T R A N S C R I P T

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

Inquiry into Student Pathways to In-demand Industries

Melbourne—Friday 28 November 2025

MEMBERS

Alison Marchant—Chair
Kim O'Keeffe—Deputy Chair
Roma Britnell
Anthony Cianflone
John Mullahy
Nicole Werner
Dylan Wight

WITNESSES

Jim O'Shea, Chief Operating Officer, and

Stephanie Kilpatrick, Executive Director, Policy, Advocacy and Communications, Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation;

Emily Hocking, Manager, Strategic Policy and Reform, and

Kayla Thomas, Policy Officer, Ngaweeyan Maar-oo; and

Tiriki Onus, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous, University of Melbourne.

The CHAIR: Welcome to the panel hearing for the Legislative Assembly Economy and Infrastructure Committee's Inquiry into Student Pathways to In-demand Industries. All mobile telephone should now be turned to silent.

All evidence given today is being recorded by Hansard and broadcast live on the Parliament's website.

While all evidence taken by the Committee is protected by parliamentary privilege, comments repeated outside of this hearing, including on social media, may not be protected by this privilege.

Witnesses will be provided with a proof version of the transcript to check.

We are just going to run this like a bit of a Q and A format—an informal chat—and the Committee members will ask some questions, and then if you wish to answer you can just let us know and just jump in, just like a chat. If there are some important points that you do not have an opportunity to make during the session, you are welcome to make an additional submission in writing to the Committee as well.

I am Alison, the Chair, Member for Bellarine.

John MULLAHY: John Mullahy, Member for Glen Waverley.

Anthony CIANFLONE: Anthony Cianflone, Member for Pascoe Vale—from Pascoe Vale right now, live.

The CHAIR: Thank you, Anthony. Thank you so much for your submissions and coming today to answer some of our questions. I think you are very much going to provide a unique insight for us and also to help us with recommendations at the end of this Inquiry. We really appreciate the work that you have done so far. We will get into some questions. John, I might head to you.

John MULLAHY: Thank you all for appearing today. How can school career education more effectively cater to the needs of First Nations students and how can Indigenous communities be involved in the co-design of school career education, and what benefits would this provide?

The CHAIR: Who would like to jump in first?

John MULLAHY: Don't be shy.

Emily HOCKING: I am Emily Hocking, and I am the Manager of Strategic Policy at Ngaweeyan Maar-oo. We are the Victorian government's formal implementation partner on Closing the Gap, so that is the lens that we bring to the discussion. I think in relation to your question around school pathways, we know that the pathways to industry start when people are children; it starts in school, and it goes right through family, through community into training organisations, universities and so on and so forth. What we see is a really high level of disengagement throughout that journey. We know that there is a lot of racism that is still embedded in schools. There is a lot of institutional distrust by Aboriginal families and Aboriginal communities. We know that schools are mandatory reporters, so there is this broader ecosystem at work—before we are even talking about student pathways, before we are even talking about TAFE and training—that is actually the main barrier that we have actually got to overcome. I do not have the data in front of me, but I know the Department of Education has a lot of data about racism in schools, and it is not a problem that is really improving. We can see in social media and we can see in the normal discourse that racism is getting a more open forum, people feel a lot more comfortable to do that, so that is then playing out in how people are engaging in community and in schools, and so we are seeing that kind of disengagement.

I might throw to Steph and to Jim, because where we can see improvements to overcome that is through ACC RTOs and Aboriginal led and designed training programs and institutions.

Jim O'SHEA: So options around different careers could be alternate education and talked about quite early, so year 7 and year 8, before children get disengaged in education. VAEAI and the ACCO RTOs could also be going to school career fairs. We would not be able to do that without the resources to do so, because at the moment our funding is quite limited in terms of just operating the courses that we have on scope. The local ACCOs would be best to get involved and potentially some traditional owner groups as well.

Stephanie KILPATRICK: Yes. I think the Aboriginal community controlled RTOs, or ACC RTOs, provide so many different options and so many different training options that a lot of people are not necessarily aware of, but as Jim said, for context, VACCHO, who we represent, is one of the biggest ACC RTOs, but we are still quite small. VACSAL is another ACC RTO; they have about four staff that are actually dedicated to the RTO, so there is no way that they, for example, could be going to career fairs without the extra resourcing to support that. But we see when Aboriginal young people are exposed to Aboriginal community controlled organisations, the RTOs, the traditional owner corporations, there are so many different career opportunities that open up when they are more connected to those spaces and see those as career pathways. But at the moment we are just struggling to have that synergy with the school space and the career space.

John MULLAHY: And Jim, you just said there that it should be around years 7 and 8, before disengagement occurs. We had some evidence from people earlier that 9 and 10 is when the career advice is needed. But in this cohort you think that it has got to be much earlier?

Jim O'SHEA: It has got to be earlier.

Tiriki ONUS: Much earlier. In University of Melbourne we have a Return to Country STEM program, and we are going and engaging with young Indigenous people in STEM fields. In that we have been pitching even starting at years 5 through to 8 in particular. Much of the research has identified that when people even in primary school are making that decision of how they will enter secondary education and what sort of pathways they will choose, oftentimes when we are getting to years 9, 10 and 11, kids have already started going down a certain academic pathway. They have made certain decisions about the elective subjects that they will be taking, and already at that stage some pathways are being closed off.

We are noticing that flexible pathways into tertiary education in particular have been particularly helpful, but also flexible approaches which allow engagement from regional and remote students as well. Many of our young Indigenous people, whether they come traditionally from that country or not, and many of our large Indigenous diaspora communities exist in the regions. We have noticed that with our own partnerships. With the Munarra Centre for Regional Excellence in Shepparton, for instance, you have got a place like Shepparton, Yorta Yorta country, but it is representing huge swathes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities who are coming in to engage and oftentimes not in a direct pathway from school either. Many of our students are coming in after a few years, a couple of decades sometimes, out of study, but still finding those pathways back through. Consistently, and to agree with my colleagues on the panel, there has been I think a gap in the advice and the image that is being shared with young people and perhaps some of the historical weight of low expectations that can be placed on Indigenous students and scholars in general, so that the advice is not necessarily setting them up early on. They are often soaking in a discourse that is steeped in deficit. And I think that shows through a lot of the cultural change more broadly in the sector and in the industry that we probably need to see as well.

Stephanie KILPATRICK: And just to really reiterate Emily's earlier point, the racism that students face in school means that they are disengaging earlier. That is why if there is more of that connection to ACCOs, to traditional owner corporations that are visible in school as well, they can see those career options earlier and have some more touchstones to keep pursuing their education as well.

Emily HOCKING: And I think, to Tiriki's point on expectations, it is really hard to be what you cannot see. I am not Aboriginal, but I even remember at school the options you get given of 'You can go be a doctor, you can be a lawyer, you can be a teacher, you can be a nurse, you can be a police officer or a tradie.' There is a whole world of other jobs that you do not know even exist. And especially in this space, when the expectation is set low and it is reinforced and you are looking at things through a deficit lens over and over, it is why there is so much disengagement, and then there is not that support to re-engage. As Tiriki said, with the Munarra centre you are not seeing people coming into further education at 17, 18, 19—it might be 25, it might be 30, it might be 50. It is a different context, I suppose, to other groups of people when you look at that.

Tiriki ONUS: And we might find some of those early school leavers who are re-engaging in programs. They might even still be teenagers themselves. But then oftentimes many of our industries or even our training organisations are not necessarily set up to recognise prior learning or the strengths that people come into that space with. There is still a gap that exists there sometimes, particularly for us. We see in the university if someone comes to us between the ages of 18 and 21, if they are not ready to come in as a mature age student

but they do not have quite the ATAR or the entry scores to get themselves through, then flexible pathways are a real benefit in this regard. I think for many Indigenous people that work in organisations and for other allies and colleagues, sometimes their job is about trying to find how far they can bend the systems and find the little workarounds that make things work, and oftentimes this is what sets many of our students up to thrive in those spaces too.

John MULLAHY: Great.

The CHAIR: Thank you. Anthony, I will head to you.

Anthony CIANFLONE: Thank you, Chair. Thank you all for appearing and for all of your submissions, which are very good and very comprehensive. Just picking up on that last question and discussion point, my question is around guidance for schools. What guidance does the Department of Education actually provide to schools to assist them with tailored career education activities and support specifically for First Nations students? In that respect, what additional support could the Victorian government through the recommendations of this Committee potentially put forward to help them provide better and further tailored support. Tying that into treaty and what that means through treaty now having passed Parliament, what potential opportunities could that bring to help us improve work in this space?

Emily HOCKING: Steph looks at me like I know the answer to this question. I will preface this. VACCHO is a Member of Ngaweeyan Maar-oo. I think we have got 14 sector representatives and delegates from the Aboriginal governance forums across government, so we have got 22 Members. We are working with the Victorian government on the development of the next Closing the Gap implementation plan, including with the Department of Education, and going through actions at the moment around how they can support Aboriginal students and organisations. Exactly to your point, Anthony, I do not think I can say anything because I think it is still in negotiation as to exactly what those actions look like.

To your point on treaty, I know that there is a lot being done and driven by the First Peoples' Assembly that will carry through to Gellung Warl around the establishment of an institute and all those sorts of things. I think what is really important to remember despite all of this is that there is a responsibility of the government to still follow through on whatever commitments, changes and policy reforms they need to do to enable that for Aboriginal people, who are still citizens of Victoria. It cannot be a case of that now being resolved over here; it needs to be connected together.

Tiriki ONUS: I think it is a really salient question because there are many challenges in how pathways are created through education. Indeed we are seeing some change now and some advancements in teacher training and how we are supporting teachers. However, there still exists a bit of a challenge here as well with the lack of trained Indigenous teachers. I think it speaks a little bit to your point there, Emily, as well. Oftentimes along with this there can be a perception that, 'Oh, you must have an Indigenous teacher to teach Indigenous content or to speak to Indigenous voices,' and the lack of young First People seeing themselves in curriculum can be a challenge. We have noticed this at the University of Melbourne with our Ngarrngga program. Whilst we are doing work with teacher training now, which has been very good, there still exists a gap for teachers, educators, guidance counsellors and others who are in employment in schools out there in the world and who have not necessarily been resourced with this information as well. The opportunity to provide greater training—cultural safety training, cultural awareness, anti-racism training and so on and so forth—is certainly an opportunity that we are seeing more and more in our space in the University of Melbourne. Also there are not a huge number of providers. I think some of this comes back to some of the points that Emily, Jim and others were making before. There is a resourcing challenge out there for organisations to do this training work in addition to the core business that they are already performing. That is not to say that there is not an industry there that could support it, but the cost of setting up that space is not one that the organisations can bear necessarily.

Stephanie KILPATRICK: We do not have a lot of engagement in the secondary space specifically, so I am happy to leave the comments there.

Emily HOCKING: I was just going to add one point on curriculum and around involving First Peoples in the design of curriculum—I know that has kind of come through treaty a bit, but in the ACC RTO space—and I know it is slightly different to secondary—there is a lot of work that has to be done to rewrite curriculum to be appropriate. If you are finding in schools the way that history is taught—and it is not even necessarily what is

taught, it is how it is taught, it is the way that those conversations are had—I think that that is something that it is not necessarily groundbreaking in changing the way that you are teaching reading and writing, but it is what changes the dynamic of that environment, and as I said, that is what has those pathways to building identity. We see it in early years—we have got Bubup Wilam, who are also an ACC RTO delivering early childhood; one of their key focuses is around building Aboriginal identity through that education pathway so that you are building up strong Aboriginal children to then progress to be students, to be teachers, to be learners throughout their lifetime. So I think that that is also something I would flag around the co-design of curriculum.

The CHAIR: Thank you. Thanks, Anthony. Just something that really stood out to me in the submissions, particularly around RTOs and the way that it is set up at the moment—and you are pretty much seen as an independent RTO—can you just talk a little bit about that and give me a better understanding of how that works, please?

Stephanie KILPATRICK: Largely, registered training organisations fall into these broad swathes of public or private, public mostly being the TAFE space, then pretty much everyone else is classified as private. For Aboriginal community controlled RTOs we are actually gathered—well, we are not gathered, we are the opposite of gathered—across many different types of private RTO classifications. This makes it, one, hard to bring the collective strength of Aboriginal community controlled RTOs clearly together and have the data together in one place, but it also means that we have less access to government and public funding to support the RTO. The reason that we have really been trying to highlight this point recently and say we are actually not categorised properly is because we do not charge fees to our students. Aboriginal community controlled RTOs are not-for-profit organisations. I would be shocked to find a single Aboriginal community controlled RTO that ever set up with the ambition of being a business; it was to address a need in community, because community and First Nations people were not receiving culturally safe education and training. VACCHO is the only place in Victoria—not the only Aboriginal community controlled RTO, the only place in Victoria—that you can study some of our courses, including the certificate III and IV to become an Aboriginal health worker and Aboriginal health practitioner. It is the only place in Victoria you can get that qualification, and that is an in-demand career that has a shortage across the nation.

Jim O'SHEA: We have actually got our RTO graduation on this afternoon. We have got 51 students graduating today, and the majority of those are Aboriginal health workers or Aboriginal health practitioners, and we have got 70 of those on a waitlist to run cohorts of courses next year. In total at the moment we have got 16 courses on scope from cert II in foundational skills to introduce people into VET training to cert III, cert IV and diplomas. And there are a couple that we are bringing on early in 2026: one is a cert IV in Aboriginal research and the other one is adding a whole heap of modules into the health courses around telehealth and the way in which that is going in the future.

Stephanie KILPATRICK: And pretty much all of the scope of our RTO and other Aboriginal community controlled RTOs are driven by the needs and the shortages that we see in community and the broader Aboriginal community controlled sector. And because we do not charge fees to our students and we generally have a smaller cohort going through a class or a degree at one time, it essentially means that it is impossible to even break even a lot of the time as an Aboriginal community controlled RTO. You are just not going to get the numbers that you see in other private RTOs, with 100 people in a classroom or a virtual classroom doing a course so that they can get Skills First funding and other kinds of subsidies to training fees. That is why we have really been trying to embark on this idea of our own Aboriginal community controlled RTO classification. We would really love in the long term not only to just have that classification exist but to have it be seen as a public classification, because we do provide that public good, that community good, and sometimes, again, it is the only place that you can get a certain type of training or become qualified in a certain type of profession. That is spread across the nation, but definitely in Victoria there are three Aboriginal community controlled RTOs, none of us charge fees to our students, all of us have to rewrite curriculum, which costs extra resources, and all of us have a particular kind of cultural support for our students. We have—our shorthand—our student mentors; they have a longer title. VACSAL has co-facilitators who are Aboriginal people in the classroom helping facilitate every class as well.

The CHAIR: Thank you. Yes, that really clarifies then, because you have just identified a whole lot of barriers and why we cannot address some of those skills shortages in an area that our communities are trying to fill.

Stephanie KILPATRICK: Yes, absolutely. Part of it as well is sometimes having to have Aboriginal trainers as well, or in lieu of that having that Aboriginal student mentor in the classroom, having the co-facilitator in the classroom who is a First Nations person as well, to make that a really culturally safe space.

Emily HOCKING: I do not think Steph just gave herself enough credit or VACCHO enough credit. It is all the other support and it is the other costs. It is not just the cost of running the course, it is also the cost of helping engage regional and remote students. It is the cost of if they need a laptop, if they need accommodation to come in. It is supporting them through their placements. It is all of those other things which, you know, you take for granted. It is—what?— 1000 bucks for a laptop, 2000 bucks for a laptop, but that adds up when you are doing that for all of your students and supporting them so that they can actually participate in the training as well.

Stephanie KILPATRICK: Yes. We have bought scrubs for students and we have bought stethoscopes for students just because of the financial barrier to training and to placements. And you need to be doing your placements to obviously finish your course. They cannot do that if they do not have scrubs and stethoscopes, and they are not always provided by the place that they are doing their placement. I think Jim, our VACCHO COO, has had to be calling up organisations to find students placements when they have not already had some lined up. So it is really, you know, hours and everyone is helping out the RTO or helping out our students to see them be successful in their education and training.

The CHAIR: Yes. Wonderful.

Tiriki ONUS: If I may very quickly add, just to pile on there, the other incredible benefit I think that exists within the Aboriginal community controlled RTOs is the fact that there is already a huge barrier which is taken down, which is about access, which is about the perception of safety and understanding. One of the biggest challenges we have with someone like the University of Melbourne is getting young people—anyone; I should not be ageist—anyone of any age, Indigenous people, to see us as a viable option. If we get to talk to them, we can talk them around, hopefully, and into that. But our organisations carry such a social licence, our RTOs, to be able to author these spaces and have an authorising environment to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into study in a way that other organisations just do not. And it is always something that is just sort of tacitly accepted and not necessarily seen, but it is a tremendous strength.

Emily HOCKING: Yes.

Stephanie KILPATRICK: And we hear the student success stories and students who say, you know, they did not think education was for them. Sometimes the first time that they have success in education is in an Aboriginal community controlled RTO. But yes, unfortunately with the financial unsustainability of the categorisation and classification, you know, we have seen ACCO RTOs close over the years, and if VACCHO was not such a strong organisation under Jill Gallagher's and Jim's leadership, our RTO would be in trouble as well.

Tiriki ONUS: It would not be there.

Stephanie KILPATRICK: It would not be there, and there would be a massive gap in a pipeline of careers that the community sector desperately needs.

The CHAIR: Yes. Thank you. That is really a good recommendation I think. John.

John MULLAHY: We have gone from schools and then we have gone on to RTOs, but what I would like to know now is: how can employers in in-demand industries more effectively meet the needs of First Nations workers, and what are some of the best practice examples of employers doing this? And how can the Victorian government support employers in in-demand industries to make workplaces more inclusive for First Nations peoples?

Tiriki ONUS: I think it has been touched on a little bit here already. I think there is a real opportunity for a broader cultural change for employers. There is training out there that people can access. Some industries, or some individual organisations, are doing it quite well. We see this ourselves at the University of Melbourne, where various organisations and government departments have been coming and doing some of our micro-credentialing courses for students in our preparing for treaty and anti-racism training and things like that. So

there are certainly opportunities for upskilling and growth, and particularly in a time of treaty I think there is opportunity here for a lot more truth-telling. Sometimes truth-telling can be cast as only an airing of grievances, if you will, or an engaging with unsavoury parts of our history, and certainly there is an element to that. But there is also an opportunity I think for people to engage with stories of strength that come from these lands of thousands of generations but certainly through the last 2½ centuries or so. Increasingly, in all of the training that I am seeing there are invitations, there are entrees made for people to find opportunities to engage and find relevance in Indigenous knowledge and in greater cultural competencies for themselves in their own areas of expertise, and I think that drives industry and business as well anyway. But that increasingly seems to be coming back from a lot of the people with whom we are engaging, saying, 'I want to see more change in the industry out there before I'm going to feel safe to go into that space.'

Jim O'SHEA: One of the other things is the cultural load that is placed on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and First Nations people that work in different areas and industries as well. There is starting to be a bit of a shift in terms of recognition for that with some of the reviews that are going on with Fair Work and some of the particular things that the commissioners are doing at the moment.

A thing that all organisations should have and mandate within their organisations is an appropriate cultural safety training program, and it should be for everyone that is employed in an organisation. And it needs to be layered, so it is just not a foundational aspect and doing an online 45-minute course; it is more than that. Everyone should do that, from the janitor through to the CEO, through to the boards. But then it is the second phase of that: it is actually understanding the community and the land that you are working on and what transpired there and also going out onto community and seeing those things firsthand.

Some other things that will probably flow through with the Fair Work stuff is sorry business and ceremony leave, which needs to be factored into that. Aboriginal organisations such as ours have additional leave and things that cover that, but I think there need to be things that are done in that legislative area to have that embedded in there.

Emily HOCKING: We had a similar recommendation in our submission around cultural safety standards as well that set that benchmark for what that training should achieve, noting that cultural safety is an ongoing practice. It is not a 45-minute web thing where you go, 'Yes, great, I know how to do this.' It is actually about putting that into practice and continuing that. We had a similar recommendation, I think, just to tie it back to schooling, around supporting businesses and stuff as well so that they do not fall behind when that is occurring, and ceremonial leave and stuff like that. I think it is not just a workplace thing but bringing that right through.

The CHAIR: Thank you. Anthony, I think we have got time for one more question.

Anthony CIANFLONE: Thanks, Chair. Just picking up on John's point there, I want to go to more culturally relevant training pathways and workplaces as well. Based on the submissions here, it appears to me very much that where we do have those tailored culturally specific training and jobs pathways for First Nations people, we have high success rates. In the Ngaweeyan submission by Emily and Kayla here, you give an example of the Bubup Wilam program, which delivers a certificate III and diploma in early childhood, and the results are quite astounding here: high completion rates of 96 per cent and job pathways and workforce retention rates well above the industry rates for both male and female. But then we go to VACCHO's submission by Jim and Stephanie, which talks about the Productivity Commission report for education and training, which identifies that participation for Aboriginal people in VET was 38 per cent in 2023 but prior to COVID it was actually much higher, at nearly 50 per cent. So there has been a big drop there since COVID.

Then we go to Tiriki's submission from Melbourne University, which talks about some astounding gaps in the science and STEM space as well, where only 0.5 per cent of Indigenous Australians hold a university STEM qualification, compared to nearly 5 per cent of the broader Australian population. I would just love to maybe hear a little bit more about what is working when it comes to First Nations training and qualifications and how it can be applied to other industries, for this Committee to consider.

Emily HOCKING: I think what it shows is that Aboriginal organisations know what works, and they do it best. When you are seeing such a disparity in completion rates like what you have just noted, it is unquestionable, and I think this comes right back to any part of Closing the Gap. Whether it is employment pathways, whether it is education or whether it is health, whatever, Aboriginal people know what works for

Aboriginal people. We have got treaty that has just been passed, and that is at the real crux of it. I think it is about taking the learnings of what works at organisations like VACSAL, Bubup Wilam and VACCHO and applying them into broader training and educational institutions but also, as employers, looking at what those wraparound supports are that set them apart. I think similarly, as I said earlier, you cannot be what you cannot see, and I would guess that that is probably a large contributor to why you have that gap in STEM degrees, for example. That deficit view, the lack of expectation and encouragement to reach it, is probably contributing to that, whereas ACCOs come from a place of strength.

Tiriki ONUS: That is right. I mean, there is that question of assumptions of relevance, I think, for Indigenous students in this area. I can speak from Melbourne University's point of view, and we have not got students in our engineering or STEM streams that are falling off. Rather, they are not making the applications in the first place. We have had some really good successes with things like our bachelor of science (extended), where our completion rate extends a three-year degree out to four, and it allows us to be more strength based in how people come in. It is a small cohort, but it has got a 90-something—do not press me for the number, but it has a 90-something per cent completion rate, is my understanding.

At the same time, in other areas like engineering we are just not seeing the applicants in the first place. There is a big challenge there, I think, in that, as Emily has kept saying, you cannot be what you cannot see and that expectation that, 'Well, if I come and study engineering, is it for me as an Indigenous person? Is there going to be Indigenous knowledge here? Am I going to have to give up something of myself to study it? Am I going to have to assimilate in some sort of way?' The more opportunity I think we have to engage Indigenous knowledge in the teaching in these spaces as well—for everyone, black, white or brindle, wherever they come from—the greater uplift we are likely to see. Increasingly we have been pushing through the university to try to establish a national engineering incubator and centre for Indigenous engineering, and that visibility is always going to be a challenge. But it is one of the reasons that our return to country program focuses on that year 5 to 8 level as well, because we realise it is something you have got to set up early.

Stephanie KILPATRICK: I think some of the success really comes from how hands-on and individually supported our students are as well. With our student success and engagement team, the moment you send off an EOI to our RTO you have got often an Aboriginal person on the phone talking you through the enrolment forms. We have had those student mentors, the student success and engagement officers, going out to people's workplaces in Shepparton and Mildura to get them to sign forms and send them back. We have got people who support students when they to come to Melbourne, to train at our physical space in Melbourne, we have student mentors meeting them at Southern Cross station and at Flinders Street Station, helping them traverse the city and the public transport. We are purchasing accommodation for them when they have to spend a week in Melbourne.

We have had some unfortunate incidents for a number of students, and our student mentors have been there on call at 11 pm to support them through whatever has happened. Our support goes so much beyond just the education or having someone to talk to while you are in a training space. It is that full wraparound support. It is understanding when sorry business comes up, when they have cultural obligations they need to go back to country for, and allowing them the space to have the time to come back to training or having the next block ready to go when they are ready to go. We have heard, through the Victorian TAFE Association, of a good example at Gippsland TAFE I think where, again, it was quite similar. An Aboriginal person could do an EOI and then they would just deal with the forms later, so just get them into the course, allow them access to the training and education and deal with the paperwork later, rather than that having to be a barrier.

The CHAIR: Yes. I am so sorry we have to wrap it up there, because we could have talked all afternoon, I think. Thank you so much for the submissions and for answering our questions today. Like I said, if there is anything else that pops up from our conversation today that you would like us to consider, please, you can write to us as well. Thank you for your time, we really appreciate it.

Witnesses withdrew.