

## **MEDIA RELEASE - 9 August 2013**

### **Greens call for funding overhaul to restore vibrant and sustainable TAFE**

Greens deputy leader Adam Bandt and Greens higher education spokesperson Lee Rhiannon today announced a rescue package of \$1.2 billion to revitalise TAFE, and called on the federal government to overhaul the current VET funding arrangements that have directed billions of dollars to private training providers ahead of TAFEs.

Speaking at RMIT TAFE in Melbourne Greens Deputy Leader and Federal Member for Melbourne Adam Bandt said: "The Greens have always been proud defenders of a strong TAFE system as a strategic public asset to meet Australia's future skills training needs.

"The federal government has forced TAFE to compete with private providers for public funding, resulting in campus closures, course cuts, rising fees and job losses.

"Our rescue package will inject \$400 million per year for TAFE, starting from 1 July 2014 over the forward estimates.

"The old parties must commit to overhaul the VET funding system to guarantee secure funding for a strong public TAFE system", said Mr Bandt.

Senator Lee Rhiannon said: "Competitive tendering of VET has attracted private for-profit companies that have failed to deliver the skilled workforce we need in national skills shortage areas.

"The Greens rescue package will help rebuild a well funded publicly owned TAFE system.

"In Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales there has been an alarming trend towards commercialisation of VET and with

that comes less accountability, reduced staff numbers and course quality.

"In 2011 1.3 million of the 1.9 million students studying vocational education were enrolled in a TAFE institution. TAFE is the preferred option for vocational study for many students who either don't want to study at university or want to supplement their high school or university education.

"For over 100 years TAFE has been the leading national provider of vocational education and training (VET) courses.

"We are calling on the federal government to take leadership and commit to increasing federal budget spending on TAFE and ensure that TAFE is the preferred provider of VET courses", said Senator Rhiannon.

The policy costed by the Parliamentary Budget Office would be funded by the \$42.7 billion of new revenue savings announced by the Greens on July 24, including fixing the mining tax, placing a levy on the big banks, ending tax breaks to fossil fuel companies and introducing a millionaires tax.

<http://greensmps.org.au/prioritytafe>

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