Appendix A: Bilateral Implementation Plan – National Skills Agreement Policy Initiatives

PRELIMINARIES

1. This implementation plan (Plan) is made between the Commonwealth of Australia (Commonwealth) and Victoria under the 2024–2028 National Skills Agreement (the NSA) and should be read in conjunction with the NSA and the NSA Bilateral Implementation Plan Guidance.
2. Once executed, this implementation plan and any updates agreed with the Commonwealth, will be appended to the NSA and will be published on the Commonwealth's Federal Financial Relations website (https://federalfinancialrelations.gov.au).
3. This implementation plan is expected to expire on 31 December 2028 (in line with the NSA), or on completion of the initiative, including final performance reporting and processing of final payments against milestones.
4. In all public materials relating to the policy initiatives, Victoria will acknowledge the Commonwealth's contribution with the following statement: The Enhanced VET Data and Evidence policy initiative is a joint initiative between the Australian Government and the Victorian Government.

ENHANCED VET DATA AND EVIDENCE (Clause A130 to A140 of the NSA)

The Enhanced VET Data and Evidence policy initiative includes three key measures:

- *VET Data Streamlining (VDS)* – Transition the VET sector to the new VET Information Standard and National VET Data System.
- *Enhancements to improve the cyber security posture of VET Data* – Develop a sector wide VET Data Security policy and strategy and initiatives to improve the security posture of the sector.
- *Development of the VET Data Reform Blueprint and Investment Roadmap* – Develop a 5-to-10-year collaborative roadmap and blueprint for multi-jurisdictional investment.

The enhancements to cyber security and the development of the VET Data Reform Blueprint and Investment Roadmap will be progressed through the State Skills Officials Network (SSON) and Skills and Workforce Ministerial Council.

This section of the bilateral agreement covers the VDS program only.

VET Data Streamlining: Victoria opts-in to the VDS program and commits to:

- completing transition to the National VET Data System by 31 December 2028; and
- transitioning State Training Authority and TAFE data systems to the VET Information Standard by 31 December 2028.

Note: A state that opts out will be ineligible for future payments under the initiative but will retain previous payments made up to the point of opting-out. States will be responsible for any costs incurred by their jurisdiction in transitioning out of the program (Clause A139 refers).

1) Specify activities that support the VDS program.

Victoria commits to:

a) assist in the development of the National VET Data System. This includes that the state will:
   - provide subject matter experts and expertise in all phases of the development lifecycle of the National VET Data System, including analysis input and design review, development support and 'go -live'
   - co-develop validation and business rules, reference data, metadata requirements, and business processes to support the VDS implementation
   - assist in testing of the National VET Data System, including User Acceptance Testing
   - actively participate in VDS program governance.

b) uplift and transition relevant State Training Authority systems and business processes to interact with the National VET Data System as an indirect state. This includes all Victorian specific changes required to complete integration of systems to the National VET Data System by 31 December 2028.

c) completing a state-specific detailed transition plan and schedule as part of the VDS detailed planning milestone 2.

d) The following timeline is indicative and non-binding:

   - Victoria will target the commencement of the 2028 calendar year to go live with the STA systems integrated with the National VET Data System (STARS).
   - Victoria will target the commencement of the 2028 calendar year to transition the state's VET (including TAFE) sector to the National VET Data System (STARS).
   - Victoria anticipates that the transition of all RTOs that deliver training in Victoria will be completed by 30 June 2028.
   - The following indicative timeline supports this transition approach.
     i. Draft detailed planning complete: June 2025.
     ii. Detailed design complete: December 2025.
     iii. Skills Victoria Training System (SVTS) build complete: October 2026.
     iv. SVTS integration and User Acceptance Testing complete: June 2027.
     v. SVTS integration to the VDS as an indirect state – go live: July 2027.
     vi. SVTS/STARS Pilot – July-December 2027
     vii. Transition of Victorian-funded RTOs and all TAFES commences: January 2028
     viii. Victorian funded RTOs transition complete 31 December 2028

2) Specify activities that support the VET Information Standard.

Victoria commits to:

a) assist the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) as the national data custodian in the development of the VET Information Standard, including:
   a. participate in the design lifecycle, including analysis, input and design review
   b. co-design data elements and associated rules
   c. provide subject matter expertise in all phases of the development lifecycle in design and testing the VET Information Standard
   d. actively participate in governance forums and decisions.

b) transition State Training Authority systems to the VET Information Standard by 31 December 2028

3) Specify the state's reporting pathway for the purpose of collecting VET Activity Data (clause A138b refers).

a) Victoria will integrate with the National VET Data System (STARS) using the indirect pathway for the collection of VET Activity Data. Victorian funded RTOs will submit Total VET Activity Data via SVTS which will collect and submit to the National VET Data System on their behalf using APIs.

4) Specify the state's collection and submission processes.

Victoria will support the collection of metadata related to VET Activity Data submitted by RTOs to the National VET Data System to enable states to monitor compliance with state specific contracts and regulators to monitor compliance with the Data Provision Requirements (DPRs).

Victoria commits to:

- submitting VET Activity Data collected from RTOs progressively to the National VET Data System, but no less frequently than quarterly or as agreed under the Data Provision Requirements (DPRs).
- ensuring Victorian-funded RTOs submit VET Activity Data more (but not less) frequently than quarterly to SVTS to meet state specific contractual obligations and then on to the National VET Data System.

5) Specify activities to support inclusive and robust governance.

- Victoria commits to participating in the Commonwealth VDS program delivery governance processes agreed as part of the VDS program reset on 24 April 2024.
- Victoria agrees to implement any changes to governance as agreed by SSON over the life of the program.
- Victoria commits to providing details of the Victorian specific program governance model and arrangements (for example, project board, governance requirements, and how decisions are made) as part of the Project Management Plan in milestone 2.

6) Project management: Specify approach to project management and reporting

Victoria will commit to providing a detailed Project Management Plan as part of Milestone 2, which will include details of how the state will manage its state-specific VDS transition project using its preferred contemporary, fit-for-purpose program and project governance, and delivery methodology.

Victoria commits to:

- participating in the Commonwealth VDS program delivery program and project management forums and working groups.
- collaborating on VET Data Streamlining program wide risk management activities with all partners including risk identification, mitigation and treatments.
- providing regular status reporting to the Commonwealth VDS Program Management Office in line with the agreed format and frequency as agreed by the VDS Steering Group.

7) Gate Reviews

Gate-reviews are a key governance tool in contemporary program management methodologies that provide stakeholders with a formalised process to review and assess the current and ongoing value and risk of the program.

The VDS program will have gate reviews at key stages of the program. States and Territories have the option to opt-out of the VDS program as part of the gateway review process. (A138 refers).

Victoria commits to actively participating in the VDS program Gate Review process endorsed by SSON on 24 April 2024 as part of the VDS governance reset. These are:

- Gate 1 – Governance Review
- Gate 2 – Go Live Review
- Gate 3 - Mid-point Review
- Gate 4 – Delivery and Operational Transfer
- Gate 5 – Program Closure.

8) Enhanced VET Data and Evidence – evaluation arrangements

States will support the development of a VET Data Streamlining Evaluation framework, for consideration by SSON which will provide a consistent methodology for all jurisdictions to use to evaluate the success of the VDS program. The Evaluation arrangements will be robust and appropriate to the design and scale of the VET Data Streamlining program.

As part of Milestone 2 Project Planning, Victoria commits to using the evaluation framework to outline how the success of the VDS program as it pertains to their jurisdiction will be measured, how effectiveness will be evaluated, and how findings will be disseminated and actioned.

REPORTING AND PAYMENTS

9) Reporting

- Performance reporting will be due by 31 March and 30 September each year until the cessation of this implementation plan, or the final payment is processed.
- Victoria will provide to the Commonwealth a traffic light status and activity summary for this policy initiative.
- The Commonwealth will provide templates for the purposes of reporting.

10) Payments

- The Commonwealth will make payment subject to performance reporting demonstrating the relevant milestone has been met. After the initial payment, second and subsequent milestone payments will be assessed and processed in the following reporting period.

- As part of the performance reporting, Victoria will provide evidence of what has been delivered in the reporting period. Payments will be processed once performance reports have been assessed and accepted.
- Where a payment is due at a reporting period (31 March and/or 30 September), Victoria will complete the relevant section of the reporting template and provide the evidence required as agreed in the Milestones and Payments associated with this Implementation Plan.

Enhanced VET Data and Evidence funding arrangements.

Details of funding	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Commonwealth contribution	$1,626,000	TBA-	TBA-	TBA-

Future payments to be agreed prior to 30 June 2026 (as per clause A136 of the National Skills Agreement) following delivery of the project management plan at Milestone 2.

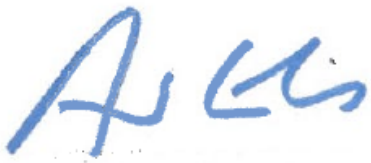
MILESTONES FOR ENHANCED -VET DATA AND EVIDENCE

The initial payment amount is limited to 10 per cent of the maximum Commonwealth contribution, States will receive up to a further 10 per cent on completion and acceptance of detailed State-specific program management planning artifacts, as outlined in the table below:

Milestone	Evidence	Payment value (Commonwealth funded)	Commonwealth reporting period
Milestone 1 Initial payment on agreement of bilateral implementation plan.	Bilateral implementation plan agreed with Commonwealth.	$813,000	N/A – Payment will be made following execution of the implementation plan in July 2025
Milestone 2 Completion and acceptance of detailed state-specific program management planning artifacts.	State-specific program management planning artifacts (as approved by VDS Steering Group) accepted by the Commonwealth. This includes: • Victorian VET Data Streamlining Roadmap • Project Management Plan • Detailed Project Schedule • Resource / Procurement plan • Risk Management Plan and Key Risks • State Specific Reconciliation Report Template.	$813,000	31 March 2026
Future milestones to be agreed prior to 30 June 2026 (as per clause A136 of the National Skills Agreement) following delivery of the project management plan at Milestone 2.			

The Parties have confirmed their commitment to this implementation plan as follows:

Signed *for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by*

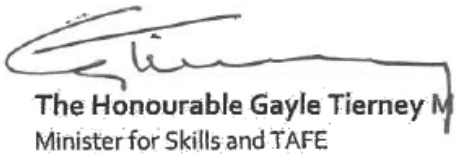


The Honourable Andrew Giles MP
Minister for Skills and Training

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Signed *for and on behalf of the State of Victoria by*



The Honourable Gayle Tierney MP
Minister for Skills and TAFE

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