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MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING
MINISTER FOR PLANNING
MINISTER FOR TOURISM, SPORT AND RECREATION
MINISTER FOR GAMING AND RACING

MEMBER FOR MOLONGLO

Ms Amanda Bresnan MLA

Chair

Standing Committee on Education, Training and Youth Affairs

Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory

GPO Box 1020

CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Ms *Amanda* Bresnan

Thank you for your letter of 14 December attaching a number of supplementary questions in regard to the Canberra Institute of Technology.

I enclose for the Committee's information responses to those questions.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Barr MLA

Minister for Education and Training

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2009-2010 Annual Reports Inquiry – supplementary questions
Canberra Institute of Technology

Question 61 – Human Resources Performance

Concerns have been raised that Joint Selection Committees may be causing delays in filling internal vacancies by failing to provide timely reports. Is there any evidence that this is occurring, and if so, what steps are being taken to address it?

Response

No.

Question 62 - Staffing

In the Annual Report, it shows that temporary staff comprise more than two thirds of the total workforce. Why is this level so high, and is anything being done to lower the levels of temporary employment?

Response

CIT provides vocational education and training to the ACT in over 500 subject areas, some quite specialised. Demand from students and industry for these courses can vary quite markedly from year to year due to economic conditions, demographic trends or government policy.

As noted in the Highlights section (A3) of the Annual Report, the Federal Government raised the educational qualifications required for childcare staff, resulting in an immediate increase in the need for additional CIT teachers to meet the 157% increase in demand. The building industry has a continual boom and bust cycle almost from one year to the next - as construction demand increases, demand for building courses can actually decrease as there is then less free time available to undertake study.

International students, the Federal Government's Productivity Places Program, User Choice Program, degree programs and other contestable funding sources now form 40% of CIT's revenue; this proportion will increase in future. The largest proportion of growth has been in contestable activity in the year to July 2010, increasing by 25%.

CIT also competes for commercial training contracts, some of which are won, some lost. When CIT won an 18 month contract for teaching literacy and numeracy skills for Centrelink, additional teachers were hired on 18 month contracts to match.

As the security of CIT's funding decreases in an increasingly competitive training environment, so the flexibility of CIT's workforce must increase to match this volatility.

Further, CIT has around 350 casual teachers paid in any one fortnight, the majority of whom teach less than 8 hours per week, resulting in a high casual headcount, but in a much smaller addition to FTE. A number of these teachers are industry experts who teach after work for a few hours per week, in a specialised subject, to give back to their industry. CIT could not afford to employ these specialists fulltime at the going market rate, but is able to procure their services part time for niche courses.

For these reasons, CIT will always require a workforce that is flexible to meet the varying demands placed on it by students, industry and government. While CIT endeavours to provide permanency to as many staff as possible; there are valid business reasons why CIT will always have a high level of contract and casual staff.

Question 63

Are DET and CIT bound by the broader public sector management principle that temporary employees should only be used for temporary work, and are all temporary employees engaged in genuinely temporary work?

Response

CIT's current Enterprise Agreements for Teachers (Section 12) and General Staff (Sections A2.2 and A2.3) commit CIT to promoting permanent employment and job security by minimising the use of temporary and casual employment, unless required for the performance of urgent or specialised work.

As noted in the previous answer, CIT's mix of permanent and temporary employees must be flexible enough to meet the varying demands placed upon it.

Question 64

Can the Government provide a breakdown of length of employment by employment type (permanent and temporary)?

Response

As at 9 December 2009:

Employment Type	Length of Service								Average
	0-2	2-4	4-6	6-8	8-10	10-12	12-14	14+	
Permanent	65	60	95	71	54	16	25	166	10.49
Temporary	417	143	75	33	14	5	5	17	2.80
Total	482	203	170	104	68	21	30	183	6.16

Question 65

At the reporting date, how many staff were recognised as acting in a higher position?

Response

106, including 20 acting in Senior Teaching Posts, which are never filled permanently.

Question 66 – Priorities 2010-11

How will the use of eLearning be part of CIT's core teaching strategy?

Response

CIT's brand position is delivery of quality teaching and learning to meet market (student and industry) needs. ELearning is fundamental to offering students and industry maximum choice and flexibility. ELearning will embrace a suite of solutions, in some cases fully online learning environments, but more commonly blended learning that includes various mixes of face-to-face, online and workplace learning applications. Fundamentally important is the notion of choice for the students and this is enabled through options for learner engagement with the learning process supported through contemporary technology based solutions. This new suite also makes it possible for CIT to engage with learners wherever they are be it overseas, within Australia or within the local environment.

Question

What are the components that make up this eLearning initiative?

Response

There are three key applications – development of a learning object repository, a new learning management system and a virtual classroom application which enables real time interaction. The respective brands are Equella, Moodle and Wimba. These three products have been packaged together as a whole solution and are internally branded and referred to eLearn. The learning object repository is critical for CIT to manage its digital assets in a contemporary way which produces efficiencies due to their ability to be repurposed and reused by other teachers or for new learner cohorts. This includes management of the licensing and copyright components. This focus brings CIT into line with other TAFE systems around Australia in digital asset management.

Question

What are the maintenance and staffing costs to maintain these services?

Response

The maintenance and staffing costs of eLearn include the software licences which are \$400,000 over 4 years, the service level agreement for support which is currently \$150,000 per annum and reducing as the knowledge is transferred to CIT and INTACT staff, hardware licences at \$45,000 per year and staffing costs which are approximately \$650,000 per year. The staffing costs include CIT/CT staff, Centre for Education Excellence staff and importantly, the Learning Centre staff to implement and manage the learning object repository.

Question

Please give us an update on the Gungahlin Learning Centre?

Planning for the establishment of CIT's newest Learning Centre in Gungahlin has been underway since July 2010. Furniture and equipment have been purchased, staffing is being finalised and it is expected that students will start within two weeks of being

permitted to occupy CIT's part of the building. The Centre is currently expected to fully open to the public in mid-March, 2011.

This modern, flexible CIT facility will provide residents of the Gungahlin region with access to a wide range of CIT programs and services, without the need to travel far from home or work.

Seven CIT teaching centres will deliver an established range of flexible learning options (self-paced, start any time courses) in Gungahlin in 2011 ranging from short courses to Diploma-level qualifications. The new Learning Centre will also provide all CIT students living in Gungahlin with local, drop-in, technology enhanced study spaces and services.

Co-location and collaboration with the Gungahlin College and the ACT Public Library will enable CIT to use some of the specialist teaching areas in the college for example use of the commercial kitchen to deliver cookery, use of the visual arts spaces for design qualifications, and use of computing areas to deliver CISCO qualifications.

Promotional and public information activities will continue throughout the early part of 2011 to maximise public engagement with the project and to encourage student enrolments at the new facility.

Question

How is the CIT expanding its training activities with regard to productivity places?

Response

CIT has continued to identify the needs of both employers and Job Seekers and where possible, match these needs to the ACT Governments Skills Priority List for inclusion in each round of the ACT Productivity Places tender application. CIT has and will continue to actively seek industry partnership arrangements that support the needs of the community and the goals of the PPP. These arrangements act as an enabler for industry seeking skilled staff and provide work experience opportunities for the unemployed. CIT has partnered with the Australian Retailers Association and Westfield to support the staffing needs of the retail expansion in the Belconnen region. CIT has also partnered with a community group to provide paid work experience to unemployed people undertaking training utilising the ACT PPP funding.

Question

Given the size of the CIT compared to smaller RTOs in town, would you say that the CIT well positioned for expansion?

Response

CIT's competitive advantage in the marketplace is in the scope of delivery and quality of training provided to students. As increased amounts of funding become available through open tender (contestable), the ACT will attract increased RTO activity and thus increase the level of competition. Not all other RTOs are either small or private. Other TAFE providers are accessing opportunities within the ACT and the expansion of the university

sector into commercial vocational delivery will impact the marketplace. CIT is well positioned, but must continue to pursue a client service business delivery model.

Question

What is the year-on-year percentage increase for international student numbers?

2008 – 924 international students

2009 – 1492

2010 - 1483

Question

How is this reflected in increases in international student tuition revenues?

Response

The amount of tuition revenue received by the Institute in actual terms is the amount of increase (or decrease) in students plus any fee increase.

Question

From the CIT's perspective, what are the present factors influencing international student enrolment trends?

Response

- Strong Australian dollar.
- Negative media continuing to impact on Australia's international reputation.
- Increased competition from other countries, most notably USA, UK and Canada
- Financial loss as a result of the GFC deterring many families and potential students from investing in overseas education.
- Commonwealth policy changes.

Question

What is the CIT doing to address this?

Response

CIT, via its commercial arm CIT Solutions, develops an International Student Recruitment Plan each year. This plan outlines strategies and targets for the recruitment of international students. In addition, CIT is developing a more broad International Strategy to better position CIT internationally.

Question

When will CIT Online be completed and at what cost?

Response

All projects within CIT Online will be completed by June 2012. The last six months of this timeline comprises the post implementation period for online enrolments scheduled to be fully operational from January 2013. The major CIT Online projects of eLearn implementation and conversion to the baseline version of the Banner student information system were completed mid 2010 and January 2011 respectively. Total costs to cover the major 15 CIT Online projects are estimated at \$5.7m.

Question

What services will this provide to CIT's clients?

Response

Services provided include wireless computing on all CIT campuses, provision of email accounts to all CIT students, provision of single sign-on authentication to CIT systems, centralised ID management, provision of an internet based portal for access to CIT client services, full online enrolment, improvements to user experience through better website design and content management, improved customer relationships through provision of CRM software to staff, provision of a learning objects repository as part of a new eLearn system, an enterprise search capacity, consolidation of technology platforms and use of web analytics.

Question

Is this also part of the CIT's initiatives in integrating eLearning into core teaching? And how will it do this?

Response

Yes. CIT's eLearn implementation is one of the two major projects of CIT Online. The new software provides enhancements to traditional teaching approaches by providing a capacity for interactive classrooms including remote delivery, more effective and efficient creation of flexible learning units, better provision of media resources to students and access and ongoing storage of learning objects.

Question

What additional learning services and options will the CIT provide in Tuggeranong?

When will this occur?

Response

CIT is unable to provide advice in response to this question as the Feasibility Study for the possible relocation of the CIT Tuggeranong Learning Centre has yet to be considered by Government.

Question

What types of staff digital literacy and sustainable practices skills have been identified by the CIT as needed improvement amongst its staff?

Response

CIT has a teaching and learning plan which defines digital literacy and identifies strategies to enable staff to develop these skills. In 2011 education for sustainability skills, a CIT priority, will be identified through the teaching and learning plan. This plan will also continue to prioritise digital literacy for staff professional development activity. Leadership will be through the Centre for Education Excellence. The focus is on staff being able to use all parts of eLearn confidently in their teaching practice or administrative support functions so that eLearn is integrated in every course for every student and with every teacher at CIT in 2011.

Question – Response to Forecast Demand for VET Delivery (Strategic Asset Management Plan, page 12, in Statement of Intent)

What plans do the CIT have for future development in areas like North Gungahlin and Molonglo?

Response

CIT recognises the value of its learning centres in providing the community with a broad range of education opportunities in locations which are accessible to students and provide safe secure environments for learning and study.

CIT will monitor population growth and demographics in north Gungahlin and Molonglo to establish appropriate timing for proposals to Government for provision of CIT learning centres in association with other ACT government facilities such as libraries, shopfronts and colleges.

Question

Has there been analysis carried out to identify opportunities to provide VET training services in these areas?

Response

CIT has participated in cross agency workshops associated with the planning of the Molonglo Group Centre and provided input into aspects of community services provision in Moncrieff (North Gungahlin).

Question

With the possible increase in demand for VET training, what are the CIT's plans to extend the capabilities of existing Learning Centres?

Response

CIT has identified potential areas for future learning centres in growth centres across the ACT and has implemented a project for assess the feasibility of enhanced arrangements for it's the CIT learning centre in Tuggeranong.

Question

When will these initiatives commence?

Response

Response to emerging demands is already established as a strategic management objective as evidenced by the current Tuggeranong Learning Centre Feasibility Study. CIT is currently working with ACTPLA to assess future growth area demands..

Question

Has a cost-benefit analysis been conducted thus far? If not, will one be conducted?

Response

Cost-benefit analysis is integral to the feasibility study for the Tuggeranong Learning Centre. The findings of this study will inform the provision of VET delivery in the Tuggeranong Valley subject to Government approval of any new proposals.

Question

The Statement of Intent proposes that master plans and feasibility studies be developed for all campuses. Is this cost effective given the value of the studies for Reid and Fyshwick campuses were \$400,000 and \$500,000 respectively?

Response

Yes. The Reid Campus Master Plan included preliminary design proposals for public spaces upgrades and major services infrastructure. These will not be required for other campuses in the master plan phase. It should be noted that there has not been a master plan process for Fyshwick Campus.

Question

Will the ones for Bruce, Southside, and Fyshwick Trade Skills campuses and the Master Brief for the Learning Centres be similar to the ones conducted for Reid and Fyshwick?

Response

No master planning for Fyshwick has been carried out. The proposed master planning will not be similar to the Reid Campus Master Plan. Master plans for Bruce, Southside, and Fyshwick Trade Skills campuses will establish capability of campuses for future development and identify opportunities and constraints occasioned by the Campus contexts.

Question

If yes, why are these almost 50% cheaper than the ones conducted for Reid and Fyshwick?

Response

No master planning for Fyshwick has been carried out. The proposed outputs for future master planning require less workload for consultants

Question

What is the current status regarding the development of the Reid Campus in relation to the Master Plan?

Response

The Reid Campus Master Plan has been endorsed by the CIT Board of Management and the National Capital Authority. The Master Plan is used to direct future development of the Reid Campus and will be a key component of any proposals to Government for financial support.

Question

During Estimates, there was mention of the Government looking into possible public-private partnership models for this development initiative, where is the Government at with this?

Response

The matter of a Public Private Partnership (PPP) related to the development options for provision of student accommodation at Reid Campus. Investigation of the feasibility of such an initiative has identified that PPP models are not viable for projects under approximately \$300 million.

Question

What options were considered?

Response

- Public Private Partnership (Developer Principal)
- Public Private Partnership (Operator Principal)
- Build Own Operate Transfer (Developer Principal)
- Build Own Operate Transfer (Operator Principal)
- Sub-lease of land
- Build Own and lease development
- Build Own and licence operation
- Build Own and Operate.

Question

Since the completion of the Reid Campus Master Plan in July 2009 (SAMP, pg 21), have there been any socioeconomic changes that may have necessitated changes to some of the Plan's proposals?

Response

No.

Question

If yes, which ones and why?

Response

N/A