

23 July 2020

Review of the Skills and Workforce Development Agreement
Productivity Commission
GPO Box 1428
Canberra City ACT 2600

BY EMAIL: skills.workforce.agreement@pc.gov.au

Dear Madam / Sir,

Inquiry of the Productivity Commission into the Skills and Workforce Development Agreement

I am writing to express Equality Rights Alliance's (ERA) endorsement of the submission to this inquiry by Women and Adult & Vocational Education Inc. (WAVE), Gender Equity Victoria, and Gender Equity Accredited Training Project (WHV).

ERA is Australia's largest network advocating for women's equality, women's leadership and recognition of women's diversity. We bring together 64 non-government organisations and social enterprises with a focus on the impact of policy or service delivery on women. We are one of the six National Women's Alliances, funded by the Commonwealth Office for Women. ERA is auspiced by YWCA Australia.

ERA is concerned that the significance of gender in segregating and limiting the capacity of Australia's workforce, and as a barrier to employment and economic wellbeing outcomes from vocational education training is not sufficiently emphasised in the National Agreement on Skills and Workforce Development. We particularly commend to the Committee the view of WAVE, Gender Equity Victoria and WHV that:

"[There is] a real and urgent need for Australia's VET system to have a strong and transparent gender lens applied to policy and practice to reduce the impact of gender inequality on all Australians. The next NASWD needs to contain measures on gender equality for the VET system."

We also commend to the Committee the assertion that the VET sector can be essential to addressing women's economic insecurity arising from the COVID-19 crisis, if designed with gender equality in mind:

"Not only have women been most affected by the COVID-19 crisis, but current Federal Government programs and plans do not seek to address this inequity, including the recently announced JobTrainer. Increased funding for industries such as construction appear to be created without considering the need to build greater opportunities for women and girls in the workforce. VET has the capability to play a significant role in developing programs that meet the needs of

Equality Rights Alliance

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many women and enable them to take up job opportunities.” (Productivity Commission Interim Report Submission by Gender Equity Victoria, WAVE and WHV submission, page 9)

We would be happy to speak further or answer any questions you might have about this letter. I can be contacted at era@ywca.org.au

Yours sincerely,

Helen Dalley-Fisher
Program Manager

The submission of Women and Adult & Vocational Education Inc. (WAVE), Gender Equity Victoria, and Gender Equity Accredited Training Project (WHV) is endorsed, in whole or in part, by:

- Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement
- Alevi Federation of Australia
- Australasian Council of Women and Policing
- Australian Baha'i Community – Office of Equality
- Australian Centre for Leadership for Women
- Australian Council for International Development – Gender Equity Working Group
- Australian Federation of Medical Women
- Australian Graduate Women
- Australian Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement
- Australian National Committee for UN Women
- Australian Women's Health Network
- CARE Australia
- Children by Choice
- COTA Australia
- FECCA Women's Committee
- Feminist Legal Clinic
- Fitted for Work
- Girl Guides Australia
- Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand
- Homebirth Australia
- Human Rights Law Centre
- Immigrant Women's Speakout Association NSW
- International Women's Development Agency
- JERA International
- Jessie Street National Women's Library
- Justice Connect
- Marie Stopes Australia
- Maternity Choices Australia
- Migrant Women's Lobby Group of South Australia
- National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence
- National Council of Churches of Australia Gender Commission
- National Council of Jewish Women of Australia
- National Council of Single Mothers and their Children
- National Council of Women of Australia
- National Foundation for Australian Women
- National Older Women's Network
- National Union of Students (Women's Department)
- NSW Council of Social Services
- Project Respect

- Public Health Association of Australia (Women's Special Interest Group)
- Reproductive Choice Australia
- Safe Motherhood for All
- Sexual Health and Family Planning Australia
- Sisters Inside
- Soroptimist International
- Union of Australian Women
- United Nations Association of Australia Status of Women Network
- Victorian Immigrant and Refugee Women's Coalition
- VIEW Clubs of Australia
- Women in Adult and Vocational Education
- Women in Engineering Australia
- Women on Boards
- Women Sport Australia
- Women with Disabilities Australia
- Women's Equity Think Tank
- Women's Electoral Lobby
- Women's Housing Ltd
- Women's Information Referral Exchange
- Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
- Women's Legal Services Australia
- Women's Property Initiatives
- Working Against Sexual Harassment
- YWCA Australia
- Zonta International Districts 22, 23 and 24