

## 4.3.6 MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING

### OVERVIEW

Agency	Forecast 1997-98	Estimate 1998-99	Variation
	\$m	\$m	%
<b>Department for Education and Training</b>			
Total Expenses .....	6,119.7	6,442.1	5.3
Asset Acquisitions .....	235.5	255.7	8.6
<b>Office of the Board of Studies</b>			
Total Expenses .....	68.4	73.0	6.7
Asset Acquisitions .....	2.3	1.9	(-) 17.4
<b>New South Wales Adult Migrant English Service</b>			
Total Expenses .....	44.3	35.0	(-) 21.0
Asset Acquisitions .....	0.1	...	...
<b>Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board</b>			
Total Expenses .....	1.1	1.0	(-) 9.1
Asset Acquisitions .....	...	...	...
<b>Total, Minister for Education and Training</b>			
Total Expenses .....	6,233.5	6,551.2	5.1
Asset Acquisitions .....	237.8	257.6	8.3

### DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Department of Education and Training (DET) was established on 3 December 1997 by the merger of the former Departments of School Education, Training and Education Co-ordination and TAFE NSW. The role of the new agency is to ensure greater integration and co-ordination in the delivery of education and training services across the State. The merger also combined three central office administrations into one, to provide economies of scale and reduce duplication.

Total expenses for the Department of Education and Training in 1998-99 are estimated at \$6,442 million, an increase of \$322 million or 5.3 per cent on 1997-98.

The school education related activities of the Department largely relate to the provision of primary and secondary education in Government schools. The Department currently provides educational services to over 771,000 students in over 2,200 schools. Assistance to non Government schools is also provided through the Department.

TAFE NSW, which will retain its identity as the largest supplier of workforce training in Australia, contributes to the economic development of New South Wales through the creation of a better skilled and educated workforce. TAFE's programs are developed and delivered in a range of ways to meet the training needs of key industries, enterprises, community organisations and individuals.

The Department also has responsibility for the formulation and co-ordination of education and training policy and for planning and resource allocation across the State-funded education sectors of schools, TAFE and vocational education and training.

## **SCHOOL EDUCATION SERVICES**

The Department has a legislative responsibility to provide education services to public school students of New South Wales. This encompasses both primary and secondary education services.

### **Expenditure Trends and Recent Developments**

Total expenses by the Department on school education related services have continued to increase and in 1998-99 will reach some \$5,022 million, an increase of some \$279 million or 5.9 per cent on 1997-98 levels. Expenses are directed to meeting the needs of -

- **Core Education Services**, reflecting the general funding requirements of Government schools in the areas of teaching and administrative staff and school operating expenses;
- **Equity and Strategic Education Services**, where equity services provide a supplement to core services and address the needs of a range of identified groups, including students from an Aboriginal background, non-English speaking backgrounds and students disadvantaged by socio-economic factors. Strategic services represent areas of emphasis in the Department's strategic plan, including programs targeting literacy, student welfare, computer technology and community languages; and
- **Non Government School Services**, reflecting financial support to non Government schools.

### **Core Education Services**

Total current expenses on core school education programs will be \$3,715 million in 1998-99, an increase of \$179 million on 1997-98.

The Department operates 75 pre-school centres throughout New South Wales that offer 2,185 full-time places. Actual enrolments number some 3,900 children (includes full-time and part-time students). Eight of these pre-schools are located in Aboriginal communities. A further 2 pre-school centres will open in the second half of 1998 including one Aboriginal pre-school centre.

The number of Government primary school students is remaining relatively constant with 448,029 enrolments in 1997 and an estimated 447,858 in 1998. A comprehensive literacy strategy is being implemented in 1998 for primary students. This strategy focuses particularly on the teaching of reading, supported by intervention where students are experiencing difficulty. Careful monitoring of students' literacy needs as they move from primary to secondary schools assists in the on-going development of the program. Numeracy, physical fitness and citizenship are also receiving increased emphasis in primary schools in 1998.

The number of Government secondary school students has increased from 304,742 in 1997 to an estimated 306,360 in 1998. The Department of Education and Training provides Government secondary school students with a full range of courses in their senior years of schooling. The Department also aims to raise the achievement of each student to maximise the students' employment, training and further education opportunities. This includes individual programs developed across all subject areas to improve literacy standards for those students with the lowest level English Literacy and Language Assessment (ELLA) test results. Programs have also been developed to target the literacy needs of non-English speaking background and indigenous students.

### **Equity and Strategic Government School Education Services**

Total current expenses on equity and strategic programs will be almost \$901 million in 1998-99, an increase of \$75 million on 1997-98. These programs include -

- special education programs;
- rural education programs;
- programs for socio economically disadvantaged students;
- Aboriginal education programs;
- programs for students of non English speaking backgrounds; and
- other equity and strategic programs.

#### **• Special Education Programs**

The number of students receiving special education support continues to increase. Over 6,000 students with disabilities receive support in regular classes through special education services. An amount of \$23 million will be provided in 1998-99 for integration support. In addition, special education services are provided through support classes in regular schools and in special schools. Special Education Consultants and Learning Difficulties Coordinators in district offices support schools in meeting the needs of students with disabilities or learning difficulties. Expenses on special education will total \$399 million in 1998-99.

#### **• Aboriginal Education Programs**

Current funding for Aboriginal Education programs has increased significantly in recent years in recognition of the special needs of Aboriginal students. A high proportion of this additional funding has been allocated to the employment of Aboriginal people to work in schools. A major training and development program to support the NSW Aboriginal Education Policy released in 1996 will be conducted in up to 1,200 schools during 1998-99. Expenses for Aboriginal Education Programs will total \$26 million in 1998-99.

- **Other Equity Programs**

The Government is maintaining its commitment to improving, in the early years of schooling, the literacy outcomes of students from low socio-economic status communities, non English speaking backgrounds and educationally disadvantaged students. The NSW Disadvantaged Schools Program, English as a Second Language General Program and the NSW Early Literacy Program will be funded at the same level as in previous years.

Total expenses on programs for socio-economically disadvantaged students will be \$55 million in 1998-99 and total expenses on programs for students of non-English speaking backgrounds will be \$86.2 million in 1998-99.

### **Non Government School Services**

Non Government School Services reflect financial support to non Government schools. Total current expenses on these programs will be \$407 million in 1998-99, an increase of \$25 million on 1997-98.

Funding is mainly in the form of student per capita grants and secondary textbook allowances together with the interest subsidy scheme for capital projects. Schools must be registered in terms of the Education Act 1990 to be eligible for Government assistance. Funding under the Government's Interest Subsidy Scheme will amount to \$32.9 million in 1998-99. This funding takes into account refinements to the scheme which were introduced by the Government in 1997-98.

## **Strategic Directions**

### **Agenda 1998**

The Department's strategies for school education services are detailed each year in a corporate planning document to guide all schools and staff in improving service delivery and the educational outcomes of students. The document, Agenda 1998, describes the five priorities for 1998, the major strategic initiatives for the year under each priority and how the success of the initiatives will be evaluated. The priorities for 1998 are -

- getting the foundation right;
- responsible and caring citizens;
- quality teachers and the best technology;
- well informed and involved parents; and
- a fair go for all.

Significant trends in strategic plan programs that underpin Agenda 1998 are -

- *Basic Skills Testing* - participation in the Basic Skills Testing program (in Years 3 and 5) has continued to grow. Some 115,656 Government school students and 22,233 non Government school students were tested in 1997. New South Wales also conducted this program for 24,474 students in South Australia.
- *Literacy Programs* - comprehensive literacy strategies to ensure that students master literacy feature -
  - assessment of student literacy levels against agreed national standards;
  - targeted intervention strategies such as Reading Recovery, Flying Start and First Steps for students not achieving appropriate standards;
  - training and development of teachers to ensure that balanced and structured classroom literacy programs are in place;
  - high quality curricula to support classroom programs;
  - programs to assist parents to take an active involvement in supporting their children's literacy needs; and
  - development of materials for schools servicing Aboriginal communities and non English speaking background students.

Over \$65 million will be spent on literacy initiatives in 1998-99.

- *Vocational Education in Schools* – the establishment of a single integrated organisation enables schools and TAFE Institutes and Colleges to more readily focus on arrangements for transition from school to further education, training and work. This is leading to a greater emphasis on vocational education in schools.
- *Student Welfare* – this incorporates home school liaison, additional new specialist schools to support students with behavioural problems, programs to combat violence, targeted child protection activities and other student welfare activities including a peer mediation program.
- *Gifted and Talented Students* – at present there are 19 selective high schools, an increase of 12 since 1988, and 4 agricultural high schools. About 5 per cent of Year 6 students are accepted into selective high schools and students continue to achieve excellent results. The number of selective opportunity 'C' classes for gifted and talented students in Years 5 and 6 in Government primary schools has increased from 83 in 1995 to 104 in 1998.
- *Technology Programs* - strategies in 1998-99 will focus on providing the best technology and training to support the effective use of computers for teaching and learning.

- *HSC Reforms* - in August 1997 the Government released a White Paper, *Securing Their Future*, which outlined reforms for the Higher School Certificate. The reforms include the evaluation and redevelopment of curricula in various subjects, enhanced reporting of student results focussing on a standards-based assessment, strengthening the vocational education component of school curricula and revised university admission procedures. The Department will liaise closely with the Office of the Board of Studies on implementation of the reforms to meet the introduction of the new School Certificate and Higher School Certificate examinations.

The Government has committed an additional \$25.1 million over four years to fund a range of initiatives related to the reforms, including staff development, curriculum materials and support and advice to parents, students and teachers on the changes being implemented.

- *Languages Other Than English Programs* - in the area of language studies, programs are being targeted at increasing the number of students who undertake continuous and sequenced learning of a language for between 500 and 1,000 hours during their school career. A sponsorship program for senior secondary students to undertake language study within the country of their selected language is playing a key role in working towards this goal. This enhanced focus on languages in high schools is providing greater opportunities for students to undertake intensive study of languages.

The Government is providing additional funding to support Asian language programs and for the training of primary teachers to extend languages provision. Initiatives in Asian languages are consistent with the direction of the National Asian Language Strategy.

- *Drug and Alcohol Education Programs* – these programs target all young people in schools including those at risk and those with special needs.

## **1998-99 Budget**

### **Total Expenses**

The Government is committed to fostering a school environment that promotes excellence in teaching and learning and encourages every child to participate in a range of school activities. To take full advantage of school, children need to be properly equipped with clothes, shoes, books and other basic items. The Government is concerned that the rising cost of these basic items is denying some children the opportunity to participate fully in school.

From the commencement of the 1998 school year, every child attending school in New South Wales was eligible for a Back-to-School Allowance of \$50 per year. The allowance helps parents and guardians meet the costs of getting their children back to school at the start of the year. An amount of \$55 million was provided for the allowance in 1998. Actual expenditure is estimated at \$54 million plus a further \$4 million in administrative costs. An amount of \$55 million will again be available for the allowance in 1999.

Provision has also been made for a 6 per cent salary increase for teachers, to fully implement the salary increase awarded under the Crown Employees (Teachers and Related Employees) Salaries and Conditions Award. The award provided for an increase of 16 per cent payable in four instalments with the final instalment to be paid on 1 January 1999. The award incorporates 2 per cent funding from productivity offsets.

In 1995-96 the Government announced a wide ranging and comprehensive educational agenda supported by a four year plan of initiatives to be implemented during its first term of office. The following initiatives are being achieved in accordance with the Government's plan.

- **Computers and Technology**

Major achievements continue to be made under the Government's Technology in Schools program that commenced in 1995. The Government will fully meet its commitment to provide an additional 90,000 computers to schools, including a final roll-out of 22,000 units from the start of the 1999 school year.

Over \$30 million will be provided to Government schools over the three years commencing 1997-98, to boost the level and effectiveness of computer education. Schools may use the additional funds to employ computer coordinators, enter into a contract with a service provider to ensure the availability of technology support or purchase additional computer related resources.

An amount of over \$68 million will be available in 1998-99 to continue the following initiatives -

- the delivery of further significant numbers of computers to schools which will fully meet the Government's commitment to this initiative;
- enhancement of the Department's website - students and staff access the Internet on average a half a million times per school day. There are some 1 million 'hits' on the Department's website each month and the presentation of information will be enhanced for users;
- additional curriculum support materials for schools;
- training of a further 3,800 teachers in the use of technology in the classroom, bringing the total number of teachers trained to more than 15,000; and
- the NSW HSC On-Line site which is a joint project between DET, Office of the Board of Studies and Charles Sturt University. The site houses original material and links to other quality sites on the Internet for teachers and students working towards the Higher School Certificate. Currently, there are 18 subjects on line which cover all key learning areas and 8 additional subjects are being developed. During the 3 months leading up to the 1997 HSC, there were over 1 million 'hits' on the site.

- **School Based Funding and Grants to Schools**

Grants to schools under global funding arrangements will total \$233.3 million in 1998-99, an increase of 3.4 per cent on 1997-98. Global funding to schools commenced in 1988-89 and is being refined in line with the Government's Fairer School Funding policy.

A Fairer Schools Funding Reference Group advises on all aspects of school global funding and oversees the recommendations of the Fairer Schools Funding Review released in October 1996. The Group is comprised of Departmental, Principals Councils and Parent and Teachers Federation representatives.

- **Additional Teachers**

In the four Budgets since coming to Office, the Government will have provided an additional 2,205 teaching positions, bringing the State's teaching workforce from 52,572 to 54,777 in 1998-99.

As part of the overall increase, the Government is meeting its commitment to provide an additional 1,405 specialist teaching positions with additional funding in this Budget and the 1999-2000 forward estimates.

These positions comprise -

- *Literacy Teachers (Reading Recovery)* - 400 literacy teachers to provide release for teachers to train in reading recovery and to implement the program. Of these, 300 teaching positions were funded during the three years 1995-96 to 1997-98 and a further 100 will be funded in 1998-99;
- *Community Languages* - 24 community languages are taught in 172 primary schools across the State. The Government considers community languages a priority area. The allocation for 1998-99 provides for a further 18 teaching positions bringing to 96 the number of additional positions provided for community languages over the four year period;
- *Higher School Certificate* - 20 positions have been established to enable the commencement of HSC instruction at the beginning of Term 4 for Year 11 pupils and 7 positions have been created for HSC coaching;  
  
Nineteen teaching positions have been allocated to provide a telephone advice service for HSC students by the Board of Studies;
- *Technology Teachers* - The equivalent of an extra 833 teaching positions are being created to support the introduction of technology in the classroom; and
- *Support Teachers for Small Schools* - Country schools are receiving the benefit of a number of Government initiatives. The equivalent of an extra 30 teaching positions has been provided for teacher professional development, curriculum development, educational enhancement plans, special school projects and administrative relief.

An additional 82 Aboriginal Education Assistant positions will be established in 1998-99 from funding provided to New South Wales by the Commonwealth under its Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Program. The additional funding is the result of the Commonwealth's revised per capita distribution. This initiative recognises that one of the most powerful and positive influences on schools, on Aboriginal students and their communities is the presence of Aboriginal people working effectively with teachers in classrooms and liaising with Aboriginal parents.

- **Drug and Alcohol Education Program**

The Government is committed to quality drug education for all young people in schools, including those with special needs. It recognises that young people may experience great risk of harm from the abuse of alcohol, tobacco, analgesics and illegal drugs such as cannabis. As a result, it is important for primary prevention programs to be available to all students in New South Wales to assist students to understand the possible risks of drug use.

The Government is providing a further \$1.1 million in 1998-99 as part of a total program of \$5.3 million for an enhanced drug and alcohol strategy involving teacher training, quality resources, curriculum support and policy advice. Assistance will be provided to special groups such as Aboriginal students and communities, and students at increased risk of harmful drug use.

### **Asset Acquisitions**

- **Schools**

The school education component of the Department's asset acquisition program provides for the construction of new and replacement schools and upgrading and additions to existing facilities. The cost of sites for new schools, furniture and equipment and major computer projects are also met from the capital allocation.

The asset acquisition program of \$129.5 million for 1998-99 will permit the commencement of 29 new building projects including new schools at Homebush Bay (Olympic Village), Lake Munmorah, Wadalba, Quakers Hill East, Callala Bay and Currans Hill. Funding is also provided for Stage 2 completion of Camden High School. Thirteen schools will benefit from the provision of upgraded facilities. Two new computer projects will commence which are designed to enhance computer information facilities in schools across the State.

Work will continue on 25 projects commenced in previous years including new schools at Blue Haven, Camden Haven, Camden, Carnes Hill and Evans Head as well as replacement schools at Bodalla, Castle Hill, Narara, Port Kembla, Sandon and Unanderra.

An amount of \$7 million will be expended on a wide range of minor capital works projects across the State as well as \$5 million to be spent on continuing a program for the provision of air conditioning in schools and demountables. An amount of \$21.5 million will be spent during the year on other programs including new furniture for schools (\$5 million), health and safety improvements (\$4.8 million), facilities for integration of students with disabilities (\$3.5 million), joint funded projects (\$1.6 million) and other various small capital projects (\$6.6 million).

- **Sydney Conservatorium of Music**

In August 1996, the Premier requested a full scale management and technical assessment of the housing needs of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and the Conservatorium High School.

Some \$69 million (\$40 million in 1998-99) has been allocated to the Department over the three year period ending 1999-2000, to undertake the project which will consolidate all Conservatorium facilities onto one site.

## **TAFE AND RELATED SERVICES**

### **Expenditure Trends and Recent Developments**

Over the past few years, recurrent expenditure by TAFE NSW has increased steadily. Total expenses on TAFE and related services are estimated at \$1,242 million for 1998-99. During 1997 TAFE offered over 1,700 courses to over 400,000 students across New South Wales. Grants for external education and training services will amount to some \$177 million in 1998-99.

Significant developments during 1997-98 included the following -

#### **Enrolment Trends**

The number of TAFE NSW enrolments in 1997 increased by 1.7 per cent to 424,450 compared with 417,319 in 1996. More than 254,000 enrolments were in major vocational award courses, making up 60 per cent of total enrolments. Enrolments in many trade courses for apprentices continued to grow, an indication of increased confidence in the State economy. Trade enrolments in the hospitality and tourism areas showed the greatest growth (12.1 per cent).

In 1997, over 13,000 indigenous students enrolled in TAFE NSW. The number of full fee paying overseas enrolments grew from 2,014 in 1996 to 2,197 in 1997, an increase of 9 per cent. Young people made up a large percentage of TAFE NSW's enrolments, with over one quarter of enrolled students (106,202) being aged 15 - 19 years. In 1997, over 31,000 university post graduates continued their studies in TAFE colleges - an increase of over 1,000 on 1996 enrolments.

#### **TAFE Responding to Industry and Community Needs**

TAFE NSW has developed and implemented a number of strategies to ensure that its courses are responsive to industry and community needs. These include implementing more innovative flexible delivery and work based learning, developing more flexible curriculum, particularly in conjunction with industry, and adopting innovative teaching practices and new educational technologies.

In addition, TAFE continues to form partnerships with industry, enterprises, other educational providers and Government departments. For example, partnerships have been formed with McDonald's Australia Ltd, Ford Motor Company, Toyota, Carlton Breweries, Optus, Royal Australian Air Force, Integral Energy and various local governments.

## **Enhanced Quality**

TAFE NSW is committed to quality and the highest standards of educational product and service delivery. All seven Educational Services Divisions have now received certification from the International Standards Organisation.

Significant structural and technological changes are taking place in business, industry and government enterprises. The resources allocated to TAFE match the requirements of emerging technology and trends in industry. TAFE Institutes are continuing the rationalisation or consolidation of facilities at specialist centres to ensure cost effective high quality delivery.

In March 1997, TAFE NSW was awarded Tourism Training Australia's 1997 Award of Excellence for dedication and leadership within the tourism and hospitality industry. The award recognises and promotes the work of TAFE in delivering innovative training in NSW and through joint ventures in Australia and overseas. There were over 11,000 enrolments in hospitality and tourism courses in 1997.

## **1998-2000 NSW Strategic VET Plan**

The Strategic Vocational Education and Training (VET) Plan, prepared by DET, outlines the key strategic components of the State's approach in addressing VET priorities and the allocation of State and Commonwealth funding.

The 1998-2000 NSW Strategic VET Plan identifies the following priorities -

- equity in vocational education and training;
- quality in the New South Wales VET system;
- addressing the training needs of the existing workforce;
- strategic interface between schools VET and higher education;
- small business and regional development;
- ensuring that NSW has the skilled workforce required for the 2000 Olympic and Paralympic games; and
- strategic developments targeted to industry.

## **Vocational Education and Training Resources Model**

The development and implementation of the new model will continue in 1998-99 and will reflect changes in funding arrangements including -

- the cessation of ANTA growth funds from December 1997 and replacement with funds for growth derived through efficiencies;
- the introduction of the New Apprenticeships; and
- resolving resource allocation priorities between entry level training and re-training of the existing workforce.

## **Strategic Directions**

## **Economic Development**

As the largest supplier of workforce training in Australia, TAFE NSW contributes to the economic development of NSW by creating a skilled workforce. Throughout 1998-99, TAFE will continue to improve links with industry and the community to ensure that vocational educational and training provision matches state wide and local training needs.

TAFE will also continue to make a contribution to economic development through the production of high quality curriculum products, in response to the training needs of industry and the community, and through the production of competency based materials and assessment methods.

## **Fiscal Responsibility and Increased Efficiency**

TAFE NSW is participating in a number of strategies that are designed to increase the efficient use of human, physical and financial resources. These include improvement of management systems and processes, resources sharing and joint planning with other organisations and income generation through increased commercial activity and tendering for targeted funds.

Quality improvement strategies are in place to produce efficiencies and enable staff to develop more effective responses to new challenges and customer requirements.

## **Strategic Capital Development Plan**

NSW TAFE's Strategic Capital Development Plan aims to support key national and State service delivery strategies. It addresses the need to maintain a statewide system of vocational education and training which is efficient, effective and internationally competitive and which can respond flexibly and creatively to the needs of the State's workforce.

## **Flexible Service Delivery and Communications Technologies**

The Commission continues to respond to the needs of its clients by increasing the flexibility of its education and training delivery. In many instances courses are offered on a full or part-time basis or through distance methodologies. There were over 31,000 enrolments in 1997 at the Open Training and Education (OTEN) Institute. An increasing number of courses are provided on-site and the use of modern educational technology provides the opportunity to cater for the needs of the learner.

In 1997, TAFE NSW broadened the range of delivery modes available to students with Institutes delivering in excess of two hundred and fifty courses using flexible modes of delivery. All Institutes have now established flexible delivery centres.

New projects have been initiated to take advantage of continuing advancements in educational delivery and communications technologies such as the Internet and interactive multimedia. The aim is to provide an innovative, flexible and quality training system accessible from the workplace, the home or on-campus.

## **1998-99 Budget**

### **Total Expenses**

- **Training for the Olympics**

TAFE NSW has been appointed as the official Training Services Supporter of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. Management training will be provided for paid employees of the Sydney Organising Committee. Other training will be provided in a variety of areas for volunteers who will be supporting the Games. TAFE NSW is also currently negotiating a contract with the Paralympic Committee to provide similar training for Games management staff and volunteers.

In planning to meet a range of service needs for the Sydney 2000 Games, TAFE has increased provision in program areas including courses in tourism and hospitality, building and construction, languages, information technology and communications.

- **The Competitive Training Market**

TAFE NSW will continue in 1998-99 to participate in an increasingly competitive training market with an expanding number of public and private providers. The NSW Government statement, *The TAFE Path to Jobs*, highlighted the crucial role played by technical and further education and identified essential reform areas for TAFE NSW. These included the need to -

- respond to unmet demand especially in areas of skills shortages;
- improve responsiveness to student and employer needs;
- increase exports;
- improve links with on-the-job training; and
- increase access to TAFE education.

- **Equity in vocational education and training**

TAFE NSW continues to place a high priority on being responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, people from non-English speaking backgrounds, people with disabilities, women, rural and isolated people and the unemployed and encouraging their access to vocational education and training programs.

New developments will expand course options for adult basic education and literacy and numeracy programs and provide improved student services and access.

- **Technological Developments in Education and Training**

TAFE NSW recognises the value of employing a variety of educational technologies in providing educational services. These include multimedia and Internet publishing, on line and broadband services, computer based graphic design and video conferencing. During 1998-99 TAFE NSW will continue to implement a \$22.4 million project to increase the use of the Internet for educational purposes. Use of such technology supports TAFE's geographically dispersed student base and expands the scope of delivery methods.

- **Other Initiatives**

Other major initiatives to be undertaken during 1998-99 include -

- provision of up to \$15 million over a three year period for the training of displaced workers and re-skilling of the existing workforce within the native (hardwood) forest industry;
- the ongoing planning of recurrent funding directions for VET resources to address priority areas identified in the 1998-2000 NSW Strategic VET Plan;
- the ongoing development and implementation of a comprehensive VET resource allocation model incorporating capital, recurrent and curriculum allocations; and
- the development of strategies to ensure the appropriate and timely provision of industry training to meet the needs of the Sydney 2000 Olympics.

### **Asset Acquisitions**

The TAFE NSW 1998-99 asset acquisition program of \$85.4 million will permit the completion of major works at a number of colleges including Bathurst, Bega, Lithgow, Loftus, Ourimbah, Shellharbour/Wollongong and Wetherill Park. Construction will continue on the Campbelltown, Hornsby and Nirimba projects.

Work will commence on 20 new major projects in 1998-99. These include developments at Baulkham Hills, Griffith, Mount Druitt, Nowra and Wollongong. The construction of new facilities at Shoalhaven and Thurgoona will also commence as will the refurbishment of Bankstown/St George, Chullora, Meadowbank and Ultimo sites. Work will also commence on the construction of the Education and Training Centre at Liverpool which is a collaborative arrangement between TAFE NSW and the University of Western Sydney, Macarthur, with support from the private sector.

## **OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF STUDIES**

The Office of the Board of Studies is responsible for development of curriculum and curriculum support materials for all schools from Kindergarten to Year 12; registration and accreditation of non Government schools and homeschooling and the development and conduct of the NSW School Certificate (SC) and Higher School Certificate (HSC) examinations. The Office of the Board of Studies also encompasses the Australian Music Examinations Board (NSW) and the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group.

### **Expenditure Trends and Recent Developments**

#### **HSC Advice Line**

In 1995 a phone-in service, the Higher School Certificate Advice Line, was established to provide HSC students access to last-minute advice on selected subjects for the cost of a local call. In 1997 the Advice Line received more than 39,000 calls which represents an increase of 11 per cent over 1996 and more than 60 per cent since its inception in 1995. The Advice Line will again operate for the 1998 HSC examination.

#### **Marking of the HSC**

In 1997 the Office –

- produced over 340 examination papers in 131 courses;
- supervised candidates at 700 examination venues;
- marked over 320,000 student scripts at 17 marking venues;
- processed over 12 million student marks; and
- released HSC results and credentials to over 63,000 candidates.

In 1997, in addition to the Newcastle and Wollongong marking centres, the Office established three country marking centres at Lismore, Wagga Wagga and Bathurst. These centres provide a valuable professional development exercise for teachers. In 1998 the Office intends to alternate the Lismore centre with Coffs Harbour and to establish an additional centre in Armidale.

#### **Early Release of HSC Results**

Since 1995 the Office has successfully reduced the time between the start of HSC and the release of results to candidates. In 1997, for the first time, HSC results were available to students by their use of an optional telephone service four days prior to documents being posted on 6 January. This initiative was highly successful with a total of 25,549 students, representing over 40 per cent of the 1997 Higher School Certificate candidature, making use of the service. The service will again be available in 1998.

## **Strategic Directions**

### **Syllabus Development Processes**

The Office initiated a review of the curriculum development processes used to develop Board of Studies syllabuses. The review was conducted by an independent research team and involved an analysis of the processes involved in the development of new syllabuses. New procedures are being put in place to meet revised HSC requirements.

### **Use of Technology**

The Office's website continues to grow and receives critical acclaim from schools, the media and the general public. The Office increased the amount of material available on the site, including key syllabuses, past examination papers, and other important documents. By the end of 1997 the site was obtaining well over 1 million hits per month.

The Office also works closely with Charles Sturt University, the Department of Education and Training and the Joint Council of Professional Teachers' Associations to provide Internet access to a comprehensive range of HSC resources via the HSC On-Line.

### **1998-99 Budget**

#### **Total Expenses**

Total expenses for 1998-99 are estimated at \$73 million. This represents an increase of \$4.7 million over last year.

- **Release of Primary Syllabuses**

The continued release of new Kindergarten–Year 6 syllabuses in a range of subjects is planned during the year. Human Society and Its Environment and a draft Creative Arts syllabus are planned to be released in 1998. In 1999 a Personal Development, Health and Physical Education syllabus is planned to be released in April and the Creative Arts syllabus is planned to be finalised and released to schools in September.

- **New School Certificate Tests**

In November 1998 all students in Year 10 will sit for statewide external tests in English literacy and Mathematics. Candidates will receive their own test results for the external School Certificate tests, rather than the moderated results used in past years.

New Year 10 external tests in Science and Australian History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship are to be trialed in 1998. The new Science test will be trialed in approximately 500 high schools for the first time in November 1998 and be compulsory for all year 10 students from 1999. The Australian History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship tests will be trialed in approximately 250 high schools in November 1998. Compulsory introduction for all Year 10 students will commence in 2002.

The Government has allocated \$4.1 million to the Office for the development and implementation of these tests in 1998-99.

- **Revised HSC Syllabuses**

The Government's White Paper on the reforms to the Higher School Certificate, *Securing Their Future* endorsed, in principle, a 2-unit structure for courses in the Higher School Certificate. This comprises single courses or two differentiated courses (standard and advanced) for a subject. An evaluation of existing HSC courses has commenced. This will enable the Board to determine which course arrangements should apply to each subject.

### **Asset Acquisitions**

An amount of \$1.9 million will be provided to the Office in 1998-99 for capital projects. This includes \$1.3 million for upgrading software and hardware associated with the computerised Examination System and cyclical replacement of computer hardware.

Increased expenditure in 1997-98 reflects supplementary funding provided to the Office to meet technology improvements required by the HSC White Paper reforms and the carry forward of some fitout costs in relation to the Office's relocation to new premises in May 1997.

## **NEW SOUTH WALES ADULT MIGRANT ENGLISH SERVICE**

The New South Wales Adult Migrant English Service (AMES) provides English training to adult migrants so as to maximise their English competence and enhance their settlement success and labour market productivity. The AMES is primarily funded by the Commonwealth Government, as part of the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) and Labour Market Programs. Funding is also derived from providing training programs for skilled migrants, job seekers, industry and youth.

### **Expenditure Trends and Recent Developments**

The expenditure of the AMES is driven by the level of funding provided by the Commonwealth Government to undertake the AMEP and other programs. This situation is reflected in the rapid decline in expenditure of the AMES over the previous three years, from \$52.2 million in 1995-96 to an estimated expenditure in 1998-99 of \$35.1 million, a decline of over 33 per cent.

The major factor contributing to this reduction in expenditure is the Commonwealth Government tendering out the provision of the AMEP in NSW. The Commonwealth submitted the AMEP to public tender in 1997 and selected the Department of Education and Training consortium, headed by NSW AMES, as the preferred tenderer for only two of five NSW regions. The AMEP delivery arrangements under tendering, which are to be introduced from July 1998, will see a reduction in AMEP business provided by the AMES by almost 60 per cent.

## **Strategic Directions**

The following NSW Adult Migrant English Service activities have been selected as priorities in the 1998-99 business plan, so as to work towards achieving the organisation's vision and future directions -

- Strategic positioning within the Vocational Education and Training sector;
- Delivery of language and literacy programs and related services;
- Quality management; and
- Workforce Planning.

## **1998-99 Budget**

### **Total Expenses**

Expenditure will reduce from \$44.3 million (projected) in 1997-98, to an estimated \$35.1 million in 1998-99 reflecting the Commonwealth outsourcing of the AMEP. This includes an amount of \$16.4 million for redundancy payments. The AMES must also assume responsibility for premises previously leased by the Commonwealth for use by the AMES. Accordingly, there will be a significant increase in the proportion of other operating expenses incurred by the AMES in 1998-99, compared with 1997-98.

While the major focus of the AMES will continue to be on the delivery of high quality educational programs, a particular emphasis will be placed upon -

- ensuring a smooth transition to the new Adult Migrant English Program delivery arrangements;
- implementing a new organisational structure to ensure optimum service delivery;
- promoting widely programs and services to potential AMEP clients; and
- marketing the full range of NSW Adult Migrant English Service programs and services to industry and other clients.

## **VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACCREDITATION BOARD**

The Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB) was established in July 1991. Its role is to promote consistency of standards in vocational education and training, to provide accreditation of vocational courses and the registration of training providers in New South Wales, and to encourage the recognition of vocational courses it has accredited.

## **Expenditure Trends and Recent Developments**

The expenditure of VETAB has fluctuated over recent years - from \$1.2 million in 1992-93 to \$1.7 million in 1996-97 and \$1 million (projected) in 1998-99.

A review of VETAB was conducted in 1997, resulting in the formation of a new structure to support VETAB within the Department of Education and Training.

The introduction of the Australian Recognition Framework (ARF) arrangements, agreed to by the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) Ministerial Council in November 1997, will have a major impact upon VETAB's operations. This includes placing an emphasis upon registration as the critical quality assurance mechanism for vocational education and training, the introduction of training packages, and the implementation of quality endorsement of registered training organisations.

## **Strategic Directions**

The following are objectives of VETAB in 1998-99 -

- registration and audit of training organisations;
- quality endorsement of registered training organisations;
- implement changes to accreditation procedures;
- improve cost effectiveness of data management and collection; and
- introduce new structures for fees and services.

## **1998-99 Budget**

### **Total Expenses**

Total expenses in 1998-99 are projected to be just over \$1 million. Expenses will meet the costs of 10 staff, the administration and support of the Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board, and associated support to training organisations.

The introduction of the Australian Recognition Framework is designed to ensure that in the longer term VETAB becomes a self-sufficient operation, with a minimum of budget support. This will increase the income derived from the registration of training organisations and the accreditation of courses.