice occupations, have well developed industry relationships, and ready access to apprentice services such as Australian Apprenticeship Centres. In Victoria the Joint Policy Unit on Youth Transition Pathways⁴ is currently undertaking research regarding best practice career development for young people in Victoria. The outcomes may be of interest to the Australian Apprentices Taskforce.
- Access universally to living support to all pre-apprentices and out-of trade apprentices undertaking full time training.
- Building strong core skills in literacy and numeracy. The University of Ballarat has introduced the Course in Applied Vocational Study Skills. Delivery of this course may apply at any level of any Training Package qualification. In a face-to-face team teaching model, a qualified and experienced literacy and numeracy teacher works alongside the expert vocational teacher to enable apprentices to gain the basic educational skills which need to be applied in achieving industry competencies.
- Funded literacy and numeracy programs to enable confident progression to higher level qualifications in all areas and prepare for potential demand for higher post-school qualifications.
- A culture of mutual recognition among employers of skills achieved in other workplaces. This may be most appropriate for mature aged apprentices. Recognition of current skills and competencies at the commencement of the pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship, without reducing employer incentives, could encourage completions.
- Recognition that in many instances following completion of an apprenticeship employers require skill sets, not full qualifications. Such further training directly linked to the employers' skill sets needs should be publicly funded to the same extent as apprenticeship training programs.
- Mapping of core competencies across Training Packages in traditional trades to build structural flexibility by allowing recognition and mobility/transferability to other occupational areas. The transferable set of competencies relevant to all traditional trade qualifications may include employability skills, research skills, occupational health and safety. Mapping could be designed for other apprenticeship and traineeship occupations.
- States/territories consistently agree to qualifications pathways to high level Training Package qualifications as apprenticeships and traineeships.

² http://www.skills.vic.gov.au/corporate/programs_and_initiatives/technical_education_centres

³ <http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vcal/index.html>

⁴ In September 2008, the Secretaries of the Victorian Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development (DIIRD) and the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) agreed to establish a Joint Policy Unit on Youth Transition Pathways. An essential part of the work of the Unit is to gain a better understanding of career development for young people in Victoria, particularly with regard to best practice.



At the local level TAFE providers engage in enterprise specific solutions with some examples provided earlier in this response (see Competency Based Completion and Progression).

School Based Apprenticeships (SBA) into employment

Anecdotal information supplied to VTA is that the most successful outcomes for school based apprentices occur where vocational education generally, and SBA programs specifically, are valued by the school, integrated into the schools strategic planning rather than being an add-on, and rigorously quality managed. Such programs demonstrate high levels of pastoral care, industry experiences for apprentices and links with vocational education and training specialists.

Successful outcomes for school based apprentices are inextricably linked to the level of pastoral care available to the apprentice. VTA advocates for increased levels of pastoral care and looks to best practice examples provided by the Technical Education Centres (TECs) and Group Training Organisations in Victoria to inform the Australian Apprentices Taskforce. TECs offer an adult learning environment and specialised learning support appropriate to the age group.(16-19 year old). They are located on TAFE campuses with programs offered including VCAL (Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning) with a Certificate II or Certificate III, pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships and traineeships, and the VCE (Victorian Certificate of Education) in some instances. The emphasis is on undertaking a training program within an industry-specific stream, accessing local industry and TAFE.

School based apprentices need access to high quality industry experiences including employers committed to developing a skilled future workforce and schools must provide pipeline pathways to RTOs to ensure completion of the training component. Auspicing arrangements between RTOs and schools have become more common in recent years and are successful where rigorously quality managed and each auspice partner understands exactly what is expected and clear responsibilities are established.

Apprenticeships for at-risk young people

At-risk young people are possibly the most challenging group or cohort to employ via the apprenticeship model; they generally experience a much higher rate of homelessness and difficulties engaging with social service providers than other groups with significant barriers to learning to overcome in addition to securing an apprenticeship and performing at the level expected by employers. At the very least, at-risk young people will require a much broader range of social support to engage in full-time employment and part-time study.

Three examples are offered for the Australian Apprentices Taskforce's consideration:

- Box Hill Institute of TAFE in conjunction with the Fifteen Foundation delivers a pre-apprenticeship program through Fifteen Melbourne. The two year program targets disadvantaged and often troubled youths. The program has achieved 75% employment outcomes for young people considered at-risk or needing an alternative method of entry into full-time work. The program is resource intensive and provides a range of personal development activities together with employment and study at Box Hill Institute of TAFE.



- Swinburne University of Technology offers a three year program for youth at-risk firstly undertaking the Certificate in Engagement, followed by VCAL with pre-apprenticeship attached. Managed individual pathways is a feature of the program design.
- Chisholm Institute of TAFE TEC offers an individualised approach to the learners, a dedicated Youth Worker and myChisholm online support. Much of the training takes place within the TEC's simulated work sites or laboratories, with high connectivity to the local community and enterprises.
- William Angliss Institute is partnering with Mission Australia, Aboriginal Health Service and Victoria Government in the recently launched 'Charcoal Lane' initiative for indigenous apprentices.

Successful programs such as these are resource intensive and outcomes take time to achieve. There is no quick fix.

Communication Strategies

The Discussion Paper (page 9) proposes action areas. While broadly supporting the information dissemination and communication strategies proposed, there were mixed responses to the likely success of a common portal or entry point for those seeking an apprenticeship and those employers seeking apprentices. A common portal or entry point may be of some use in providing general information, best practice initiatives and links to states'/territories' information. States, territories and the Australian Government need to communicate consistently, and provide clear leadership and direction to employers and employees. As an information hub a common portal may be useful.

VTA suggests the communication strategy on the critical importance of developing Australia's skills base for the future would be enhanced if schools were explicitly included in the range of supporters as schools are influential and play a vital role in shaping career planning.

The enterprise strategy provides an opportunity to encourage enterprises to take on retrenched apprentices and to transfer existing employees into higher level/high skilled apprenticeship areas.

RETAINING APPRENTICES

Much of the discussion above highlighting initiatives successfully contributing to increasing completions can also contribute to retaining apprentices through the downturn. VTA notes that the Australian Apprentices Taskforce is looking in the first instance for actions to immediately support at-risk apprentices to retain their employment and complete their qualifications.

VTA supports the efforts of the Commonwealth Apprenticeship Wage Top-up, and Commencement, Recommencement and Completion incentives, and Group Training Australia Targeted initiatives. The Victorian Government is also to be commended for apprentice retention programs and completion bonuses. The Taskforce could explore the benefits of extending the incentive scheme to include a payment to employers who retain apprenticeships for a period, say twelve months, after completion of the apprenticeship.

Key to ensuring the success of these initiatives is to maximise the ease for employers to participate and to allow some relaxation of 'rules' surrounding some



existing programs for the immediate future. For example, where apprentices have completed off-the-job training requirements (typically Certificate III), employers should still be able to attract the re-commencement incentive if they take on an out-of-trade apprentice needing to complete on-the-job requirements.

TAFE providers consistently advise that the highest apprentice drop-out occurs in the early years of the apprenticeship and that once the apprentice has finished the first two thirds of the competencies, completion of the apprenticeship is more likely. Victorian TAFE providers and industry are creating innovative models of on-the-job and off-the-job training in workplaces including online/e-learning. VTA recommends that the Australian Apprentices Taskforce focus initiatives on employers with apprentices in the early stages of the apprenticeship. This may include:

- tax incentives for a limited period of time until the economy shows clear signs of sustained recovery,
- investment bonuses to employers to encourage ongoing employment and engagement of out-of-trade apprentices.
- increased flexibility in employment arrangements around part-time arrangements for existing apprentices and multiple entry and exit points.

Many respondents to VTA emphasised the importance of support to both employers and apprentices through mentoring programs.

OUT-OF-TRADE APPRENTICES

Out-of-trade apprentices and trainees need support to continue to develop vocational and educational skills and to motivate them to seek opportunities and focus on the opportunities that may arise from the economic recovery. Occupational skills cannot be allowed to deteriorate and the emotional well-being of the out-of-trade apprentice/trainee must also be considered. TAFE providers have welcomed the initiatives to allow out-of-trade apprentices to continue to study full-time to complete a qualification. During this time the out-of-trade apprentice needs to access government benefits such as New Start.

Other initiatives could include:

- Funded opportunities directly to the apprentice/trainee and the RTO to allow the apprentice/trainee to commence study in a complementary course. Such as business management, that will assist employment prospects once industry revives and apprentices complete qualifications.
- A national register supporting online interaction by potential employers, prospective or out-of-work apprentices linked to Employment Service Providers and Centrelink. Effectively a one stop e-location that makes it easy for rapid communication to occur.
- Promotion of an Out-of-Trade list through trade-based magazines.
- Industry associations (eg HIA, Restaurant and Caterers' Association) to promote out-of-trade apprentices to their members.
- Recognition of relevant casual/seasonal work as contributing towards apprenticeship/traineeship achieved competencies.
- Australian Apprenticeship Centres and Apprentice Field Officers (Victoria) pro-actively seeking placements for Out-of-Trade apprentices/trainees.
- Out-of-Trade or at-risk apprentices access to the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS) and build entrepreneurship. Where retrenchment occurs for more experienced apprentices, the unemployed apprentice could build new business skills (management/green skills) and receive mentoring support and a NEIS allowance for one year while establishing a small business.



- Establishment of a register of community projects as simulated work experiences for RTOs training Out-of-Trade apprentices/trainees.
- Well being programs for Out-of-Trade apprentices/trainees.
- Create work environments simulating the on-the-job experiences and dovetail with vocational training leading towards an approved apprenticeship/traineeship qualification. The Australian Apprentices Taskforce is referred to the RMIT Skills Enhancement Program, a partnership between industry, TAFE, peak associations and industrial bodies in the electrical industry. Currently unemployed apprentices are completing an intensive program of skills development in a framework that builds self-confidence, resilience and focuses on the economic upturn and growth in jobs.

CONCLUSION

VTA reaffirms support for recent endeavours to maximise commencements, increase completions and retain apprentices through the current economic downturn. Poor apprenticeship/traineeship completions has been on the VET agenda for some time but the current economic circumstances have brought the matters to the forefront. VTA hopes that this immediate activity and cross-jurisdictional commitment to improvement will be sustained.

The above commentary highlights examples of good practices among Victorian TAFE providers that may be emulated in other jurisdictions. We have also proposed other initiatives requiring changes to the administration of Australian apprenticeships and their intersection with the VET sector.

Any reforms must be considered in the context of the outcomes of other current initiatives. Appendixes 1-9 of the Discussion Paper reveal the plethora of programs offered by the states and territories. VTA hopes the Australian Apprentices Taskforce will be able to develop a national framework for apprenticeships/traineeships and publish good practice examples.

VTA looks forward to further consultations on strategies to engage and retain Australian Apprentices now and for the longer term.

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Chris Coates (William Angliss Institute of TAFE)
Stuart Cooper (Central Gippsland Institute of TAFE)
Trudy Cunningham (University of Ballarat)
Carolyn Curnow (Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE)
Terry Dzufer (Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE)
Malcolm Macpherson (Chisholm Institute)
Phillip Murphy (Kangan Batman Institute of TAFE)
Franklin O'Carroll (RMIT University)
Sharon Rice (Swinburne University of Technology)
Nita Schultz (Victorian TAFE Association)
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