

Dear stakeholder

Re: Indigenous Client and Student Voice Consultations

You are invited to provide feedback to the attached consultation paper.

The paper has been developed by the Indigenous Sub-Group of the Client and Student Voice Action Group, which was established to develop a model for future Indigenous advisory mechanisms in the new National Vocational and Technical Education System.

The national training system has undergone significant change since July 2005 following the transfer of responsibilities and functions of the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) to the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST).

These changes have included the establishment of a new Ministerial Council, new legislation, new multilateral and bilateral agreements and advisory arrangements reflecting a commitment by the Australian government to an industry led vocational education and training system for the future.

The needs of Indigenous people and their communities must be met in appropriate ways by these new arrangements and build on the work initiated during the implementation of Australia's National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy for vocational education and training 2000-2005, Partners in a Learning Culture.

The paper includes a model proposed by the former Australian Indigenous Training Advisory Council (AITAC) as a discussion starter followed by a series of questions for response. You are asked to consider this and other models in the preparation of your feedback and respond to all or some of the questions which follow. You are also invited to make any other comments you feel are appropriate to this issue.

I understand that the timelines are extreme but there is urgency for this work to be done to enable the Action Group to present its proposed model to Ministerial Council via the National Senior Officials Committee by June 30 this year. I am sure you will appreciate our concern to get an advisory arrangement in place sooner rather than later and that the advisory arrangement proceeds with the functions and responsibilities it is charged with. .

The consultation will take two forms.

This is the first process with the paper based consultations - closing date for submissions is COB Friday 17th February.. The information gathered through these responses will be collated, analysed and used as a basis for further discussion during targeted face to face consultation forums in 5 locations across the country (NT/WA/SA/NSW/FNQLd) in early March.

Whilst I acknowledge some momentum has been lost since last year I urge that organisations, agencies, governing councils, public and private registered training organizations, communities and individuals engage with this process actively and in an inclusive manner.

Where appropriate I ask that students, elders and boards of management or existing Indigenous advisory committees are included in the development of your responses to ensure that their voices are captured in the feedback and reflected in the proposed model for future advisory arrangements.

Indigenous students and clients must have a voice to ensure that the national training system is more responsive to our needs and continues to provide access to and outcomes from training regardless of our location and circumstances.

Your involvement in this consultation is the beginning of a new way forward and I welcome your participation.

Bill Wilson
Convenor
Indigenous sub-group
Client and Student Voice Action Group