

Australian Industry and Skills Committee

MEDIA RELEASE

14 July 2015

Globally relevant skills to support growth

The Chair of the new Australian Industry and Skills Committee, John Pollaers delivered a keynote address on meeting the skills challenges facing Australian industry to the Australia-China Strategic Policy Dialogue on Vocational Education and Training in Beijing on Tuesday.

Mr Pollaers is accompanying the Assistant Minister for Education and Training, Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, on a visit to the People's Republic of China.

"Ensuring that industry needs are appropriately identified and reflected in the training system is absolutely paramount," Mr Pollaers said.

"The discussions conducted today between key skills leaders from Australia and China across government, industry and training providers have made a significant contribution to strengthening approaches to industry engagement in both countries.

"Australia's VET system is internationally recognised as delivering high quality training that is linked to the needs of industry. The Australian Industry and Skills Committee is focused on ensuring the needs of Australian employers continue to be met by the training system, and that Australian training continues to be valued internationally."

Mr Pollaers has also participated in an industry roundtable with key business representatives in Shanghai to discuss the skills challenges facing business in China, and what solutions could be offered through high quality, industry-focused training.

"Industry in China faces similar challenges to what we face in Australia – an aging population, wage pressures and rising costs," Mr Pollaers said.

"Ensuring a highly skilled and productive workforce, with industry-relevant skills will be vital to continued economic growth in both countries.

"It is a reflection of the Australian Government's commitment to industry leadership and engagement that Senator Birmingham asked me to join him in this visit to one of Australia's most important bilateral partners. As a result of this visit, both governments have agreed to further cooperation on vocational education and training, including on approaches to industry engagement."

Mr Pollaers said the strengthened government engagement, and the recently signed China-Australia Free Trade Agreement would help support further international engagement by VET stakeholders.