

TERTIARY, TRADE AND TRAINING PORTFOLIO CONFERENCE REPORT – June 2023

The Tertiary, Trade and Training portfolio encompasses a wide variety of policy areas concerning the future careers and the pathways for students living in Regional Queensland. The extensive nature of the courses, facilities, skills, and training in Queensland is rapidly expanding, and in many cases far surpasses that of other states. Throughout my travels I'm assured that while many young people from rural and remote areas face obstacles in accessing, undertaking, and completing various forms of Tertiary, Trade, and Training, they result in some of the most employable young people, highly sort after by employers. Their innate initiative and strong work ethic are generally the two praises sung.

Apprentices/Trainees

There were three motions presented at last year's conference, centring around the lack of support for apprentices, many of whom are required to relocate to pursue their chosen pathway or are disadvantaged due to the distances that they are required to travel in order to complete training modules. Some progress has been made in this area, but the issues are something that will remain on our agenda going forward. Throughout the year discussions have been had with DESBT, Bob Gee, AgForce, LGAQ, and ICPA had representation at several regional LGAQ Community Forums. DESBT was able to provide information around the establishment of a series of Regional Apprenticeship Offices for apprentices should they require extra support in the workplace. This was a welcome initiative and a positive step for rural apprentices and families. Several ICPA families have accessed these offices and the feedback to date has been positive, finding them of great assistance particularly given that they have local knowledge and contact. State Council would like to hear any feedback from families that have utilised this service. Additionally, the DESBT website is under review. DESBT has taken on board our member's concerns relating to a cumbersome and difficult space to navigate, and hopefully we will see some more developments there. After discussions around last year's motions, DESBT is also in the process of developing a "wallet" app for apprentices/trainees. This app will contain relevant apprenticeship/trainee information and aims to make accessing assistance more user friendly. It's hoped that the app will resonate with the apprenticeship/trainee age demographic.

Throughout the year, some very constructive partnerships were established during delegations and ICPA will continue to build on them. It was also reassuring to see several different pathways available to students, helping them upskill. The Governments \$200 million of funding through the Future Skills Fund targets "*disadvantaged cohorts, ensuring that they do not miss the opportunity to participate.*" We look forward to tracking the progress and opportunities for our rural students.

The Big Red Truck

The BRT has undergone its refurbishment as part of the \$2.6m "Local Schools, Local Jobs Program". It has been delivered to Longreach, is fully operational, and providing training opportunities for students as intended.

TAFE

Following on from TAFE's presentation at the 2022 conference we have had to opportunity to meet with TAFE representatives on several occasions throughout the year. Conversations reinforced the rapidly expanding VET space and the vast opportunities available to students. TAFE kindly generated a road map of all the possible educational pathways. It is an excellent resource to have and was distributed to members. The roadmap paints a very clear picture for those that haven't operated in the space before. With such an evolving educational space it is imperative that ICPA continues the strong partnership with stakeholders such as TAFE to ensure students are well supported.

Vet Submissions

Throughout the year two submissions into the Delivery of VET in Central Queensland and Northern Queensland and the delivery of VET in Regional, Rural and Remote Queensland were made. ICPA will endeavour to have council members attend the public hearings of the findings, at a date to be advised in the coming months.

Thank you to the branches that brought motions to last year's conference and to those members that reached out to State Council for support or guidance on TTT matters throughout the year. I'd also like to thank the various government departments and individuals that I have met with throughout the year. The best outcomes are achieved by working together towards betterment.

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