

### **Low student numbers result in Southland Civil Plant programme closure**

Declining student numbers in Tai Poutini Polytechnic's (TPP's) Southland-based Civil Plant Operation programme have made it unviable to continue and the programme will be closed as soon as current students have completed their studies.

TPP has been consulting with staff and union representatives over the future of the Southland Civil Plant Operation programme in recent months. With just five students enrolled in 2017, it has been decided that it is not economical to continue the programme.

The Polytechnic is working with the staff affected by the decision to discontinue the programme in order to appropriately address employment matters.

The closure of the programme in Southland will have no direct impact on other TPP Civil and Mining programmes around the country, which continue to attract strong enrolments.

TPP Chief Executive Alex Cabrera says the decision to close the Southland Civil Plant Operation programme was not an easy one.

"We are acutely aware of the contribution the programme makes to the local economy and of the future of our staff in Southland. Unfortunately, it simply became unviable to continue to offer the programme with such low student numbers.

"The closure relates to the ongoing sustainability improvement work currently underway at TPP. It was a difficult decision, however, it is a financially prudent step for an institution that is very aware of its financial challenges."

TPP is also considering a new model for the future provision of tertiary education and vocational training on the West Coast.

"Our programmes rely on the interest of the local community to ensure enrolments are sustainable. We work with industry across all of our programmes to ensure that what we are delivering is meeting the needs of the business community. Unfortunately, in the case of the Civil Plant Operation programme delivered in Southland, it became unsustainable to continue delivery," Mr Cabrera says.

#### **For more information contact:**

Mequa Hourston, Communications Manager

DDI: 03 7699 405 | mobile: 027 237 5844 | email: [mequah@tpp.ac.nz](mailto:mequah@tpp.ac.nz)