INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS GRATEFUL FOR NEW COMPUTERS

Independent schools receiving computers under the Federal Government’s computer initiative are grateful but concerned over the cost of additional infrastructure and maintenance.

The Executive Director of the Association of Independent Schools of SA, Garry Le Duff, said Independent schools that qualify for the initiative are grateful because it means their students will have access to computers faster than could previously have been hoped.

“IT’s good for students but the extra costs imposed on our school communities and families are likely to cause considerable impact,” said Mr Le Duff.

“There also are extra costs for our Association as we support schools under the program. It’s something we are monitoring very carefully and with increasing concern.”

Mr Le Duff also said it was important that equity and fairness be maintained throughout the life of the initiative.

The program’s guidelines give priority to schools with the least access to computers with the aim of achieving one computer for every two students in each school. Schools with more than one computer for every two students do not receive computers.

“We think that is sensible, equitable and fair,” said Mr Le Duff.

Once the aims of the current guidelines are achieved, it should be widened to all schools.

“Once there is a computer for every two students, we want to see all schools given access to other information technologies for learning, such as interactive whiteboards, I-Pods and palm pilots,” said Mr Le Duff.

“The significant majority of parents are taxpayers. It is fair and equitable, therefore, that all students and all schools eventually benefit from the program.”

Contact: Garry Le Duff, Tel: 8179 1402(W), 8339 2106(A/H) or 0419 806 419