

21 August 2020

The Hon Josh Frydenberg, MP
Treasurer
PO Box 6022
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Via email only: josh.frydenberg.mp@aph.gov.au

Dear Treasurer

Critical Role of Blue Tech and Digital Skills in Australia's Economic Recovery

As you have noted a number of times since COVID, now is the time to invest in the skills required by firms and industries. As Australia comes through the recovery phase of COVID Australians will need the right skills to contribute strongly to Australia's economic recovery. As you stated in your speech on 5 May 2020 to the National Press Club:

The proven path for paying back debt is not through higher taxes, which curtails aspiration and investment, but by growing the economy with productivity enhancing reforms.

TAFE Directors Australia (TDA) has worked with our industry partners Cisco and Optus to bring together a package for the consideration of the Australian Government. This package seeks the Australian Government work with Cisco, Optus, and TDA member TAFEs on productivity enhancing reforms through the Australian Government providing funding:

- to assess the size of the blue tech market (i.e. technology-intensive jobs requiring sub-degree level qualifications) down to the individual job role, so TAFEs can more quickly prepare and respond to the anticipated demand; and
- for the development and delivery of one or two micro-credentials for digital skills to help in the re-skilling and up-skilling effort as part of a wider productivity drive that will support the recovery of existing industries and support new industries as we move into the recovery phase.

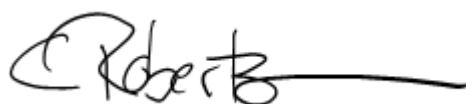
I have attached a submission to the Australian Government, *Critical Role of Blue Tech and Digital Skills in Australia's Economic Recovery*, which sets out the urgent need for a digital skills initiative for economic recovery.

As we approach some important decisions in consideration of the upcoming October Federal Budget, I trust you will find this initiative worthy of support.

Should you or your Office wish to discuss this matter I may be contacted on 0412 299 028 or at crobertson@tda.edu.au.

I have copied this correspondence, and the attached report, to the Secretary of your Department, Dr Steven Kennedy, and to Cisco and Optus for their information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Robertson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

CRAIG ROBERTSON

Chief Executive Officer

TAFE Directors Australia