

## REGIONAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT STATEMENT

**AGENCY:** TAFE SA

### 1. TITLE

TAFE SA: Improving Access to Education

### 2. ISSUE

While recognised as a quality provider with strong links to industry and community, TAFE SA has identified opportunities to improve the way it delivers the specific courses and content required by local communities and industries around South Australia.

To achieve this outcome, TAFE SA has developed the *Improving Access to Education* strategy. This strategy aims to better align training delivery in a region with local industry and community demands through the development of regionally aligned training plans designed to guide activity in a particular part of the State.

*Improving Access to Education* is based on a strong foundation of consultation with local communities, industries, schools and other parties in each region. Using the engagement principles outlined in the State Government's *Better Together* policy, TAFE SA undertook state-wide consultation in Regional Development Australia (RDA) regions, metropolitan Adelaide and the APY Lands.

Results of this consultation confirmed that our proposed courses included in the Regional Training Plans largely met local community and industry needs in each region. Consultation also revealed opportunities for TAFE SA to introduce new courses tailored to local demand, introduce innovative delivery methods which provide students with greater flexibility, and increase our presence in regions by expanding the use of off-campus fit-for-purpose facilities.

What is offered in a particular region will be tailored to the needs of that local region. In some regions, TAFE SA has identified off-campus facilities which are more fit-for-purpose than current TAFE SA sites. In those cases, TAFE SA will cease delivering from its current site and continue to serve the area using shared industry or community facilities which are better aligned to specified training objectives.

It is intended that some of the savings realised through this process will be reinvested into new training equipment, including mobile classrooms and special-purpose training vehicles and into community site lease costs, which will enable TAFE SA to provide better educational and training outcomes to more students in more areas.

The model reflects proven delivery methods used by TAFE SA and other education providers around Australia. A mixture of online delivery (including facilitated online methodologies), mobile training and community site/workplace delivery will enable TAFE SA to offer and facilitate training where demand exists. TAFE SA will be more accessible, flexible and responsive to local needs.

### **3. REGION(S)**

The *Improving Access to Education* outcomes will affect all South Australian Government regions:

- Minor impact on Adelaide metropolitan (northern, southern, eastern and western)
- Minor impact on some areas of Greater Adelaide (Adelaide Hills, Barossa, Light and Lower North, and Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island)
- Minor impact on some regional areas (Eyre and Western, Far North, Limestone Coast, Murray and Mallee, and Yorke and Mid North) due to geographical location.

### **4. STAKEHOLDERS AFFECTED**

Changes to TAFE SA's delivery of education and training in regional South Australia may affect:

- Existing TAFE SA students
- Potential TAFE SA students
- General public / communities
- Local industry and businesses across South Australia
- Schools and other training providers
- Local government and Regional Development Boards
- TAFE SA staff.

### **5. STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED**

In late 2014 and early 2015, TAFE SA undertook initial, high-level consultation on aligning our course delivery profile to the current needs of students, industry and communities in regions across the State. This initial consultation led to the development of proposed Regional Training Plans aligned to the specific training needs of each region.

A second round of consultation was completed in each region during the second half of 2015, where regional stakeholders were asked to consider if the proposed Regional Training Plans met the key training priorities for their area. Stakeholders consulted in this phase included:

- Existing TAFE SA students
- Potential TAFE SA students
- General public / communities
- Local industry and businesses across South Australia
- Schools and other training providers
- Local government and Regional Development Boards
- TAFE SA staff.

## 6. CONSULTATION

In October 2015, formal consultation was drawn to a close across South Australia with communities, industry and other key stakeholders. Further details are available on the TAFE SA website at <https://www.tafesa.edu.au/about-tafesa/access>

This process involved:

- Targeted meetings with key stakeholders including industry partners, major employers, local government, school sectors, Regional Development Australia and TAFE SA staff
- Direct contact with key partners
- Community and industry forums
- Region-specific and state-wide surveys.

Participants were asked to:

- Respond to TAFE SA's vision for the future of vocational education and training delivery in a region, as outlined in the Regional Training Plans
- Identify current and emerging demand for skills and training in a region
- State their preferred course delivery method
- Identify potential locations for training and short courses to capitalise on a region's existing, fit-for-purpose facilities.

## 7. SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND ANALYSIS

### 7.1. ECONOMIC FACTORS

Student access to TAFE SA courses is limited by the condition and location of existing TAFE SA sites and the mode of course delivery.

Under the proposed model, more training will be delivered through:

- Lecturers travelling to community locations with mobile classroom kits
- Specialised vehicles custom-fitted with educational equipment
- The use of innovative on-line methodologies and mobile devices that capitalise on digital and information technology
- Providing education and training in community sites such as schools, sporting clubs and libraries; and industry sites such as businesses and hospitals.

These measures are expected to increase overall productivity and deliver improved educational outcomes.

The cost of acquiring and implementing new equipment and equipping sites for use will be offset in some locations where TAFE SA sites will no longer be used for delivering education and training.

## **7.2. SOCIAL FACTORS**

TAFE SA has consulted deeply and broadly to determine outcomes to support each region by developing and delivering education and training to foster skills development, job readiness and business productivity and growth.

The outcomes for a region aim to provide students with more access to training that will diversify opportunities for further study and employment. Where possible and demand exists, it is intended that local instructors may be sourced to assist in tailored delivery.

In addition, the outcomes will support TAFE SA in establishing short courses to suit local communities and their interests, contributing to social development and inclusiveness.

## **7.3. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS**

There will be a minor positive environmental impact. By exiting underutilised and ageing sites and opting for delivery through online, mobile training or in other sites owned by third parties, we are likely to reduce our energy requirements.

## **7.4 EQUITY FACTORS**

The ability to provide training to a wider geographic area will improve equity and access to vocational education. The consultation process has ensured people in communities across the State have had the opportunity to provide input that will inform TAFE SA strategy and help ensure the social benefits of subsequent decision-making.

TAFE SA is committed to ongoing engagement with the community, and members of the public can contact us through local representatives or via email [improvingaccess@tafesa.edu.au](mailto:improvingaccess@tafesa.edu.au) if they wish to provide any further feedback.

## **8. SOLUTIONS**

TAFE SA is continuing to analyse all consultation feedback as part of our delivery planning process for 2016-17 and is devising a range of options that will be introduced according to the specific requirements of a community or region.

The proposed measures fall within three main categories:

### *Tailored training*

- More leisure short courses
- Courses and training tailored to local industry needs and emerging demand
- Courses to support local businesses to succeed and expand
- Clearer training and educational pathways from secondary school to higher education.

### *Innovative delivery*

- Lecturers travelling to community locations with mobile classroom kits
- Specialised vehicles custom-fitted with educational equipment
- Innovative on-line methodologies and mobile devices that capitalise on digital and information technology.

### *Fit-for-purpose facilities*

- Training and short courses provided in sites appropriate to their intent, such as school gyms, wineries, hospitals and sporting clubs.

Measures have already commenced being implemented according to community demand from Semester 1 2016.

## **9. COORDINATION**

Extensive consultation has been undertaken to inform the way TAFE SA delivers the specific courses and content required by local communities and industries around South Australia.

TAFE SA will regularly engage with our industry partners and stakeholders as part of 'business as usual' practices.

Two new Metropolitan Regional Manager positions (North-West and South-East) have been created, and Regional Business Development Officer roles are also being introduced in some areas to support TAFE SA's ongoing liaison with community and business stakeholders to ensure our training and delivery continues to meet local demand.

## **10. LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

TAFE SA will continue to engage with all local government as well as Regional Development Australia bodies as required.

## **11. PREFERRED OPTION**

TAFE SA has undergone significant consultation to identify the training needs of South Australia's regions, and will implement measures to ensure these needs are addressed for maximum community benefit.

As a result of the consultation and the implementation of these measures, TAFE SA expects to be able to provide training and education to South Australia's regions that is:

- Tailored to local needs in its intent and content
- Delivered using innovative technology, tools and educational methods to maximise effectiveness and suit students' needs

- Conducted in fit-for-purpose facilities which communities have identified as being appropriate for the courses and programs required to meet their local needs.

In improving its delivery of training in South Australia's regions, TAFE SA will be best-placed to contribute to jobs, business and industry productivity, and the economic and social development of communities across the State.

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