



Progress Report

2023 Federal Conference Motions

Distance Education Portfolio

Compiled March 2024

There were two Distance Education motions passed at the 2023 ICPA Federal Conference in Darwin, Northern Territory.

A conjoined motion presented by four branches, Western Australia State Council, Alice Springs Branch (NT), Far North Queensland Branch (QLD), Goldfields Eyre Branch (WA), Katherine Branch (NT), continues to highlight that the need for home tutor recognition and recompense is high on the agenda.

Post conference, a letter was written to the Hon Fiona Nash, Regional Education Commissioner seeking her support for the Distance Education Teaching Allowance (DETA), whose response explained that she had raised the issue of a DETA in her 2022 Annual Report and will continue to consider how best to assist with progressing this issue. Ms Nash continues to be supportive of DETA and we look forward to a meeting with her in March to discuss the issue further and potential opportunities to reframe the lobby.

The DETA lobby has been on the table for over 30 years, with extensive directions, actions and advocacy being undertaken over that time in an attempt to bring it to fruition. However thus far no traction has been made and discussions this year have revolved around how the topic can be reframed and presented in a potentially more progressive manner. ICPA (Aust), alongside the State Councils have had lengthy discussions regarding DETA over many years, and again at the most recent Joint Council meeting in February.

At this meeting Federal Council provided State Councils with an overview of the federal advocacy currently, primarily that feedback continues to be that it is a state and territory government issue. The risk however if state and territory governments are approached separately is that they might fund at different levels, and some may not fund at all. ICPA (Aust) has also requested on several occasions that the topic be added as an agenda item at an Education Ministers Meeting (EMM), which is a periodic meeting of all state, territory and federal education ministers.

Given the current financial climate, complexity and longevity around the DETA advocacy, it was agreed that the direction of the advocacy needs to be revisited, reconsidered and adjusted with some fresh methodology in order to have more impact and certainty in future, particularly regarding the distance education tutor role, terminology and details on what a DETA would actually look like. Federal Council has also taken the feedback from the Joint Council meeting to our public relations and strategic planning consultants, who we have also asked to advise on ways forward with the DETA advocacy. Federal Council is absolutely committed to resolving the DETA issue for home tutors all over Australia.

ICPA (Aust) has spent many years advocating for some form of allowance for distance education tutors and a variety of avenues have been investigated over this time. At the Federal Conference, a motion was also carried requesting that ICPA (Aust) investigates the existing precedence of the Centrelink Jobseeker payment which is available to single principal carer with exemption from mutual obligation requirements because they are a home or distance educator of child/ren in their care, and its possible application, adaption and or leverage for the creation of an applicable Distance Education Tutor Allowance for geographically isolated families. In the



first instance, Federal Council has written to the Minister for Social Services, the Hon Amanda Rishworth MP, regarding this recommendation. At the time of writing we have not yet received a response from the minister; however we have a meeting scheduled with her in April.

Portfolio Leader- Louise Martin

To view the full 2023 Federal Conference Motion Update Report click [here](#).