

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry Portfolio
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2014-15
23 October 2014

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY

TOPIC: Training Needs of Industry

REFERENCE: Written Question - Senator Lee Rhiannon

QUESTION No.: SI -88

1. With regard to “servicing the training needs of industry”, “high level training and workforce development for industries”:
 - a. Is it true that face-to-face teaching delivery hours at several Institutes including Illawarra and Riverina have been cut by up to 33% in industry-critical courses including electrical trades?
 - b. What risk analysis has been undertaken in relation to consumer, workplace and student safety and quality of delivery?
2. Classes in engineering, automotive manufacturing programs have been cut back at South Western Sydney Institute.
 - a. What is the response to Institute of Automotive Engineers chief executive Peter Blanchard’s statement that TAFE training was "absolutely essential" and the cuts to engineering courses would have a negative impact on industry?
 - b. Does the National Skills Reform agreement demand local industry is consulted with before programs are cut as a consequence of funding changes flowing from the Agreement? If not, why not?
 - c. What consultation AND risk analysis has been done by the government in relation to engineering and automotive industries prior to opening funding contestability?
3. What is the government’s response to concerns that boat building and shipwrighting course might not be viable under Smart and Skilled, and given that Northern Sydney Institute runs the last remaining such TAFE course in NSW?
4. May I have a list of the courses on the NSW Skills List and associated TAFE Faculties that have suffered funding cuts?
5. Why have student fees in fine arts drastically increased, when the government’s own Creative Industries Taskforce has argued against the increases?
6. What is the government’s response to the concern that the HSC is now only offered in Sydney and Wollongong TAFE campuses?
7. What is the response to the situation where deaf students at the Illawarra Institute have been forced to withdraw from courses after funding support for assistance was dropped under the new student funding support regime?
8. Is the government aware that students with an intellectual disability at Northern Sydney Institute were forced to pay \$825 for courses that were previously free? What influence on this situation has the National Skills Reform Agreement been responsible for? Does this concern the government?

ANSWERS

1.
 - a. States and territories are responsible for the operation of training systems within their jurisdictions.
 - b. The Australian Government has not undertaken a risk analysis of this matter.
2.
 - a. The Australian Government is committed to ensuring industry has the skilled workforce and operating environment it needs to boost the nation's productivity and increase its international competitiveness. States and territories are responsible for the operation of training systems within their jurisdictions
 - b. The National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform does not require industry consultation of this nature.
 - c. The Australian Government considers that the Australian economy will benefit from a more competitive and flexible training market where employers and students choose a training course and provider which best suits their needs.
3. States and territories are responsible for the operation of training systems within their jurisdictions, including student eligibility and access to public subsidies, and the setting of strategic priorities for the delivery of courses and qualifications. Smart and Skilled is a New South Wales government initiative.
4. The Australian Government does not collect this information.
5. States and territories are responsible for the operation of training systems within their jurisdictions.
6. States and territories are responsible for the operation of training systems within their jurisdictions.
7. States and territories are responsible for the operation of training systems within their jurisdictions.
8. The Australian Government recognises that, as states and territories transition to a more competitive training market, there may be adjustments to funding arrangements. This is a matter for state and territory governments.