

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry Portfolio
Additional Budget Estimates Hearing 2013-14
27 February 2014

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY

TOPIC: ICT Issues Faced by Regional TAFE Institutions

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard, 27 February 2014, page 81)

QUESTION No.: AI-31

Senator KIM CARR: I appreciate that. Can you tell me or perhaps take on notice what the department is doing in terms of dealing with the problems faced by regional TAFE institutes with poor ICT skills levels for staff. So it is not only the infrastructure question but also the staff question, the skills question. What is it doing to support regional TAFEs to improve those skills? Can you provide me with that?

Ms Beauchamp: We can take some of those issues on notice. But if I could just add that the infrastructure and the mechanics of how support for the TAFE, students and teachers is provided is a responsibility of the states and territories. Our focus is on outcomes in terms of access, quality and responsiveness. Of course, we have an interest, but in terms of primary responsibility and accountability I think it is the states and territories which have that.

ANSWER

Each state and territory government has responsibility for TAFE and teacher development.

The Government has funded initiatives to help build the capacity of VET practitioners. The Flexible Learning Advisory Group (FLAG) was funded to develop the e-learning expertise (rather than specific ICT skills), of VET practitioners. This included a number of leadership and professional development initiatives, including an e-learning support service and a series of online workshops to build VET sector capability.

The department funds the Innovation and Business Skills Australia (IBSA) Industry Skills Council to provide a unified industry voice on vocational education and training across six industries, including both the ICT and Telecommunications industry and the Training and Education Industry. As part of their role in the national training system IBSA is responsible for the competency standards and nationally recognised qualifications for teaching in the VET sector.

As part of this role, IBSA developed and released in 2012 the Vocational Graduate Certificate in Digital Education. This qualification is designed to provide the knowledge and skills teachers and trainers need in an education environment increasingly driven by information and communication technology. The qualification explores how digital media technology can streamline and enhance the teaching and learning experience, and deliver better outcomes. It has been designed to complement existing teaching and training qualifications and experience and is suitable and valuable for all individuals working in all areas of education and capability development, including regional TAFE teachers.