Victorian budget 2012 – another significant step in the privatisation of our public VET system

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Funding cuts announced in today’s Victorian state budget are another significant step in the dismantling of the state’s public vocational education and training system, according to the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU).

The cuts announced on the weekend and confirmed in today’s budget, involve effectively reducing base funding to public TAFE by 22 per cent from the start of 2013.

“This is a massive funding cut,” said Dr Colin Long, NTEU Victorian Division Secretary. “It will definitely result in further job losses, reduced course offerings, and the closure of some TAFE facilities.”

“Overall, the impact it will have the quality of TAFE education and training in Victoria will be severe.”

“I am aware of at least two TAFE institutions that have put their staff on notice about the serious consequences of these cuts for their financial bottom line.”

“It’s also going to make life even harder for dual sector institutions, like Victoria University which is already struggling and this week announced a major restructure to cope with cuts to public funding and increased competition from private providers.”

“If the Victorian Government announced it was going to privatise a major public asset it would be greeted with fierce public debate.”

“But because no one has called this a privatization it’s been allowed to happen with a minimum of opposition.”

“A significant public education infrastructure and public asset that has taken generations to build is being dismantled before the public’s eyes to provide opportunities for cut rate private providers that are not properly regulated.”

“TAFE provides education opportunities and support for some of Victoria’s most disadvantaged students, such as libraries, counseling services and learning support.”
“Both political parties share the responsibility for this situation.”