
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

Learning to Work

Report on the inquiry into vocational education in schools

House of Representatives
Standing Committee on Education and Training

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Foreword

The philosophy and purposes of education have always been the subject of debate, but at their heart they must involve assisting children to fully reach their potential and to prepare them for a full and productive role in society.

For some students the focus on an academically oriented general education has served this purpose well. However, for others, particularly amongst the 70 per cent of students who do not proceed to higher education, it has been wanting. This fact, associated with unrealistic pressures to pursue a university education, has meant that secondary schooling, particularly at the post-compulsory level, has been a frustrating and unrewarding experience for some young people. An expanded and improved provision of vocational education opportunities is not a panacea but for many it will help broaden the appeal and relevance of their post-compulsory school years.

While the attention paid to vocational education within the broader framework of school education and its role and status relative to general education have waxed and waned since the early 1960s, the renewed focus over the past decade has been very encouraging. The trebling of the number of students participating in just the past six years, combined with higher school retention rates and a gradual blurring of the distinctions between general and vocational education, has greatly improved the chance of school education meeting the needs of a larger number of young people.

However, to date this renewed focus has not been matched by adequate planning, coordination or resourcing. It has been too ad hoc and has relied too heavily on the commitment of a relatively small number of school leaders and teachers, supported at times by community and industry representatives. This is unsustainable. If the growth in vocational education in schools is to continue and its potential is to be realised, these issues must be addressed as a matter of urgency.

As a starting point, the status of vocational education in schools must be raised so that it is considered an integral part of the mainstream school curriculum rather than an added extra or a second rate option for less capable students. Further, it must be supported by adequate financial and human resources and practical support for the teachers and VET coordinators whose passion and dedication have driven its growth and success in recent years. This must be done in a way that still allows the creativity and flexibility for schools and employers to respond to the particular needs of local communities but at the same time moving towards a more nationally consistent approach.

It is essential that by the time they leave school all students have developed a body of employability skills and have an understanding of the work environment and of the various transition and career paths open to them.

It is to be hoped that the increased attention, inquiries and reports on vocational education in recent years will help sharpen the focus in a way which produces positive and effective policy outcomes.

I would like to thank the many individuals and organisations who made written submissions to this inquiry and who gave time and valuable insights at the various public hearings. Particular thanks to the committee secretariat who painstakingly researched and evaluated volumes of material in preparing the report and to my fellow committee members for their committed and diligent work.

Finally I would like to acknowledge the inspirational examples of vocational education and careers teachers and coordinators in many schools who have led the way in this vital area, particularly in those years before the benefits of vocational education were fully appreciated.

Mr Kerry Bartlett MP
Chair



Membership of the Committee

Chair Mr Kerry Bartlett MP

Deputy Chair Mr Rod Sawford MP

Members Mr Anthony Albanese MP

Mrs Margaret May MP

Mr Pat Farmer MP

Mr Chris Pearce MP

Ms Teresa Gambaro MP

Ms Tanya Plibersek MP

Mr Michael Johnson MP

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Terms of reference

On 18 July 2002 the Minister for Education, Science and Training, Hon Dr Brendan Nelson MP, asked the Committee to inquire into:

The place of vocational education in schools, its growth and development and its effectiveness in preparing students for post-school options, with particular reference to:

- the range, structure, resourcing and delivery of vocational education programs in schools, including teacher training and the impact of vocational education on other programs;
- the differences between school-based and other vocational education programs and the resulting qualifications, and the pattern of industry acceptance of school-based programs;
- vocational education in new and emerging industries; and
- the accessibility and effectiveness of vocational education for indigenous students.



Executive summary

Overview

In July 2002 the Commonwealth Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon Dr Brendan Nelson MP, asked the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Training to inquire into the place of vocational education in schools, its growth and development and its effectiveness in preparing students for post-school options. The inquiry was referred to the Committee as the growth of vocational education in schools has been one of the most significant and positive changes in secondary education in the last twenty years, and it has become increasingly apparent that this growth has exceeded the capacity of school systems to respond effectively.

A wide range of evidence was presented in the 116 written submissions received by the Committee, by the 455 witnesses who appeared at public hearings, and in the 130 exhibits and other research that is available on vocational education in schools. The Committee also visited schools in every state and territory. This evidence reinforces the view that continued and improved support for vocational education in schools is essential to achieving quality education for our students into the future.

Vocational education and learning addresses the understanding of the world of work, and requires knowledge, skills, competencies and attributes that are relevant to a range of work environments. Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VET in Schools) is a subset of vocational education that is provided as part of the National Training Framework and assessed as meeting national competency standards as part of industry developed Training Packages. Most of the evidence that the Committee received for this inquiry focussed on VET in Schools.

The impact of vocational education, and more specifically VET in Schools, has been considerable. There has been substantial growth in student numbers, in total

course enrolments, in the range of programs, annual curriculum hours, structured workplace learning and to a lesser extent School-based New Apprenticeships. In 2002, 44 per cent of all students enrolled in a senior secondary certificate were enrolled in VET in Schools; 95 per cent of all schools with senior secondary programs offered VET in Schools; more than 50 per cent of programs were in tourism and hospitality, business and clerical and computing; 112,403 students undertook structured workplace learning; and over 7,500 students commenced a School-based New Apprenticeship.

Many students are highly appreciative of the opportunities that VET provides. The growth that has occurred can be attributed to the increased retention rate of students to Year 12 since 1980, a focus on accommodating the needs of a wider range of students, a focus of the Australian community and hence students on skilling for the future, and the appeal of alternative learning methodologies to those of traditional theoretical subjects. The incorporation of vocational education has been recognised as integral to a student's education in most schools, yet the management of the change is clearly problematic.

The degree to which schools have incorporated the organisational and structural requirements for conducting VET in schools has been raised as a key to sustaining high quality VET in senior secondary school. Greater sustainability is dependant on greater mainstreaming of courses and parity of esteem for VET. Aspects of school operations and culture which need to be addressed in order to sustain VET include:

- operational features such as timetabling and the length of the school day, how VET is delivered including purchasing where necessary from other providers , and transport to facilitate mobility of students;
- perceived parity or lack thereof between general and vocational education;
- equal treatment of alternative pathways in career education and student counselling, with advocacy of a wide range of training and employment options, beyond the traditional tertiary courses and related jobs; and
- professional development for teachers, and the addressing of workload issues.

New national frameworks have been developed for vocational education, accompanied by action plans to assist with the transition from school to post-school options. However, although there has been considerable high level development of principles and guidelines for their implementation, most witnesses reported that there has been insufficient funding to support these objectives.

Additionally, the Committee notes that the purposes of vocational education and VET in meeting the diverse needs of students are not sufficiently clear, and

confusion arises when the terms vocational education and VET are used almost interchangeably by the community. Greater consistency in terminology would assist educators, industry and the community to discuss the benefits and outcomes of vocational education in schools and VET in Schools, as well as other post-school pathways.

The Committee believes that there needs to be greater promotion of the advantages of VET qualifications in the community relative to the absence of post-school qualifications and relative to university qualifications.

Diversity

There are significant differences between the states and territories in key features of vocational education including:

- the nature of delivery: with some states and territories delivering a VET qualification or competencies as a separate ‘stand alone’ course, while others ‘embed’ the competencies within a general curriculum course;
- Registered Training Organisation (RTO) status of schools and external RTO involvement: with some jurisdictions supporting all senior colleges to be RTOs, while others mainly have auspice arrangements with TAFE;
- requirements for, and hours of, work placements: with some states and territories mandating structured work placements, and others only requiring work placements when the Training Package specifies it.
- nominal hours for gaining competency: with significant variation across jurisdictions, which affects national reporting;
- recognition of VET for tertiary entrance purposes: with some states requiring the completion of an additional exam by VET students, and in others the courses attracting a tertiary entrance score;
- access to School-based New Apprenticeships: with Queensland accounting for more than 50 per cent of commencements and other states and territories very few;
- access to non-National Training Framework vocational learning opportunities: with a reported decline in access to career education and other work experience programs.

These differences have been identified in some cases as a risk to the quality of VET in Schools. The variation affects students’ access to opportunities such as work experience and structured work placements, the quality of delivery in relation to

the number of hours for consolidating skills in schools and in the workplace, the available support provided by the school, access to further pathways using paid employment as part of School-based New Apprenticeships, and recognition for university entrance.

Provision of vocational education

The number and type of VET programs offered by schools depends on a range of factors including:

- student demand;
- school location;
- the availability of human, physical and financial resources;
- external providers and access to suitable programs; and
- employers willing to offer opportunities for structured workplace learning and/or apprenticeships.

The Committee appreciates that this is a complex range of factors to consider and address. The Committee is concerned that for a number of schools with limited resources, this complexity will dissuade them from advancing vocational education quality and participation. The Committee is encouraged by recent actions of governments and education authorities to pursue a greater diversity in vocational education offerings. The importance of school systems in providing support, and industry being engaged and being aware of the positive outcomes, is crucial to successful implementation. A key feature of successful vocational education programs is access to structured workplace learning. The development of clusters of local community partnerships to coordinate work placements has been promoted as a successful model to expand across Australia.

Review of the distribution of students' qualifications, choices made by male and female students, and participation in specific fields of education indicate that the outputs across states and territories are highly diverse. Students' background characteristics and early schooling experiences influence choices that will affect their future careers. Providing earlier access to vocational education opportunities and more structured career education and advice would benefit many students, especially students with a disability, students at risk of leaving school early and Indigenous students.

The effects of location and cultural background highlight the challenges of providing access to vocational education in geographically remote communities.

Where there is essential support, positive outcomes are being realised, for example for Indigenous students participating in vocational education. The complexity of addressing background factors is recognised by the Committee. Involving the community in supporting all students, shaping students' choices, and supporting work placements is integral to the vocational education process.

Quality assurance

Addressing teacher development issues needs to be a priority to improve the effectiveness of vocational education and assist with culture change. Changes to pre-service education courses and providing additional funding for schools to facilitate industry placement and professional development for teachers are required.

The provision of assistance to schools to achieve Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) compliance, and streamlining joint administrative requirements are essential to reduce the overhead administrative costs associated with VET in Schools. Greater resourcing is needed to assist VET coordinators, especially in the set-up phase of programs and establishing RTO status.

An additional concern of the Committee is that much of the focus of VET in Schools has been on meeting quality assurance requirements of management and administrative processes rather than on quality improvement in teaching and learning. This must become the main focus in the next phase of development of vocational education in schools. It is important that the burden of administration is reduced to allow teachers and administrators to focus on pedagogy and outcomes, without compromising confidence in schools' compliance with AQTF standards.

Innovative models for structural solutions have been generated more through leadership and innovation at the school and local level rather than through system leadership. States with senior secondary colleges seem to have a number of well-established models for incorporating VET into school structures and cultures. The economies of scale offered through senior secondary colleges in close proximity to TAFE facilities lead to more cooperative structures and processes. It appears to the Committee that some high schools operating in clusters across school sectors and with TAFE are also effectively managing the complexities of structural and cultural change. The variety of approaches to managing and delivering VET would seem to indicate that there is no single successful model in schools. One of the challenges is to create greater national consistency without compromising local flexibility.

Resourcing

It is likely that without significant commitment and action by authorities to assist with resourcing, an increasing turnover of VET teachers and coordinators can be expected. Improvements in quality will therefore be more difficult to achieve. The Committee notes that the current funding situation urgently needs to be addressed as there is strong debate on the meaning of 'adequate' resourcing as defined in the National Goals for Schooling. The Committee believes that it is time to move from rhetoric to sustainable implementation.

It is clear from evidence given to the inquiry that VET is more expensive to set up, deliver and administer than the majority of general education programs. This should be recognised in funding. The significant growth in VET in Schools has resulted in declining per capita funding for students. Expectations that all costs can be absorbed into current budgets appear to be unrealistic given the smaller class sizes and greater administration and work placement requirements. Funding of both schools and TAFE remains tight, making it difficult to cope with the higher costs of providing VET in Schools. The funding issue is complicated by different arrangements and guidelines that apply to the two sectors. The Committee believes that efforts are required at all levels to streamline the administration of VET in Schools.

The current funding models can create barriers to cooperation and in some jurisdictions there are disincentives for schools who might otherwise seek to outsource their VET delivery to TAFE or other RTO providers. These issues need to be addressed.

Qualifications

The Committee supports the greater focus on, and development of, generic and employability skills as a substantial base for all students on which further industry, occupation or job-specific skills can be built. There is a case for the development of a national Certificate I in generic and employability skills to be available for all students. For those interested in particular industry skills the pathway would then lead to specific vocational education and training through National Training Packages. This needs to be supported by non-National Training Framework activity. There should be greater focus on and consideration of other vocational education areas to foster students' development, such as broader vocational learning, career education and enterprise education. Funding to enable resourcing of these through the schooling sectors also needs to be addressed.

Focussing on VET qualifications, the Committee notes that for levels above Certificate II, the teaching and resource expertise required is more specialised and carries additional costs. Successful programs at the Certificate III level are usually run in partnership with other providers. The Committee believes that the priority focus of VET in Schools should be up to and including Certificate II. Further qualification levels should be provided in conjunction with local industry, requiring them to demonstrate that there are skills needs and that they can support the work placement requirements and contribute to infrastructure costs.

Skill needs

The Committee notes that initiatives have been introduced by governments and industry to address current skill shortages and anticipate new employment markets. Although the accuracy of predictive labour market information is variable, strategies need to be developed to support students through the volatility of economic cycles and longer term change. As the prediction of national future skill shortages is problematic, addressing skill shortages at a regional or state level, supported by national skills initiatives, may be more effective than doing so on a national scale. The support of the community and industries represented by local employers is crucial. Industries with concerns about skill shortages and quality need to take the initiative, supported by education providers, to develop effective methods to improve the image of their industry with students to encourage VET in Schools participation.

Part of the challenge is to encourage students, parents, teachers and careers advisors to consider the full range of opportunities for young people in traditional and emerging industries, and to address the perception that traditional trades and industries do not offer good opportunities. This requires a concerted joint approach between school careers advisors, industry and government.

Emerging industries have urgent needs that are not well served by the current VET system with the long development time for the introduction of training packages. Greater links between industries and teachers are required to provide greater access to professional development opportunities. Developing centres of excellence that build links with industry, schools and the broader VET and university sector is a model that the Committee recommends. Yet for most emerging industries, the development of sound generic workplace and employability skills may be more useful than trying to predict specific skill needs.

Career education

The Committee finds the lack of appropriate standards for delivering career education disturbing. It is also concerned at the lack of appropriate data to inform policy, planning or performance measurement. Greater accountability and accurate collection and reporting of relevant data is essential, and a clear set of national standards for the delivery of career education in schools, and a national system of reporting are necessary.

The Committee believes that career education has to be a legitimate and significant part of the school curriculum, to be taught by experienced and appropriately qualified teachers. Whether it is taught as a separate subject or embedded in the curriculum, there should be a clearly defined part of the curriculum in Years 9-10, possibly with some introductory work in Year 8, devoted to career education.

Better pre-service careers training and continuing professional development are necessary for careers advisers, just as they are for all teachers. Education authorities, professional associations and higher education institutions should work together to coordinate the development and provision of appropriate activities.

There is considerable work under way in the wider field of vocational education, including career guidance, to enhance opportunities for Indigenous students and to encourage improved retention rates and successful post-school outcomes. However, the Committee also notes the problems associated with the short-term nature of some projects and the need for long-term strategies. There is also a need for Indigenous staff with career guidance training to participate in the delivery of programs for Indigenous students, and the Committee encourages education authorities to develop pathways for Indigenous careers educators.

Recent work on an Australian Blueprint for Career Development, and progress on the National Training Framework for Career Coordinators, is encouraging and should provide the basis for ensuring minimum common standards.

Access and outcomes

It is important to improve the access to and effectiveness of vocational education in schools for students with particular needs, with earlier and more individualised support. External providers have an important role to play in assisting schools to provide additional support in transition management, especially for those

students with disabilities, students at risk of leaving school early and Indigenous students.

Part-time work provides benefits to improving the transition from school to work, although there can be dangers of over-commitment. Early outcome data indicates that vocational education in schools assists in improving post-school outcomes. However, in general there is an urgent need for national longitudinal data on the outcomes of vocational education in schools.

Conclusion

This report includes recommendations mainly aimed at longer term strategies. In summary, there is a need to:

- urgently review and improve resourcing, operating infrastructure and processes, both within and across educational sectors;
- expand partnerships to include a broader base of stakeholders, improving links with industry to better target vocational education offerings;
- build stronger connections between career education, structured workplace learning, VET in Schools, vocational learning and enterprise education;
- review the requirements of Training Packages to specify work placement requirements;
- improve access to vocational education for students with specific needs, in particular before the post-compulsory level;
- provide training and development opportunities for teachers; and
- increase national consistency on a range of vocational education issues.

Many of these strategies require the successful implementation of cooperative arrangements, both within local communities and nationally. The priorities for the next period of vocational education in schools should be to ensure the sustainability of vocational education with a focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning for all students. The facilitation of partnerships and better cross-sectoral arrangements are fundamental to this process.



List of recommendations

Recommendations are grouped thematically below. They are numbered according to their sequence in the report.

Purpose of vocational education in schools

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that MCEETYA, its associated education authorities and key community groups engage in further debate on the purposes of vocational education in schools, including VET in Schools programs, in order to clarify and articulate specific objectives, expected outcomes, target groups and priorities, with a view to better ensuring that policies and programs meet those purposes. (*Paragraph 2.46*)

Promotion of vocational education

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that Commonwealth, state and territory governments and industry jointly fund a promotion campaign to:

- raise the awareness of parents, students, educationalists and the community of the benefits of vocational education including:
 - ⇒ VET as broadly available to all members of the community; and
 - ⇒ VET in Schools and School-based New Apprenticeships;
- raise the status of VET and other non-tertiary pathways by:
 - ⇒ increasing awareness of the range of rewarding career options available; and
 - ⇒ promoting careers in areas of skill shortage, such as in established trades. (*Paragraph 2.54*)

National Consistency

Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends that as a high priority MCEETYA pursue greater national consistency in key aspects of vocational education affecting the recognition and value of VET in Schools, to ensure a more uniform approach to transition to further education, training and employment. This should include:

- the collection of meaningful and accurate data;
- the adoption of common terminology;
- the recognition of VET for tertiary entrance;
- the role of and requirements for structured workplace learning;
- issues regarding nominal hours and units of competency;
- approaches to stand alone courses versus embedding of VET components;
- teacher training;
- policies for the use of TAFE and private RTOs; and
- reporting of participation and outcomes. (*Paragraph 3.54*)

School-based New Apprenticeships

Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends that Commonwealth, state and territory education authorities and industry bodies address the findings and implement the proposals of the ANTA National Evaluation of School-based New Apprenticeships in order to increase the participation of students and industry in SBNAs, particularly in areas of skill shortage such as the traditional trades. (*Paragraph 4.44*)

Resourcing

Recommendation 5

The Committee recommends that state and territory education authorities recognise in their staffing formulae the additional workload of teachers with significant VET responsibilities, and reduce the classroom teaching load to reflect the extra work, supervision and reporting requirements of teaching VET. (*Paragraph 5.37*)

Recommendation 12

The Committee recommends that as a priority more complete assessments be made of the costs of vocational education and specifically VET in Schools (using *The Cost of VET in Schools*, 2003 as a methodology) in comparison with:

- general education programs in schools; and
- the delivery of comparable certificate programs in TAFE;

and that if such calculations demonstrate higher costs of VET in Schools programs than general education programs, Commonwealth, state and territory governments share the responsibility for funding, with states and territories raising the recurrent per capita funding and the Commonwealth increasing the capital and support funding. (*Paragraph 6.22*)

Recommendation 13

The Committee recommends that MCEETYA pursue the resolution of funding responsibilities for vocational education between the Commonwealth, states and territories across the different education sectors. (*Paragraph 6.35*)

Recommendation 28

The Committee recommends that ANTA receive additional funding to facilitate the development of qualifications and industry links in new and emerging industries, and to better reflect the growing numbers of students undertaking VET in Schools courses. (*Paragraph 7.91*)

Teaching and professional development

Recommendation 6

The Committee recommends that educational authorities and industry representatives undertake further analysis of the relative costs and benefits of embedded and stand alone courses; and that authorities move towards a nationally consistent approach bearing in mind the suitability of particular subjects to either type of course. (*Paragraph 5.40*)

Recommendation 7, 27 and 31

The Committee recommends that the MCEETYA Taskforce on Teacher Quality and Educational Leadership (TQELT) pursue changes to teacher education programs to achieve a nationally consistent approach. This should include greater consideration of vocational education issues, including the need for:

- potential VET teachers to meet the competencies required to Certificate IV in the new Training and Assessment Package, and more specialised training in VET-related subject areas; (*Recommendation 7, Paragraph 5.60*)
- all pre-service teacher education to include some career education training; (*Recommendation 31, Paragraph 8.139*) and
- technology based courses to have appropriate industry-standard facilities to train teachers. (*Recommendation 27, Paragraph 7.63*)

Recommendation 8

The Committee recommends that a consistent application of Recognition of Prior Learning be pursued nationally to ensure that current schools and teachers are not financially disadvantaged in meeting compliance requirements of the AQTF. (*Paragraph 5.60*)

Recommendation 9

The Committee recommends that a national industry placement program be developed to support teachers accessing industry experience. The involvement of industry in part should be pursued to sponsor such a program in conjunction with state and federal government funding. (*Paragraph 5.71*)

Recommendation 10

The Committee recommends that education authorities implement initiatives to attract suitable industry qualified personnel into VET teaching, including supported and accelerated education training, with assistance for HECS provided by the Commonwealth. (*Paragraph 5.71*)

Recommendation 22

The Committee recommends that appropriate national, state and territory associations be identified to support professional development and forums to encourage principals and school leadership teams to advance the VET agenda and more fully incorporate VET into the mainstream school curriculum. (*Paragraph 6.125*)

Australian Quality Training Framework

Recommendation 11

The Committee recommends that the reporting requirements of RTOs, school VET coordinators and teachers be streamlined in order to reduce the administrative burden, but without compromising the integrity of such arrangements. (*Paragraph 5.81*)

Coordination and cooperation

Recommendation 14

The Committee recommends that efforts be made to improve cooperation between school and TAFE sectors where geography and course offerings make that viable, in areas such as co-location, human resources and administrative practices.

This should include a national review of charging practices by TAFE for government and non-government schools in order to:

- determine more equitable practices to better reflect their relative costs and resourcing; and
- ensure that funding restrictions and differential charging practices do not act as a barrier to government and non-government school students accessing otherwise appropriate VET courses through TAFE.

It should also include consideration of ways of addressing other potential barriers to the greater take-up of suitable courses offered by TAFE or other RTOs, including factors such as transport, timetabling, certainty of course continuity and duty of care issues. (*Paragraph 6.39*)

Recognition processes

Recommendation 15

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Education Minister coordinate education authorities and universities to accelerate work on nationally consistent approaches to developing tertiary recognition arrangements for VET in Schools courses. (*Paragraph 6.60*)

Recommendation 16

The Committee recommends that the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee and ANTA take action to provide greater recognition of TAFE qualifications for university entrance, so that this becomes a more viable pathway to higher education for those pursuing VET options at and after school. (*Paragraph 6.60*)

Workplace Learning

Recommendation 17

The Committee recommends that the period of funding for providers of work placement coordination be extended to a triennium basis in order to provide greater certainty and continuity of programs. (*Paragraph 6.90*)

Recommendation 18

The Committee recommends that agencies at all levels of government be encouraged to participate in supporting work experience and structured work placements. (*Paragraph 6.93*)

Recommendation 20

The Committee recommends that an evaluation of the role of cluster workplace coordinators be undertaken for the purpose of:

- increasing their effectiveness in forming the critical links between schools and industry;
- establishing structures to improve cooperative approaches between education and employment services in the community;
- assisting them to meet the increasing demand for work placements while also addressing the areas of local skill shortages;
- ensuring that rural and remote area needs are being met; and
- determining what extra resources and training are needed to effectively carry out this role, with the Commonwealth providing those extra resources. (*Paragraph 6.103*)

Recommendation 21

The Committee recommends that relevant authorities address issues regarding work placements such as occupational health and safety, workers compensation, and clarifying the responsibilities of supervisors, which may be acting as barriers to more employers offering work placements. (*Paragraph 6.103*)

Recommendation 23

The Committee recommends that MCEETYA and ANTA develop a consistent national approach to structured workplace learning, with an agreed mandated minimum which meets the needs of industry and the requirements of the National Training Framework and Training Packages. (*Paragraph 6.139*)

Generic and employability skills**Recommendation 24**

The Committee recommends that enterprise and employability skills be made a higher priority and developed through a range of strategies across the curriculum in addition to the VET in Schools pathway, to

maximise the effectiveness of vocational education in preparing students for post-school options. (*Paragraph 7.38*)

Recommendation 35

The Committee recommends that the *Principles and Guidelines for Improving Outcomes for Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Schools (2002-2004)* be revised for the next period to reflect the greater need for access to VET qualifications prior to senior secondary years. (*Paragraph 9.34*)

Recommendation 36

The Committee recommends that Commonwealth, state and territory education authorities through ANTA fast track the development of a Certificate I in Generic Workskills for all students to complete by Year 10. (*Paragraph 9.34*)

Industry needs

Recommendation 25

The Committee recommends that the National Industry Skills Initiative be evaluated for the purpose of increasing its effectiveness and breadth in attracting young people into industries experiencing skill shortages, and that any funding necessary for an expanded role be jointly met by government and the relevant industry bodies. (*Paragraph 7.55*)

Recommendation 26

The Committee recommends that DEST work with industry bodies to identify and project skill shortages, and that closer links be forged between business and industry and schools to address those shortages at a local, regional and national level.

- At the national level this needs to be addressed by industry representatives and training bodies in conjunction with educational authorities.
- At the local and regional levels, the links between industry and schools should be strengthened by enhanced cluster coordinator positions. (See Rec. 20) (*Paragraph 7.60*)

Careers Education

Recommendation 29

The Committee recommends that careers education be a mandatory part of the core curriculum for the compulsory years of secondary schooling. It should include a clearly defined and structured program, distinct from VET programs. (*Paragraph 8.57*)

Recommendation 30

The Committee recommends that all secondary schools have at least one full-time professional careers adviser, with appropriate specialist training, who can provide a dedicated career education service within the school and work with the VET coordinator. (*Paragraph 8.74*)

Recommendation 32

The Committee recommends that the professional development needs of careers educators be better met by:

- private and public tertiary institutions providing additional and more accessible post-graduate courses; and
 - sufficient resourcing for teachers to access both formal courses and industry knowledge including:
 - ⇒ state and territory support through salary continuity and release from teaching; and
 - ⇒ Commonwealth support in meeting formal course costs.
- (*Paragraph 8.139*)

Recommendation 33

The Committee recommends that in order to ensure consistency, transparency and accountability in the delivery of career education, a clear set of national standards for the delivery of career education in schools, and a national system of reporting, be adopted by MCEETYA. (*Paragraph 8.152*)

Special Needs

Recommendation 19

The Committee recommends that Commonwealth, state and territory education authorities investigate and develop strategies to support rural and remote communities' transport needs and, where necessary, provide increased travel and accommodation assistance to allow more isolated students to access VET courses. (*Paragraph 6.103*)

Recommendation 34

The Committee recommends that Commonwealth, state and territory education authorities give further attention to providing VET programs, and effecting transitions to work and further training, for people with disabilities, by:

- providing necessary modifications to learning materials, programs and equipment;
- increased work placement mentoring and support; and
- improving links between workplace coordinators and disability employment services. (*Paragraph 9.23*)

Recommendation 37

The Committee recommends that there be an increased focus on earlier assistance to support students 'at risk' and Indigenous students by:

- strengthening literacy and numeracy skills;
- supporting the development of vocational skills and VET qualifications earlier than Year 10; and
- monitoring the progress of *Partners in a Learning Culture* projects and programs for the purpose of replicating and expanding those which effectively meet the training and transition needs of Indigenous students. (*Paragraph 9.40*)

Recommendation 38

The Committee recommends that Commonwealth, state and territory education authorities fund additional support, mentoring and career guidance, ideally by Indigenous staff, for Indigenous students undertaking or considering undertaking VET in Schools or SBNAs, and that consideration be given to more effectively linking these courses to real post-school employment opportunities and career paths. (*Paragraph 9.40*)

Recommendation 39

The Committee recommends that there be an evaluation of funding for a wide range of specific ancillary vocational education and careers support programs, in order to:

- determine their effectiveness;
- improve coordination;
- ensure greater continuity of funding; and

- reduce community confusion by eliminating the frequent rebadging of similar programs. (*Paragraph 9.40*)

Outcomes

Recommendation 40

The Committee recommends that a full analysis be undertaken of the wide range of training pathway, career and transition services in order to:

- achieve better understanding and coordination of services, avoid duplication and remedy deficiencies;
- improve the links between SBNAs and New Apprenticeship Centres, making NACS more accessible for young people; and
- improve the information available to students on transition options and available assistance. (*Paragraph 9.53*)

Recommendation 41

The Committee recommends that research be conducted at a national level into immediate and longer term post-school outcomes of students to better evaluate the effectiveness of VET in assisting students into career pathways. (*Paragraph 9.88*)

1

Introduction

A student's perspective:

I am doing the retail operations traineeship ... [it] is the only thing that has really kept me at school. I got to grade 10 and I did not know if I can do it anymore, and then I got offered my traineeship. It is one day out of school and it is really good. That is what has kept me at school.¹

A local business perspective:

I love the program but I have the feeling ... the whole program could crash, despite what any businessperson would do ... I feel it is the exceptional and extraordinary efforts of teachers and personnel that are holding it together, and maybe the support of the business.²

A teacher's perspective:

A lot of teachers come into the system in isolation ... vocational education is not important, especially in the traditional areas of maths, social science and English, and that is where there are huge issues ... I feel the emphasis needs to be ... on getting teachers to making a pedagogical mind shift and understand that it's not their subject in isolation that is important. They have got to place that student in the real world and that involves work, employment, further training, everything.³

1 Ms Sarah Cole, Student, Marymount College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 8 April 2003, Burleigh Waters, Qld, p. 222.

2 Mr Neil Druce, Managing Director, Green Grove Organics, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 July 2003, Junee, NSW, p. 787.

3 Mr Damian Shuttleworth, Manager, Enterprise and Industry Program, Mandurah Senior College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 August 2003, Mandurah, WA, p. 857.

Vocational education in schools

- 1.1 The growth of vocational education in schools has been cited as one of the most significant educational changes in secondary education in the last ten to twenty years.⁴ This growth has been demonstrated across all industry sectors and in the number of students and hours of participation. It has been attributed to a range of factors, including a response to student disengagement from school, the need to better prepare students for the world of work and to aid young people in the transition from school to more independent living, and a demand from industry for young people needed to meet identified skill shortages.
- 1.2 One rationale for vocational education in schools has been meeting the needs of students in an educational context where only 30 per cent of students go on to university. It has been argued that the curriculum has been inadequately catering for those students who may not aspire to go to university or who may be unsuccessful in attaining that goal. The best ways that schools and communities can cater for all students has been a key point of discussion.
- 1.3 The number of students completing Year 12 in the last twenty years has risen markedly. Since 1980 the percentage of students participating in Year 12 rose from 35 per cent to just over 73 per cent in 2001 (with a peak of 77 per cent in 1992).⁵ Following the Finn review⁶ of post-compulsory education and training in 1991 young people have increasingly been encouraged to complete Year 12 or its vocational equivalent.
- 1.4 Jurisdictions across Australia are seeking to address the disengagement that some young people are displaying in high schools. This lack of engagement can result in students leaving school before completing Year 12 or its vocational equivalent, the outcomes which all educational jurisdictions see as desirable for students themselves and for the community. Indigenous students and other students 'at risk' or with special needs have been identified as requiring additional support.
- 1.5 Combined with the growth in vocational education have been challenges for all education sectors to meet the demand and improve outcomes for

4 Klee, C, 2002, 'A practitioner's view of vocational education and training in schools', *Exhibit No. 40*, pp. 48–54, and see Mr Bert Evans, Chairman, NSW Board of VET, *Transcript of Evidence*, 25 February 2003, Sydney, p. 57.

5 Fullarton, S, Walker, M, Ainley, J and Hillman, K, 2003, *Patterns of participation in Year 12*, LSAY Research Report No. 33, ACER, Adelaide, p. vii.

6 Finn, B, 1991, *Young People's Participation in Post-compulsory Education and Training*, Report of the Australian Education Council Review Committee, AGPS, Canberra.

students and the wider community in skilling the nation. The challenges brought to the attention of the Committee have included issues of funding and resourcing at all levels, teacher support and effectiveness, career advice, student outcomes and definitions of success, and the differing expectations of industry and education providers regarding the purpose of vocational education in schools.

- 1.6 In 1998 this Committee's predecessor, examining broader issues involving TAFE and higher education, found concerns over the delivery and recognition arrangements of vocational education and training (VET) in schools. The report noted that growth had been significant but that substantial work was required to address the identified concerns:

VET in Schools is still in a fledgling and experimental state. It is not as widely available to students as it should be and programs are of varying quality and relevance to industry.⁷

- 1.7 Considerable research and work has been completed in every jurisdiction and at national levels through the Ministerial Council on Employment Education, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA)⁸ and the Australian National Training Authority Ministerial Council (ANTA MINCO) to advance cooperative strategies to address these challenges, which go beyond the educational domain alone. However, in speaking to students, teachers, work placement coordinators and employers in a range of communities, it was apparent to the Committee that despite considerable progress since its 1998 report, significant work remains to be done.
- 1.8 There has been considerable industry criticism of the quality of vocational education in schools,⁹ which must be addressed to ensure that school-based programs and qualifications have high industry acceptance. The priority area for school programs, in part funded by ANTA, has been in nationally recognised qualifications as part of the National Training Framework (NTF). Ensuring that employers have confidence in industry specific qualifications is essential to ensure positive outcomes for young people.
- 1.9 However, in evidence to the Committee industry representatives suggested that the focus should be on providing a sound general

7 House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training, *Today's training. Tomorrow's skills*, 1998, p. 44.

8 MCEETYA, 2001, *National Report on Schooling in Australia 2001*, Curriculum Corporation, Melbourne, <<http://www.curriculum.edu.au/anr>>.

9 Ghost, S, 2002, 'VET in Schools: the needs of industry', *Exhibit No. 40*, pp. 61-64.

education, including generic workplace and employability skills,¹⁰ with the provision of a workplace to provide the context for work related learning. This then raises the question of how much emphasis should be placed on vocational education for new and emerging industries,¹¹ and on addressing current skill shortages in established industries.

- 1.10 The terms vocational education in schools, vocational learning, career education and enterprise education are frequently used and all have significant and separate meanings in the process of youth transitions. Much of the focus to date has been on accredited vocational education and training in schools. To ensure its effectiveness in preparing students for post-school options it has been suggested to the Committee that greater resources need to be allocated to support vocational learning and career awareness.
- 1.11 These and many other issues have been brought to the Committee's attention during the course of this inquiry.

Terms of reference

- 1.12 On 18 July 2002 the Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon Dr Brendan Nelson MP, asked the Committee to inquire into the place of vocational education in schools, its growth and development and its effectiveness in preparing students for post-school options, with particular reference to:
- the range, structure, resourcing and delivery of vocational education programs in schools, including teacher training and the impact of vocational education on other programs;
 - the differences between school-based and other vocational education programs and the resulting qualifications, and the pattern of industry acceptance of school-based programs;
 - vocational education in new and emerging industries; and
 - the accessibility and effectiveness of vocational education for indigenous students.

10 Mr Steve Balzary, Director, Employment and Training, and Ms Mary Nicholson, National Manager, Business and Industry School to Work Alliance, ACCI, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 March 2003, pp. 212 and 214.

11 Mr Stephen Ghost, General Manager, Education and Training, Australian Industry Group, *Transcript of Evidence*, 25 February, 2003, Sydney, p. 83.

The structure of the report

1.13 The report is structured into three sections:

- Chapters 1 – 3 provide background to the context of the inquiry. Chapter 2 reviews the purposes and rationale of vocational education in schools. Chapter 3 outlines the systems in place to support vocational education, including state and territory arrangements, funding, and quality arrangements.
- Chapters 4 – 8 report on the current situation. Chapter 4 highlights the growth of vocational education, especially VET in Schools. Chapter 5 discusses the impact that vocational education has had on schools: on timetabling, teachers and resourcing, including the implications of the Australian Quality Training Framework. Chapter 6 identifies various structural factors that influence outcomes, including cross-sector arrangements, funding models, teacher availability and regional factors. Chapter 7 considers the effect of the multiple purposes of vocational education, and how competing needs create dilemmas for educators. Chapter 8 addresses the issues of career education, advice and staffing. Resourcing for careers advice has generally been further diminished by the emphasis on accredited vocational education and training.
- Chapters 9 and 10 focus on future actions. Chapter 9 reviews approaches to catering for individual needs, pathways and the importance of external services to schools that support individuals. The effectiveness of vocational education is reviewed, highlighting the need for greater information on outcomes. Chapter 10 reinforces the need for consolidation and ensuring the sustainability of vocational education. Facilitating partnerships and better articulation arrangements are also keys to effective outcomes and the chapter concludes by advocating support for a diversity of pathways and the need for greater national consistency.

The aims of the report

1.14 The aim of the report is to provide an overview of vocational education in schools throughout Australian jurisdictions in late 2002 and 2003, through the Committee's review of submissions, its public hearings and its visits to a range of schools in all states and territories. Reviews such as *The quest for a working blueprint: vocational education and training in Australian secondary*

schools published by the NCVET¹² provide a more exhaustive description of growth and practice up until 2000. The Australian College of Educators in *Learning in a Knowledge Society: the Vocational Dimension*¹³ provides a series of essays on vocational learning from a range of stakeholder perspectives.

- 1.15 It is not the intention of this report to replicate the substantial volume of research that has been undertaken. Rather, the focus of the report is on the issues and dilemmas facing education authorities and schools, teachers, parents, industry and students, and to present key findings and make recommendations to increase the effectiveness of vocational education, in its various forms, in preparing students for post-school options.

12 Malley, J, Keating, J, Robinson, C and Hawke, G, 2001, *The quest for a working blueprint: vocational education and training in Australian secondary schools*, Part 1, NCVET.

13 *Learning in a Knowledge Society: The Vocational Dimension*, Unicorn: Journal of the Australian College of Educators, 2002, Vol 28, No. 3, Exhibit No. 40.

2

Purpose and rationale

- 2.1 Major policy changes and initiatives in vocational education in schools have occurred in response to increasing retention, global economic imperatives and industry requirements, social equity considerations and community expectations. These different drivers of change create multiple purposes for vocational education which are not always compatible. The range of purposes has resulted in the need for a broadening of the curriculum in secondary schools. The rationale for increasing vocational education and its links with general education is a major theme of this chapter. A review of vocational activity is provided, including the need in the most recent Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) national strategy document for addressing the status of VET.
- 2.2 The chapter concludes with descriptions of the components of vocational education, including a depiction of a model of vocational education within a general education framework. The model highlights the purposes that vocational education is expected to serve and the range of pathways that can be followed. This diversity in pathways provides some indication of the complexity of providing vocational education in schools.

A major national activity

- 2.3 Since Federation shifts in government policy have resulted in significant changes in the location of responsibility for vocational education and training, and for its coordination. The shifting of delivery in the last decade reflects the move in recent years to broader welfare and economic concerns for youth, in conjunction with a focus on skilling for the future.¹

1 MCEETYA, 1999, *The Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century*, <<http://www.mceetya.edu.au/nationalgoals/index.htm>>. For activity since 1996 on

- 2.4 Essentially, there have been periods of policy shift from the 1960s where vocational learning played a significant role in preparing young people at the end of Year 10 or 11 to consider full-time employment, apprenticeships and other skills training, or university study. This long standing presence of vocational education within the state secondary education systems predates the national post-school system of vocational education developed from the mid 1970s.
- 2.5 School-based vocational education and training received less emphasis in the 1980s. The change from the 1960s and 1970s to the renewed focus on vocational education in the early 1990s was associated with a new social and economic environment that had higher youth unemployment, increasing secondary school retention rates to Year 12 and variable numbers of apprentices in training. Concerns were raised at national and state levels about the quality and organisation of the final years of schooling, the need to improve national skill levels, and welfare and equity issues for young people.²

Response to needs in schools

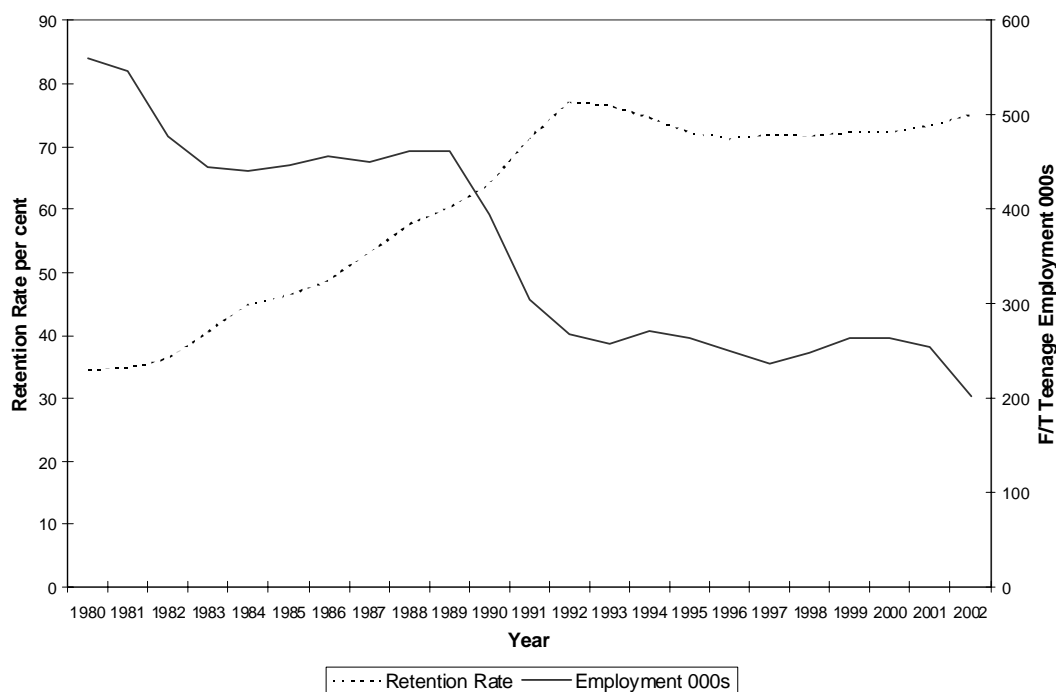
Increasing retention

- 2.6 The most significant development in schooling in Australia in the last thirty years has been the rise in the proportion of young people completing secondary education. The retention rate to Year 12 rose from approximately 30 per cent in 1971 to 77 per cent in 1992, falling to around 72 per cent in 1995 and remaining at this level.³

vocational education in schools at a policy level please refer to MCEETYA, *National Report on Schooling in Australia 2000 and 2001: Vocational Education and Training in Schools*. For an earlier summary of activity please refer to Malley, J et al., 2001, *The quest for a working blueprint: vocational education and training in Australian secondary schools*, NCVER.

- 2 Malley, J et al., 2001, *The quest for a working blueprint: vocational education and training in Australian secondary schools*, Part 1, NCVER, p. 19; Ms Susan Hyde, District Superintendent, Central South West, SA Department of Education and Children's Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, p. 1036.
- 3 DETYA and South Australian Department of Education, Training and Employment, 2001, *National report on the development of education in Australia*, prepared for the International Conference on Education, <<http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/ICE/natrap/Australia.pdf>>.

Figure 2.1 Rate of retention to final year of secondary schooling, fulltime teenage employment: 1971 – 2002



Source ABS Schools Australia (4221.0) and ABS Labour Force (6202.0.40.001)

- 2.7 This trend can be partly explained by the reduction in full time employment opportunities for teenagers. The peak in the retention rate was associated with the 1991-92 recession. The retention rate for females has been higher than that of males for most of the 1980s and 1990s. This is in part due to a significant proportion of males leaving school prior to Year 12 and taking up apprenticeships as one example.⁴
- 2.8 Associated with reduced labour market opportunities have been changing social factors, the valuing of educational attainment in leading to more opportunities and the need for a more skilled Australian workforce.
- 2.9 However, despite the increasing awareness of the value of completing secondary education, following 1992 the national retention rate fell. This was attributed in part to a significant proportion of students dropping out of school because the curriculum was not relevant to their needs and interests as well as to the improving general employment prospects. The school curriculum has been described as having too narrow an academic

4 Collins, C, Kenway, J and McLeod, J, 2000, *Factors influencing the educational performance of males and females in school and their destinations after leaving school*, Deakin University and University of South Australia, funded by DETYA, Canberra, p. 7.

focus, suited to the approximately 30 per cent of students who go on to university.

- 2.10 In this context, in 1997 the then Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training called for a review of curriculum:

If schools are to retain these students, they must accommodate a wider range of abilities in the curriculum than is currently the case.⁵

- 2.11 Considerable activity at the national level from the early 1990s moved VET from a post-school option to encouraging vocational education in schools as a key initiative in education, supporting a broadening of the curriculum. This had the intent of converging general education with vocational education, and making the secondary curriculum more socially inclusive by reducing the distinctions between programs of study mainly on the basis of matriculation status.⁶

General education and vocational education

- 2.12 The growth of programs such as VET in Schools⁷ can be attributed firstly to the economic policy imperative to promote VET, and secondly to the benefits expected from the applied learning that VET involves.
- 2.13 In 1994 the Schools Council made the distinction between general and vocational education. General learning is the creation and acquisition of knowledge irrespective of the uses to which it may subsequently be put. Vocational learning is the acquisition of knowledge relevant to employment. Generally, vocational courses stress the acquisition of demonstrable competencies.⁸ The Schools Council advocated incorporating vocational and general studies into one coherent curriculum framework. Recommendations for a convergence between general education and vocational education have been made nationally and also internationally:

5 Dr David Kemp, Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training, *Retention rate fall highlights need for government reforms*, media release, 23 January 1997, K1/97.

6 Connell, R and Crump, S, 2003, *Exhibit No. 126*, p. 3.

7 As noted in Paragraph 1.10, there is a range of terms associated with vocational education. In this report the term *VET in Schools* is limited to school students continuing to work towards their secondary school certificate. The VET component of their studies gives them credit towards a nationally recognised VET qualification.

8 Schools Council, National Board of Employment, Education and Training, 1994, *The role of schools in the vocational preparation of Australia's Senior Secondary Students*, pp. 5-7.

the demands of the modern workplace are such that that the distinction between ‘doers’ and ‘thinkers’ is no longer relevant. Hence the distinction between academic and vocational skills is also irrelevant.⁹

2.14 A report from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) *From Initial Education to Working Life* identifies common elements of pathway reform of participating OECD countries. These include:

- broadening of vocational programs and qualifications;
- creating linkages between general and vocational education;
- developing combinations of school and work-based learning;
- establishing bridges between secondary vocational education and training and tertiary education; and
- developing more flexible education and training pathways.¹⁰

2.15 Contextualised learning, and integrated on- and off-the-job training, are desirable in vocational education.¹¹ A workplace learning component is thought to enhance general learning by providing a context and rationale for specific learning. Internationally, the United Kingdom’s Minister for Schools, for example, has expressed the view that:

upper secondary education in England historically had suffered from a weak vocational offer and a narrow academic track which resulted in a system “marked by barriers to learning”. The new greater flexibility would mean a range of vocational options ... ‘Academic’ and ‘vocational’ do not do justice to the courses being studied. That is why I prefer to talk of general education and specialist study.¹²

2.16 The Committee agrees that the traditional distinction between ‘academic’ and ‘vocational’ courses is becoming increasingly blurred, with a significant element of theoretical and conceptual content in many

9 Malley, J et al., 2001, *The quest for a working blueprint: vocational education and training in Australian secondary schools*, Part 1, NCVER, p. 36.

10 OECD, 2000, *From Initial Education to Working Life: Making Transitions Work*, Chapter 4, Key features of effective transition systems, Paris, p. 83.

11 Harris, R, Willis, P, Simons, M and Underwood, F, 1998, *Learning the job: Juggling the messages in on- and off-the-job training*, NCVER, cited in Malley, J, et al., 2001, *The quest for a working blueprint: vocational education and training in Australian secondary schools*, Part 1, NCVER, p. 36.

12 David Miliband MP, UK Minister of State for School Standards, *Greater flexibility in education for 14-19 year olds*, media release, 21 January 2003, <<http://www.pm.gov.uk/output/Page1047.asp>>.

vocational courses. However, the Committee notes that distinctions between general and vocational education are still present and useful in providing a focus for efforts, but that greater convergence is required to enable the development of enterprise skills and vocationally competent young people in their transition to post-school options.

Major vocational education activity

2.17 A brief chronology of major VET activity since 1985 maps the development of vocational education, highlighting the significant focus on skills formation and a national VET system, followed by the increasing adoption of vocational education into the secondary school curriculum.

- 1985 - *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Labour Market Programs* (Kirby Report), calling for on-the-job training and improved competency standards.
- 1988 - *Skills formation in Australia*, the Commonwealth Government's policies relating to education and training development in terms of international competitiveness.
- 1989 - *Improving Australia's Training System* and the establishment of the National Training Board.
- 1990 - formation of the Australian Committee on Training and Curriculum.
- 1991 - *Young Peoples' Participation in Post-Compulsory Education and Training* (Finn Report). Recommendations included the convergence of vocational and general education, the recognition of employment related key competencies, curriculum development to cater for student choices and different learning styles, multiple pathways.
- 1991 - the Mayer Key Competencies to develop employment related key competencies.
- 1992 - *The Australian Vocational Certificate Training System* (Carmichael Report), with schools participating in pilots in 1993 and 1994.
- 1994 - the development of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) to provide a nationally consistent, recognised system of qualifications and the implementation of improved pathways between the post-compulsory education sectors.

-
- 1995 – *Enterprising Nation* (Karpin Report), recognising the importance of enterprise skills within the curriculum at all levels.
 - 1997 – the acceptance of Advanced Standing between schools and TAFE, recognising students’ completed accredited courses on entry into further study.
 - 1998 – MCEETYA endorsed the Principles and Framework for the Consistent Application of the National Framework within Secondary Schools.¹³
- 2.18 Most relevant to the Committee’s inquiry, activity in the last five years has included identifying the key role of vocational education in the National Goals for Schooling, the development of a New Framework for Vocational Education in Schools, the provision of ANTA funds to support VET in Schools and the development of *Stepping Forward – improving pathways for all young people* in 2002, with progress to be reported in 2004.
- 2.19 The fundamental role of vocational education in schools was recognised in the National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century, endorsed at the 1999 Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) meeting. The goals relating to vocational education and training in schools include:
- Schooling should develop fully the talents and capacities of all students. In particular, when students leave school they should have:
 - ⇒ employment related skills and an understanding of the work environment, career options and pathways as a foundation for, and positive attitudes towards, VET, further education, employment and lifelong learning.
 - In terms of curriculum, students should have:
 - ⇒ participated in programs of vocational learning during the compulsory years and have had access to VET programs as part of their senior secondary studies; and
 - ⇒ participated in programs and activities which foster and develop enterprise skills, including those skills which will allow them maximum flexibility and adaptability in the future.
 - Schooling should be socially just, so that:
 - ⇒ all students have access to the high quality education necessary to enable the completion of school education to Year 12 or its vocational
-

13 Klee, C, 2002, ‘A practitioner’s view of vocational education and training in schools’, *Exhibit No. 40*, pp. 48–54.

equivalent and that provides clear and recognised pathways to employment and further education and training.

2.20 The preamble to these proposed goals indicates that:

- The achievement of these common and agreed national goals entails a commitment to collaboration for the purposes of:
 - ⇒ further strengthening schools as learning communities where teachers, students and their families work in partnership with business, industry and the wider community.¹⁴

2.21 In response to these goals, in 2000 a New Framework for Vocational Education in Schools was proposed, with an implementation strategy to commence in 2001. The new framework, outlined in Figure 2.2, consists of six inter-related elements of:

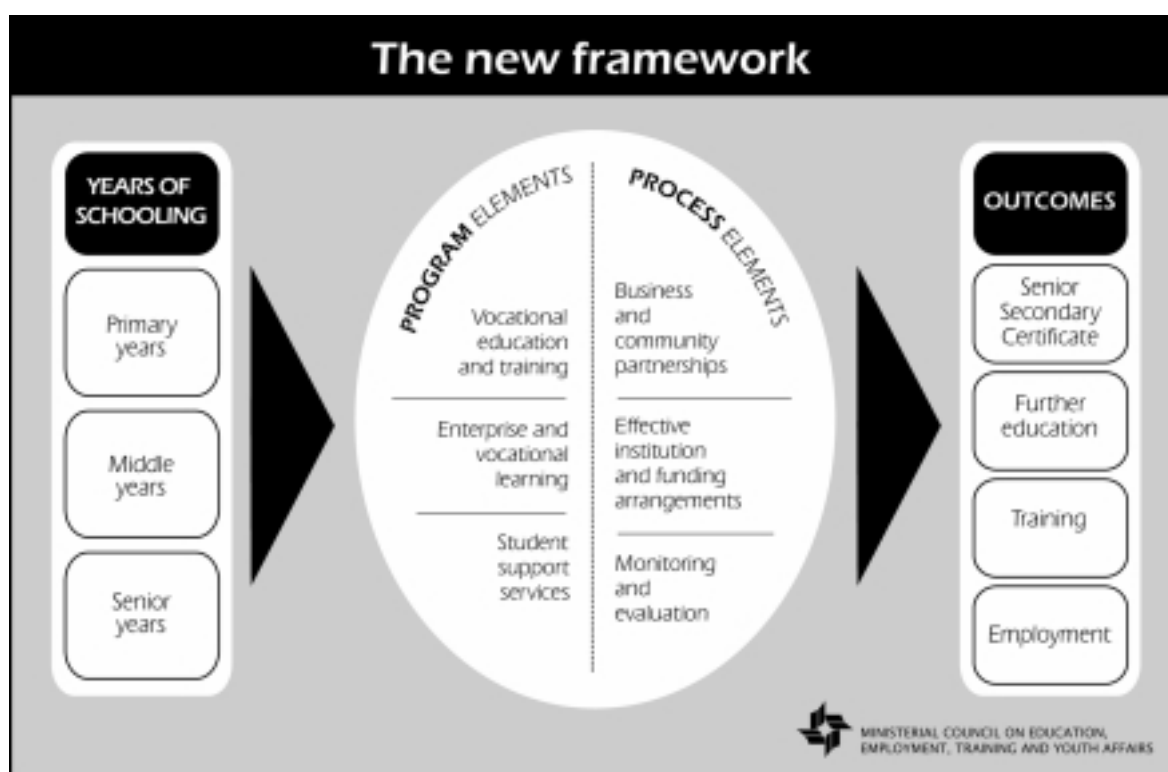
- vocational education and training:
 - ⇒ appropriately accredited industry-specific training based on AQF qualifications and competencies endorsed within the National Training Framework.
- enterprise and vocational learning:
 - ⇒ enterprise and vocational perspectives incorporated into general learning that is appropriate for all years of schooling.
- student support services:
 - ⇒ services that guide and support young people in their transition from compulsory schooling to post-compulsory schooling options and post-school destinations, especially the inclusion of explicit career education programs in school curriculum. Services will allow for local discretion over delivery and relate to participation and attainment in education, training and work.
- community and business partnerships:
 - ⇒ the new framework provides for a long-term commitment from stakeholders to working together to develop mechanisms that foster close cooperation between all levels of government, business, community organisations, education and labour market authorities.
- effective institutional and funding arrangements:
 - ⇒ policy coherence and effective program implementation through institutional arrangements for the organised and continuous

14 DEST, *Submission No. 75.1*, pp. 1-2, MCEETYA, 1999, *National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century*, <<http://www.mceetya.edu.au/nationalgoals/index.htm>>.

involvement of all relevant players at the national, state and territory, and local levels.

- monitoring and evaluation:
 - ⇒ data collection processes to provide information that will enable the effectiveness of current and future arrangements to be measured.¹⁵

Figure 2.2 New Framework for Vocational Education in Schools



Source MCEETYA, 2001 from *New framework for vocational education in schools. A comprehensive guide about pathways for young Australian in transition: Policy Directions*, p. 26.

2.22 In the Committee's meetings with stakeholders the first element of vocational education and training, often described as VET in Schools, was widely commented on as having significant prevalence in schools. A major driver seems to have been the allocation of ANTA funds to support accredited vocational education and training in schools. The other elements of the program were less widely acknowledged as being successfully embraced and resourced.

2.23 The implementation strategy for the new framework, with indicative timelines running from 2000 to 2004, outlines a range of actions and

15 MCEETYA Taskforce on VET in Schools, 2000, *New framework for vocational education in schools: Policy Directions*, <<http://www.mceetya.edu.au/pdf/policy.pdf>>.

outcomes that are in train. Many of the actions go beyond the school and education sectors, requiring the involvement of business and the community for successful implementation.

- 2.24 From the whole of government perspective, vocational education in schools is recognised as just one component assisting in the transition of young people from school to work or further study. In July 2002 a sub-committee of MCEETYA on Young Peoples Transitions developed *Stepping forward – improving pathways for all young people*, and a Taskforce on Transition from School developed an action plan to guide jurisdictions in their implementation.¹⁶
- 2.25 It is apparent from the refocussing of the MCEETYA Taskforce on VET in Schools to the description Transition from School that a broadening of the agenda beyond accredited training in secondary school was required to better reflect the partnerships in the community and elements of successful outcomes.
- 2.26 The five key areas for action in *Stepping Forward* which have direct relevance to this inquiry are:
- education and training as the foundation for effective transition for all young people;
 - access to career and transition support;
 - responding to the diverse needs of young people;
 - promulgating effective ways to support young people; and
 - focussed local partnerships and strategic alliances.
- 2.27 Appendix E outlines the *Stepping forward – action plan*. A progress report is expected to be provided in 2004.
- 2.28 The Committee acknowledges that jurisdiction activities addressing *Stepping Forward* may be in place or in progress. However, this holistic view of vocational education in schools as one component of the transition of young people was not a common element of evidence to the Committee. A number of outcomes and areas of specific activity in the *Stepping Forward - Action Plan* were cited by witnesses as recommendations for actions. Further progress is needed and this will be discussed in more detail in later chapters.
- 2.29 In 2000 Ministers noted the:

16 MCEETYA Taskforce on Transition from Schools, 2002, *Stepping forward – improving pathways for all young people*, <http://www.mceetya.edu.au/stepping_forward.htm>.

need to improve mechanisms for coordinating policy, program and resource management across the broad area of vocational education in schools

and asked the taskforce:

to progress more coordinated and integrated approaches in this area, with particular attention to streamlining diverse funding initiatives and focusing on outcomes driven arrangements.¹⁷

2.30 In 2003 the same call was echoed by witnesses to the inquiry.¹⁸ Clearly, considerable effort has been made at the planning levels to recommend these courses for action but the reality faced by schools is still a challenge.

2.31 The experience of the Committee in speaking with schools is that a whole-of-school approach that is effectively managing the spectrum of vocational learning within a general education framework is for many an ideal that is still to be realised.

Industry and vocational education and training

2.32 Accompanying the focus on the schools sector the broader VET environment was also refocussing. In June 2003 the ANTA Ministerial Council (MINCO) which consists of Commonwealth, state and territory ministers responsible for VET endorsed in principle *Shaping our Future, the national strategy for vocational education and training 2004–2010*. As stated in this document the purpose of VET is to provide skills and knowledge for work, enhance employability and assist learning throughout life. The four objectives are:

- industry will have a highly skilled workforce to support strong performance in the global economy;
- employers and individuals will be at the centre of vocational education and training;
- communities and regions will be strengthened economically and socially through learning and employment; and
- Indigenous Australians will have skills for viable jobs and their learning culture will be shared.¹⁹

17 MCEETYA Taskforce on VET in Schools, 2000, *New framework for vocational education in schools: Policy Directions*, p. 7, <<http://www.mceetya.edu.au/pdf/policy.pdf>>.

18 South Australian Government, *Submission No. 97*, pp. 2-3, 5-6; Alice Springs Workplace Learning Community, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 May 2003, Alice Springs, p. 622.

- 2.33 In December 2003 an action plan to progress twelve specific strategies for achieving the objectives was under development. These are to include a range of strategies that are relevant for the schools sector and acknowledge the need to make learning pathways seamless and to improve the value and image of vocational education and training. The action plan will be presented to ministers in June 2004.

Purposes of vocational education

- 2.34 In evidence to the Committee it was stated that there is still considerable debate about the purpose of vocational education in schools,²⁰ reflecting varying stakeholder views. During the early 1990s the underlying purpose appeared to be to enable non-university bound students to learn applied skills and competencies in demand in the workplace. Now the policy expectations are much broader, aiming to meet the needs of all students and with that comes greater complexity.²¹ Catholic Education South Australia, for example, questioned the purpose of vocational education. If its purpose is to enhance existing learning and it can be embedded in existing subjects the resource impact is considerably lessened. If it is to be offered in schools as industry-specific 'stand alone' subjects then those subjects will be capital intensive and directly compete with other areas of the curriculum for the limited resources available.²²
- 2.35 Again in South Australia, Ms Susan Hyde, District Superintendent in the Department of Education and Children's Services, reiterated the view of national government bodies that vocational education is for all students, not just for some students who want to enter a certain industry pathway. The broad view of vocational education is that it prepares all young people for their working lives rather than just preparing them for a particular trade, industry or avenue of employment.²³
- 2.36 Identifying the stakeholders and their views requires considerable coordination to involve students, schools, education authorities for schools

19 ANTA, 2003, *Shaping Our Future, the National Strategy for Vocational Education and Training 2004-2010*, < <http://www.anta.gov.au/dapStrategy.asp>>.

20 *See for example:* Australian Federation of Special Education Administrators, *Submission No. 108*, p. 5.

21 Malley, J et al., 2001, *The quest for a working blueprint: vocational education and training in Australian secondary schools*, Part 1, NCVET, p. 23.

22 Catholic Education South Australia, *Submission No. 53*, p. 2.

23 Ms Susan Hyde, District Superintendent, Central South West, SA Department of Education and Children's Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, p. 1029.

and VET, universities, employers and industry bodies, and the community. The role of vocational education needs to be considered within the wider social and educational responsibilities of schools. Specific local contexts also need to guide those priorities. A concern of the Committee is that while this prioritisation of purposes is required in order to set reasonable expectations on what schools and the community can achieve, it should not dampen innovation or prevent the meeting of local needs.

- 2.37 In the broader VET environment the multiple purposes of VET are somewhat clearer, with ANTA making clear statements in *Shaping our Future 2004–2010* about the client and employer driven focus of VET.²⁴ Students attend TAFE and other providers for very different purposes, so there is no single purpose for vocational education and training. Some are interested in entry level training, others wish to upgrade skills or change their career focus and are pursuing new areas. Some people are doing courses simply for personal interest.²⁵
- 2.38 Within the schools sector there are additional purposes identified by government and education authorities, such as trying to retain students at school. However, the reason for participating in VET in Schools is probably not so clearly formulated in many school students' minds as it is usually more exploratory than for those in the broader VET system such as TAFE. Organisations with an investment in the future outcomes of vocational education indicated that they thought that VET in Schools is a 'taster' of possible work futures.²⁶ The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) stated that:

the role of vocational education and training is a taster for students to examine some of their alternative career paths. It is not an end in itself and it should be seen as such. The first point I would like to make is that vocational education and training needs to be seen in the context of other activities within the school environment. It is not a stand-alone. It is quite different in terms of

24 ANTA, 2003, *Shaping Our Future, the National Strategy for Vocational Education and Training 2004-2010*, < <http://www.anta.gov.au/dapStrategy.asp>>.

25 Dr Tom Karmel, Managing Director, NCVER, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, pp. 1066-1067.

26 Mr Steve Balzary, Director, Employment and Training, ACCI, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 March 2003, Canberra, p. 207. (NB: ACCI considered that School-based New Apprenticeships are career oriented); ECEF *Submission No. 84*, p. 22.

an offering from School-based New Apprenticeships and the distinctions need to be much more clearly outlined.²⁷

- 2.39 Others in industry stated that VET in Schools was not successful for their organisation due to the lack of clear focus on their industry as a future career.²⁸
- 2.40 The Committee believes that there is a need for greater identification of purpose, as currently practitioners are attempting to meet all needs under the heading of flexible and diverse pathways, and the system of funding is insufficient to do so. The translation of purpose into strategies affects the models and programs that are then developed. This discussion needs to occur at all levels in the community. For example, in Victoria, following examination of students' needs, VET programs were developed for students whose needs were not being met by the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) system. Two programs are in place to support students, VET in the VCE, and the recently developed Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL).²⁹
- 2.41 Part of the as yet limited evaluation of outcomes of VET in Schools indicates a greater participation of academically lower achieving students and improved outcomes for that group.³⁰ However, the benefits of applied learning appeal to a broad range of students. In Tasmania, the different learning methodology of VET was integral to its appeal, and not necessarily only for lower achieving students:

In many aspects the VET program is probably harder than a pre-tertiary but I would probably disagree with it being counted towards university because, if we went down that path, theory might become an even bigger aspect of the VET course. I would hate for VET to lose its integrity because hands-on experience is vital to the subject. If you lose that, it is just another course.³¹

27 Mr Steve Balzary, Director, Employment and Training, ACCI, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 March 2003, Canberra, p. 207.

28 Mr Grant Howorth, Human Resources Manager, Austal Ships, *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 August 2003, Henderson, WA, p. 899.

29 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 86*, p. 18.

30 Polesol, J & Teese, R, 2002, *Transitions from the VET in Schools Program the 2000 Year 12 cohort*, July 2002, Department of Education and Training, the Educational Outcomes Research Unit, University of Melbourne, pp. 18, 21.

31 Mr Grant Cooper, Student, Don College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 30 September 2003, Devonport, p. 1306. Pre-tertiary subjects are those which contribute to a tertiary entrance score. A student must satisfactorily complete a minimum of four pre-tertiary subjects to be eligible for tertiary entrance, with at least three being done in Year 12.

- 2.42 Concern was expressed to the Committee that the VET system should not be designed solely to meet the needs of a small group of students and direct them into employment rather than considering other educational options, and that the system should have enough flexibility in it to be able to meet the needs of all students.³² It was suggested that the model of a successful system would:
- engage some people who are not particularly engaged at schools;
 - develop students' skills for employment in particular industries;
 - enable students who want to go to university to broaden their education; and
 - enable the development of generic workplace or employability skills for all students.
- 2.43 ANTA commented that the need for flexibility and for multiple ways to address these different student and industry requirements is currently being considered.³³ However, even though there is planning and policy comment about pathways, the Committee notes that the current system is not yet effectively delivering or supporting those multiple pathways.
- 2.44 Much of the focus has been placed on VET in Schools, and yet given the increasingly broad range of expectations of schooling there needs to be greater consideration of other areas to foster student development, such as broader vocational learning, career education and enterprise education. It was suggested that the specific focus on VET in Schools has been an outcome of the original performance measures, and the Committee suspects that this has been to the possible detriment of these other areas.³⁴
- 2.45 Even within National Training Framework (NTF) programs the role of VET in Schools is itself contested, subject to 'multiple ... objectives and expectations imposed ... by separated central agencies'.³⁵ The Committee believes that the complexity of the multiple goals needs to be clarified, and that there needs to be greater debate about the purposes and goals of vocational education in schools to enable effective development of appropriate pathways.

32 Ms Meredith Peace, Deputy Vice President, Secondary Sector - Victorian Branch, AEU, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1207.

33 Mr Adrian Stephens, Director, Client Relationships, ANTA, *Transcript of Evidence*, 9 April 2003, Brisbane, p. 359.

34 Mr Bernie Fitzsimons, Senior Education Adviser, Catholic Education Office, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, p. 1055.

35 AEU, *Submission No. 72*, p. 20.

- 2.46 The Committee believes that there is a need to debate these issues more rigorously with the range of stakeholders - students, parents, industry and the community: What is the purpose of the increased emphasis on vocational education? What are the purposes of VET? What is the role of the school in the community in providing vocational education, and the differences between vocational education and 'vocational education and training'? These issues are explored further in Chapter 7.

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that MCEETYA, its associated education authorities and key community groups engage in further debate on the purposes of vocational education in schools, including VET in Schools programs, in order to clarify and articulate specific objectives, expected outcomes, target groups and priorities, with a view to better ensuring that policies and programs meet those purposes.

Status of vocational education and training

- 2.47 Much policy work has been instigated at the national and state and territory level to support and encourage vocational education. Vocational education has been described as providing access to multiple pathways for all young people in their transition from school to work or further study. Across the whole of the VET sector an issue that was voiced to the Committee is the poor status of vocational education and training:

Many parents have commented on the positive effect VET programs have had on their children. However there are some parents who need to be persuaded of the value of vocational education. In many schools, parents' perception is that the achievement of academic success is the expected goal for their children, no matter what interests the student may have. The challenge is to have vocational learning valued by parents, employers, the wider community and at all levels of education.³⁶

- 2.48 This view is reinforced at a national level, with the National Goals for Schooling stating that schooling should develop fully the talents and capacities of all students. When students leave school they should have

36 Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia, *Submission No. 25*, p. 6.

employment related skills and an understanding of the work environment, career options and pathways as a foundation for, and positive attitudes towards, VET, further education, employment and lifelong learning. A goal of this kind suggests that the benefits of participating in vocational education and VET programs are applicable for all students.³⁷

- 2.49 There is evidence that some academically high achieving students are undertaking VET programs.³⁸ However, the general image of VET is that it provides a pathway for academically less able students. Consequently, VET has had a status problem, and efforts to achieve parity of esteem are focussing on recognising VET achievements within the senior secondary certificate, and enabling VET programs to be incorporated into the tertiary entrance score. This is not without significant challenge. One of the National Strategies recently announced included improving the value, brand, language and image of VET and public recognition of its employment outcomes.³⁹
- 2.50 The Committee heard concerns that altering curriculum by embedding the industry developed competencies into existing units, or requiring an additional exam to meet perceived more rigorous requirements for university entrance, may then alienate the students for whom the industry focussed programs have been initially designed. It has also been suggested that doing so would fundamentally change the nature of VET courses. Resolution of these issues relate to the purpose of vocational education. Alternative assessment strategies are being examined and evaluation of one methodology is due to report early in 2004.⁴⁰
- 2.51 The Committee believes that while there is value in exploring these possibilities it is important that VET not be absorbed into the general curriculum in such a way that its content and assessment becomes subject to the tertiary entrance requirements of what is currently the dominant element of the curriculum, and thereby lose the significantly different

37 MCEETYA, 1999, *The Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century*, <<http://www.mceetya.edu.au/nationalgoals/index.htm>>.

38 Malley, J et al., 2001, *The quest for a working blueprint: vocational education and training in Australian secondary schools*, Part 1, NCVER, p. 45.

39 ANTA, 2003, *Shaping Our Future, the National Strategy for Vocational Education and Training 2004-2010*, <<http://www.anta.gov.au/dapStrategy.asp>>.

40 Griffin, P, Gillis, S and Jelinek, M, 2003, *A pilot investigation of a Standards Referenced Assessment Model for VET in Schools courses*, Assessment Research Centre, University of Melbourne; see also *Exhibit No. 125, Expanding Opportunities for Youth. Greater Industry and University Recognition of achievement in VET in Schools*, 2001, ANTA.

approaches which make it so valuable in its own right. These issues are explored further in Chapter 7.

- 2.52 Other methods of addressing the community perception of VET have centred on the provision of greater information and the marketing of opportunities through VET programs. Industry has criticised career advisers for focussing their efforts on subject choice for university entrance rather than employment and vocational outcomes.⁴¹ Given that the careers role within schools has reportedly been significantly under resourced in government and non-government schools,⁴² there is clearly much work to be done in this area. Additionally, it has been suggested that there is also a greater role for industry in marketing career opportunities.
- 2.53 Examples were provided to the Committee of industry, community and school partnerships in the production of information resources.⁴³ The need for follow-up in the schools of such resources and for allowing sufficient time for students to review possible employment options were identified as issues that would assist in promoting vocational education and training pathways.⁴⁴ Chapter 8 explores these issues further.
- 2.54 Furthermore, continuing the discussion of vocational education at the Ministerial level and elevating the discussion to the Council of Australian Governments would assist in bringing the importance of vocational education in schools to national focus.

41 National Wholesale, Retail and Personal Services Industry, *Submission No. 61*, p. 6, Shop Distributive and Allied Employees Association, *Submission No. 45*, p. 10; Mrs Wendy de Souza, Owner-Operator, Cutting Remark, *Transcript of Evidence*, 30 April 2003, Alice Spring, p. 591.

42 Mr Paul Billows, Principal, Willunga High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 6 August 2003, Willunga, p. 1014; Ms Cathy Hickey, Education Officer, IEU, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September, 2003, Melbourne, p. 1198; and Mr Geoff Bloom, Executive Director, Rural Skills, *Transcript of Evidence*, 21 August 2003, Canberra, pp. 1140 and 1141.

43 National Farmers Federation, *Submission No. 91*, p. 5; and ACCI, *Submission No. 95*, p. 22.

44 Mrs Leyla Yilmaz, Industrial Relations Manager, VACC, *Transcript of Evidence*, 3 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1232.

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that Commonwealth, state and territory governments and industry jointly fund a promotion campaign to:

- **raise the awareness of parents, students, educationalists and the community of the benefits of vocational education including:**
 - ⇒ **VET as broadly available to all members of the community; and**
 - ⇒ **VET in Schools and School-based New Apprenticeships;**
- **raise the status of VET and other non-tertiary pathways by:**
 - ⇒ **increasing awareness of the range of rewarding career options available; and**
 - ⇒ **promoting careers in areas of skill shortage, such as in established trades.**

Descriptors

- 2.55 Associated with the community perceptions of vocational education is some confusion about the meanings of terms used in the educational and industry literature on developing skills and pathways. The following descriptors of core components in vocational education are used in the report to provide some clarity in usage. The glossary in Appendix F lists other terms used in vocational education and training.
- 2.56 In March 2000 MCEETYA endorsed a vision of vocational education in which:
- vocational education in schools assists all young people to secure their own futures by enhancing their transition to a broad range of post-school options and pathways. It engages students in work related learning built in strategic partnerships between schools, business, industry and the wider community.⁴⁵
- 2.57 This view of vocational education incorporates the wide range of programs that connect young people with the world of work. Vocational

45 MCEETYA, Taskforce on VET in Schools 2000, *New framework for vocational education in schools: Policy Directions*, p. 11, <<http://www.mceetya.edu.au/pdf/policy.pdf>>.

learning, enterprise education and vocational education and training (VET) are all components of vocational education.⁴⁶

- 2.58 There has been some overlap in terminology to describe these components. The description of vocational learning that the MCEETYA VET in Schools Taskforce adopted in 2002 is that vocational learning is:

General learning that addresses the broad understandings of the world of work and develops in young people a range of knowledge, skills, competencies and attributes relevant to a wide range of work environments.⁴⁷

- 2.59 Vocational learning includes elements such as general employment skills, career education and community and work-based learning, which is appropriate for all years of schooling.

- 2.60 Many submissions to this inquiry focussed on accredited VET in Schools, programs that as part of the senior secondary certificate provide credit towards a nationally recognised VET qualification as part of the National Training Framework within the AQF.

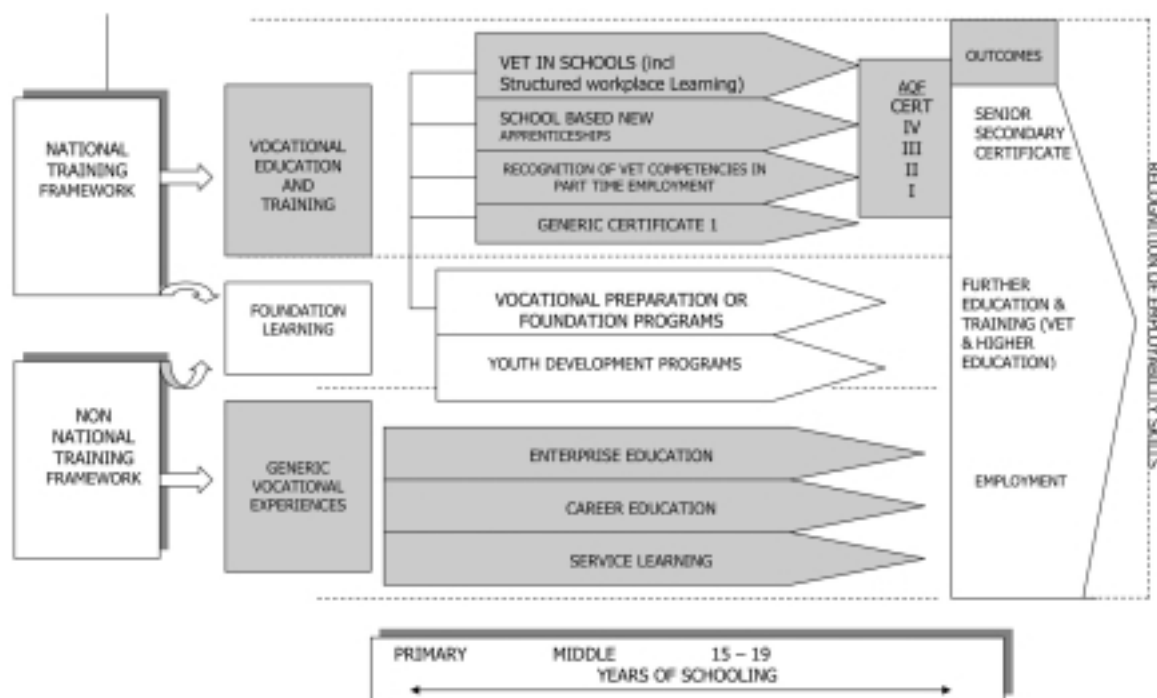
- 2.61 However, the Committee considers it important to focus on the broader definition of vocational education, including its place in Years 7-10, with accredited VET as only one component of assisting students in determining post-school options. Accredited VET also refers to School-based New Apprenticeships (SBNAs), where secondary students enter a formal training agreement with an employer, attend school for part of their time, and attend a place of training for the off-the-job component of the New Apprenticeship.

- 2.62 One conception of the interplay between various vocational activities is provided in Figure 2.3, Vocational Activities and Experiences within a General Education Framework. This clearly outlines the range of strategies that should assist students, distinguishing between programs that are part of the NTF, and the range of other vocational learning experiences.

46 Spring, G and Syrmas, J, 2002, 'What's in a name? The meaning of 'vocational' in changing times', *Exhibit No. 40*, pp. 5-17.

47 MCEETYA, 2002, *National Report on Schooling Australia 2001*, Chapter 7, Vocational Education, p. 2, <http://online.curriculum.edu.au/anr2001/ch7_concepts.htm>.

Figure 2.3 Vocational activities and experiences within a general education framework



Source *Learning in a Knowledge Society: the Vocational Dimension*⁴⁸

2.63 Within this figure there is reference to:

- enterprise education – learning directed towards developing young people to be innovative and identify, create and manage personal, community, and business opportunities; and
- career education – development of knowledge, skills and attributes through a planned program of learning experiences in education and training settings which will assist students to make informed decisions about their life, study and/or work options.

2.64 Other components in this depiction include community based learning as part of service learning, vocational preparation programs to develop work readiness and youth development programs. All these combine to provide a broader perspective of learning as part of the community than was traditionally provided within a general education framework.

2.65 Within this view vocational activities should occur throughout all years of schooling and not be focussed solely on senior secondary years. Witnesses to the inquiry, including students, indicated that earlier support and more

48 Spring, G and Syrmas, J, 2002, 'What's in a name? The meaning of 'vocational' in changing times', *Exhibit No. 40*, p. 15; see also ANTA, *Submission No. 90*, p. 10 for a similar figure.

extensive careers advice would be worthwhile. Findings on careers will be discussed more fully in Chapter 8.

- 2.66 Clearly, vocational education in schools requires a range of strategies to be implemented effectively. The challenges of incorporating vocational education within a school will be discussed more fully in Chapter 5. The following chapter examines how vocational education is managed from a systems perspective.

Summary

- 2.67 Seeking to accommodate the needs of a wider range of students has provided an impetus for the resurgence of vocational education in the secondary school curriculum. This has been combined with a need for the Australian community to be skilling for the future. The incorporation of vocational education has been recognised as a fundamental process in schools, yet the management of the change is clearly problematic.
- 2.68 New frameworks for vocational education in schools have been developed, accompanied by action plans to assist with the transition from school to post-school options. However, the Committee notes that the purposes of vocational education and VET for the diverse needs of students are not sufficiently clear, and confusion arises when the terms vocational education and VET are used almost interchangeably.
- 2.69 In responding to competing needs of stakeholders, the Committee believes that there is a need for greater identification of the purpose of vocational education, as practitioners in schools are currently attempting to meet diverse needs while targeted funding is mainly directed to VET in Schools programs. The Committee supports the view that vocational education should be available for all students in a generic way to Year 10, and believes that there then needs to be greater consideration of the purposes of vocational education and training in the senior years.
- 2.70 To enable clearer discussion of the components of vocational education the depiction of the system in Figure 2.3 provides clarity to develop common meanings. However, this complexity needs to be reduced to aid parents and the community in their understanding. The model highlights the purposes that vocational education is expected to serve and the range of pathways that can be followed. This diversity in pathways provides some indication of the complexity of providing vocational education in schools.

3

Systems of education

- 3.1 The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of arrangements for vocational education in schools, identify key differences between states and territories and outline the funding of vocational education.

Government roles and responsibilities

- 3.2 School education in Australia is administered under a federal system of government. Primary responsibility for school education and vocational education and training lies with state and territory governments, with the Commonwealth having a role in providing leadership in areas of national priority. Governments have a responsibility to ensure that young people have the knowledge, skills and attributes to contribute and participate effectively in all aspects of Australian society. The Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) is the Commonwealth Government department responsible for education policy from a national perspective.

School education

- 3.3 The Commonwealth, state and territory, and non-government school authorities all share a role in the identification of national priorities for schooling and in identifying strategies to achieve outcomes from these priorities. States and territories have responsibilities for their own systems. This has led to commonalities and diversity in the organisation and delivery of schooling across Australia. This is also a significant feature in the administration and delivery of vocational education in schools.¹

1 DEST, *Submission No. 75.1*, p. 1.

- 3.4 The Commonwealth Government has no day-to-day responsibilities for schools but provides significant national funding and coordination for school education. The involvement of the Commonwealth Government has increased as a function of these funding arrangements. The Commonwealth's role is to link the various government and non-government education authorities and to facilitate the involvement of others in Australia such as business, industry, parents and local communities.
- 3.5 Although school education is largely a state responsibility, Commonwealth, state and territory ministers for education meet regularly in the national Ministerial Council for Education Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) to work together on issues of common interest. The National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century is an example of that cooperation.
- 3.6 The Commonwealth's general recurrent funding, which will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter, is provided to support the National Goals for Schooling in particular priority areas identified by all governments. Commencing in January 2001, the *States Grants (Primary and Secondary Education Assistance) Act 2000* provides school funding for the quadrennium 2001-04 and includes provision for a new approach to non-government schools funding from 2001, based on the socioeconomic status of school communities.²
- 3.7 The Act also contains new accountability provisions. Education providers are required, as a condition of funding, to commit to achieving performance measures, including targets agreed to by MCEETYA in vocational education, incorporated in the legislation. The accountability provisions of the legislation are based on the premise that all schools, government and non-government, are equally accountable for the public funds they receive for the education of the children in their care.³

Government and non-government schools

- 3.8 Vocational education in schools has had differing levels of take-up in government and non-government schools and across the states and

2 Amendments to the *States Grants (Primary and Secondary Education Assistance) Act 2000*, to provide additional literacy, numeracy, capital works and strategic assistance funding, were passed in December 2003.

3 MCEETYA, 2001, *National Report on Schooling in Australia 2000*, p. 18.

territories. VET in Schools is more common in government schools than in non-government schools.⁴

- 3.9 In some states there are cooperative arrangements between the two systems to facilitate VET delivery and work placements,⁵ for example the Local Learning and Employment Networks in Victoria that create linkages with the broader community and industry.⁶ In other states cluster arrangements exist which provide coordination in the one system, for example Careerlink in Western Australia.⁷ The development of the type of model depends on local circumstances as supported by state and territory policy.⁸
- 3.10 As an example of non-government school activity, the Association of Independent Schools of Tasmania (AIST) has been involved since 1996 in the development of infrastructure for VET programs to be offered through schools. This has included involvement in:
- national activities both with the National Council of Independent Schools and other state and territory associations and through the Commonwealth Department, the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) and the Enterprise and Career Education Foundation (ECEP);
 - various cross-sectoral activities at state level, and regional education and community partnerships where AIST schools are involved; and
 - assisting schools with their own infrastructure development in such areas as professional development and the promotion of VET within schools and the wider community.
- 3.11 Another non-government school, Wongutha, a Christian Aboriginal Parent-Directed School in Western Australia, has designed its curriculum for Year 11 and 12 students around a VET program. It provides Indigenous students with practical skills to take them into further education, training and/or employment.⁹

4 Dr Erica Smith, *Submission No. 101*, p. 1.

5 Hobart Education Business Training Partnership, *Submission No. 22*, p. 1.

6 Smarter Geelong Region LLEN, *Submission No. 47*, p. 5; and Kelly, H and Perry, L, Learning Communities in Victoria, *Exhibit No. 40*, p. 55.

7 Mrs Kathleen Davey, Executive Officer, CareerLink, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 967.

8 The Allen Consulting Group, 2003, *Organisational Best Practice Delivery of VET in Schools*, Report to MCEETYA Taskforce on Transition from School, p. 1.

9 Australian Associations of Christian Schools, *Submission No. 62*, p. 3.

- 3.12 The introduction of VET programs for students in Years 11 and 12 has been part of a considerable cultural shift for many independent schools. Many of these schools have long had a very well developed career education structure but this has been predominantly directed towards tertiary education. The Adelaide Declaration provided an opportunity for a general review of the vocational emphasis in schools.¹⁰

Australian National Training Authority

- 3.13 ANTA commenced operation in 1994 to provide a national focus for VET. ANTA has a dual role: it supervises a range of national programs designed to enhance the effectiveness of the VET system, and it administers over a billion dollars a year of Commonwealth funding toward the development and operation of the national VET system. *Shaping Our Future, the National Strategy for Vocational Education and Training 2004-2010* outlines the purpose of VET as providing skills and knowledge for work, enhancing employability and assisting learning throughout life. The vision of VET is described as:
- VET works for Australian businesses, making businesses internationally competitive;
 - VET works for people, giving Australians world-class skills and knowledge;
 - VET works for communities, building inclusive and sustainable communities.¹¹
- 3.14 The strategy also recognises that clients value the pathways to and from vocational education and training, schools, universities and adult and community education. Specifically in the area of vocational education in schools, ANTA administers the portion of Commonwealth funds for the VET system to support VET in Schools. Since 1997 this has included \$20 million per annum to states and territories and from 2002 this has been subject to indexation. Additionally, monies have been allocated from infrastructure funding for skill centres for school students.¹²
- 3.15 The ANTA funds for vocational education in schools are conditional on the adoption of accredited training and competencies linked to national Training Packages. Curriculum and accreditation authorities for secondary schooling in the states and territories have had to review all vocational offerings to ensure that they comply, and this has led to

10 AIST, *Submission No. 78*, p. 7.

11 ANTA, 2003, *Shaping Our Future, the National Strategy for Vocational Education and Training 2004-2010*, <www.anta.gov.au/dapstrategy.asp>.

12 ANTA, *Submission No. 90*, p. 7.

significant change for senior secondary curriculum as non-compliant vocational programs are phased out, to accommodate new initiatives.¹³

- 3.16 ANTA also undertakes research and projects in relation to emerging issues in vocational education in schools. Recent focus has been on the quality and compliance arrangements in terms of the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF), gaining greater recognition for VET qualifications across the education sectors and recognising skills obtained by young people outside the education sector.¹⁴

The national VET system

- 3.17 The National Training Framework (NTF) consists of competency based training defined by outcomes in Training Packages supported by the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF). Industry is a major stakeholder defining the outcomes for competencies to be achieved.
- 3.18 The VET system provides nationally recognised qualifications. The AQF is described as a structure where there are consistent definitions and standards across Australia for all levels of certificates and diplomas. These are defined in the Framework. Achievement of these qualifications should allow portability across Australia in a national approach. However, there are still concerns about inconsistencies in various aspects of VET in Schools.
- 3.19 The AQTF covers the standards required for the registration of registered training organisations (RTOs) and the accreditation of courses by the relevant state and territory bodies. Public and private providers which meet the standards can be registered to deliver VET and this can include schools.¹⁵

Competency-based training

- 3.20 Competency-based training represents a move away from time-based programs to a system in which the qualification is based on demonstrated competence. Skills-based training and assessment around competency outcomes identified by industry is a distinctive feature of Australian vocational education and training. These outcomes are defined in Training

13 Malley, J et al., 2001, *The quest for a working blueprint: vocational education and training in Australian secondary schools*, Part 2, NCVER, p. 78.

14 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, p. 19.

15 ANTA, *Submission No. 90*, pp. 4-5.

Packages. In January 2004 there were seventy-two endorsed Training Packages, nine of which were enterprise Training Packages.¹⁶

Responsibilities in vocational education and training

- 3.21 Although it is regarded as a national system, responsibility for the delivery of vocational education and training also rests with the states and territories. The Ministerial Council (MINCO) of Commonwealth, state and territory ministers responsible for VET makes decisions on national objectives and priorities, strategic policy and planning including funding.
- 3.22 Commonwealth Government funding for VET is provided to state and territory training authorities through ANTA. States and territories provide two-thirds of the funding for VET and have the regulatory responsibility for the sector. The VET sector includes a range of recognised providers, including publicly funded institutes of TAFE, individual enterprises and schools. In recent years the Commonwealth Government, through ANTA, has focussed increasingly on promoting national consistency in the provision of VET and ensuring that the VET system is more responsive to industry and client needs.

NTF, AQTF and vocational education in schools

- 3.23 As noted in the previous chapter, a priority for national activity has been accredited vocational education and training. In April 1998 there was national agreement by the ANTA Ministerial Council on a set of principles to underpin the implementation of VET in Schools. The six agreed principles and implementation framework were designed to assist school accreditation authorities, other state and territory agencies and industry in making appropriate arrangements to support the implementation of the National Training Framework within the secondary school sector.
- 3.24 These principles were updated to reflect the new AQTF introduced in 2001, and provide the basis for the consistent application of the NTF within Secondary Schools. The six principles are:

16 ANTA, *Submission No. 90*, p. 4; ANTA website: *Training Packages - What are they?* <<http://www.anta.gov.au/tpkWhat.asp>>. A training package is an integrated set of nationally endorsed standards, guidelines and qualifications for training, assessing and recognising people's skills, developed by industry to meet the training needs of an industry/ industries. Enterprise Training Packages are developed by organisations for their own unique needs.

Recognising Training

Boards of Studies, in agreement with State/Territory Recognition Authorities, will recognise VET in Schools only where it is delivered by providers which meet the registration requirements under the Australian Quality Training Framework, as from 1 July 2002.

Meeting industry and/or enterprise standards

Boards of Studies, in agreement with State/Territory Recognition Authorities, will recognise as VET in Schools only that which delivers national and/or enterprise competency standards or accredited training where no relevant Training Package qualification/pathway exists, within the National Training Framework.

Pathways through Senior Secondary Certificate

VET in Schools will contribute to qualifications defined by the AQF, including Senior Secondary Certificates or equivalents, and will provide multiple pathways which will articulate with further training, education and where appropriate, employment.

Ensuring dual outcomes

VET in Schools studies, undertaken within the Senior Secondary Certificate, should also contribute to a VET qualification defined by the AQF.

Determining priorities for the delivery of VET in Schools

In determining priority areas for the development of VET in Schools and School-based New Apprenticeship programs, account will be taken of national and regional/local skill shortages, industry needs and student demand. Opportunities for all groups of students to participate should be maximised, especially those under-represented in education and training.

Using Training Packages

Boards of Studies, in agreement with State/Territory Recognition Authorities, will develop recognition procedures consistent with the Australian Quality Training Framework and the requirements of Senior Secondary Certificates in each State and Territory, to enable Training Packages to be delivered.¹⁷

17 ANTA MINCO, 2001, *Principles and Guidelines for Improving Outcomes for VET in Schools 2002-2004*, <<http://www.anta.gov.au/publication.asp?qsID=294>>.

- 3.25 These principles have significant implications for states and territories. In evidence to the Committee, the Australasian Curriculum, Assessment and Certification Authorities (ACACA) commented on the considerable amount of work required of ACACA agencies in supporting VET in Schools. The responsibilities come from two sources: national agreements and state and territory requirements to:
- provide AVETMISS¹⁸ compliant data for system level reporting and national reporting purposes;
 - develop, maintain and manage databases;
 - develop and revise curriculum and associated support materials;
 - collaborate with school sector authorities and planning for professional development;
 - report VET qualifications and statements of attainment to unit of competency level; and
 - negotiate articulated pathways for students from school to university and to TAFE.¹⁹

States and territories

- 3.26 Each state and territory education department determines its own policies and practices on matters such as the organisation of schooling, curriculum, course accreditation, student assessment and awards, as well as administering resources allocated to schools. With respect to vocational education, state submissions to the inquiry provided an overview of their arrangements.²⁰ Additionally, ACACA in their submission summarised the key features of delivery, assessment and certification in the states and territories.²¹
- 3.27 The key differences between the states and territories are based mainly around the following eight categories:

18 The Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMIS Standard or AVETMISS) is the agreed national data standard for the collection, analysis and reporting of vocational education and training information in Australia.

19 ACACA, *Submission No. 99*, pp. 5-6.

20 WA Department of Training, *Submission No. 70*, WA Department of Education, *Submission No. 71*; Victorian Government, *Submission No. 86*; Tasmanian Government, *Submission No. 92*; Queensland Government, *Submission No. 93*; NSW Department of Education and Training, *Submission No. 94*; South Australian Government, *Submission No. 97*; NT Government, *Submission No. 38*; ACT Department of Education, Youth and Family Services, *Exhibit No. 84*.

21 ACACA, *Submission No. 99*, Appendix A.

- embedded vocational education and training compared to stand alone courses;
- the proportion of schools that are RTOs;
- involvement of other RTO providers in delivery;
- hours of structured work placement and whether or not it is mandated;
- nominal hours and units of competency;
- the recognition of studies in tertiary entrance scores;
- the delivery of School-based New Apprenticeships; and
- the provision and accessibility of enterprise, vocational learning programs and career education.

3.28 The Committee notes the significant range of approaches and differences across states and territories. This variety encourages beneficial diversity and the meeting of needs to suit local circumstances. However, the Committee believes that this lack of consistency creates concerns for employers who expect consistent quality, and for students who expect portability as embodied in the aims of the ANTA *Shaping our Future* strategy. Some examples of differences in the eight categories are considered below.

Embedded compared to stand alone

3.29 Schools may offer VET as:

- 'stand-alone';
- 'embedded'; or
- a combination of 'stand-alone' and 'embedded'.

3.30 Stand-alone VET refers to the delivery of a VET qualification or suite of competencies as a separate course. Generally, embedding is an arrangement whereby VET competencies or modules are delivered within a general curriculum course (often pre-existing), producing both vocational and general education outcomes. The purpose of embedding is to minimise the assessment workload of students by avoiding unnecessary duplication and to more easily satisfy the relevant tertiary entrance requirements. In some states and territories embedding is necessary to provide recognition of VET within senior secondary certificates of

education. In other states, stand-alone VET components can contribute towards the senior secondary certificate.²²

- 3.31 In all states and territories, VET in Schools is acknowledged in some way on the senior secondary certificate. Tasmania, New South Wales, the Northern Territory and Victoria favour the stand-alone model of delivery while Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory favour embedding models. Western Australia provides for both modes of delivery, as does South Australia, where stand-alone is growing in popularity.²³
- 3.32 Stand-alone delivery is increasingly the preferred method of delivery. The move away from embedded competencies is prompted by industry concern that there is a risk of different outcomes where VET is not delivered in a stand alone manner, and is packaged differently across the senior secondary certificates. However, education authorities insist that within embedded courses the competencies are assessed against the standards as specified in the Training Packages, no matter what the form of delivery.²⁴

Proportion of schools that are registered training organisations (RTOs)

- 3.33 For VET in Schools programs the training that students receive reflects specific industry competency standards, and is delivered by RTOs or by the school in partnership with an RTO. The school might also be an RTO in its own right if it has been accredited as such. The number of schools which are RTOs varies greatly between states and territories, reflecting varying policy directions.²⁵ For example, in the ACT all senior colleges are RTOs in their own right. In the NSW government school sector regional administrative RTOs assisting schools is the preferred model.²⁶ In Queensland, for example, 378 schools are RTOs, while in South Australia only three schools are RTOs. This means that in Queensland most students are undertaking VET with the school as the RTO, but in South Australia most students are undertaking VET with the TAFE institute as the RTO partner. The partnership approach to the delivery of VET in Schools is widely used.²⁷ South Australia is undertaking a feasibility study of government schools seeking RTO status.²⁸ A national analysis of the costs

22 ANTA, *Submission No. 90*, p. 30.

23 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, pp. 28-29.

24 ANTA, *Submission No. 90*, p. 30; ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 56, Northern Territory Government, *Submission No. 38*, p. 5; South Australian Government, *Submission No. 97*, p. 21.

25 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 28.

26 DEST, *Exhibit No. 89*, p. 36.

27 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 28.

28 South Australian Government, *Submission No. 97*, p. 18.

of delivering VET in Schools including an analysis of cost efficiencies was completed in June 2003 for DEST. The report, *The Cost of VET in Schools*, also provides substantial information on administrative arrangements and delivery mode in detail across a sample of schools in each jurisdiction.²⁹ More information on delivery and costs is provided later in this chapter and in Chapter 6.

Involvement of other RTO providers in delivery

3.34 Where a school is not an RTO, auspicing arrangements are entered into. VET in Schools agreements allow secondary school staff who are suitably qualified to deliver accredited VET. The RTO issues the accreditation and the VET counts towards the students' senior certificate. The delivery may be stand-alone or embedded. Alternatively, in a purchasing arrangement, there is delivery to school students by the RTO's staff, which could take place in a range of venues or class formations. Purchasing arrangements generally apply when programs have small numbers of students and because schools lack the infrastructure. The auspicing may be by:

- institutes of TAFE;
- private RTOs;
- school systems; or
- ACACA agencies, such as Boards of Studies.³⁰

3.35 There is considerable variation between states as to charging arrangements for government and non-government schools purchasing TAFE courses.³¹

TAFE and private providers

3.36 TAFE, as the major public provider of vocational education and training, has had a keen interest in the development of vocational education in schools. Seventy-eight per cent of VET students are studying at TAFE or other government providers.³² The quality of provision and the most

29 DEST, 2003, *The Cost of VET in Schools: An analysis of delivering VET in Schools including an analysis of cost efficiencies, Final Report*, prepared by The Allen Consulting Group, *Exhibit 89*.

30 DEST, *Exhibit No. 89*, pp. 28–36.

31 For example: Ms Bernadette Gigliotti, Treasurer, Career Education Association of Victoria, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1159; Mr Bernie Fitzsimons, Senior Education Adviser, Catholic Education Office, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, p. 1059.

32 NCVER, 2003, *Training Trends in the public VET system in Australia, 1999-2002*.

effective use of resources are key issues for TAFEs across Australia.³³ There has been considerable debate in the post-compulsory sector where the TAFE Directors support the provision of VET courses for school students, but consider that such courses are not necessarily best provided by the schools themselves. In their view the most appropriate approach is 'VET for schools' rather than 'VET in schools'.

Hours of structured work placement

3.37 The amount of workplace based learning varies across jurisdictions. In two states, New South Wales and Tasmania, structured workplace based training is mandatory for all VET in Schools students. These states have already achieved relatively high levels of participation although the average hours per student is relatively low in NSW. Western Australia has achieved high levels of participation and a high average length of time in the workplace for each student participating.³⁴

Nominal hours and units of competency

3.38 There is variation across states in the nominal hours assigned to individual units of competency. Often nominal hours are used as an index in providing status towards many of the senior secondary certificates around Australia, and it is likely that nominal hours will play a greater role in national reporting for VET in Schools.³⁵ It was suggested by witnesses that the determinations of the number of hours needs to be reviewed. For example, in Western Australia, in Hospitality and Automotive programs many students require far more time to complete training than the nominal hours attached to units of competency. This places additional resource requirements on training.³⁶

3.39 Another example is in construction training. In South Australia the Certificate 1 in Construction attracts 256 nominal hours; in New South Wales the same qualification attracts 180 hours. It was suggested to the Committee that this differing amount of training would result in different outcomes, thus bringing into question the validity of the training system, especially for shorter programs.³⁷

33 TAFE Directors Australia, *Submission No. 83*, p. 2.

34 ANTA, *Submission No. 90*, Figure 14, p. 22.

35 ACACA, *Submission No. 99*, p. 6.

36 Catholic Education Office, Western Australia, *Submission No. 54*, p. 8.

37 Construction Industry Training Board, *Submission No. 37*, p. 7.

Recognition of studies in a tertiary entrance scores

3.40 In the VET in Schools area each state education authority has different requirements and processes with respect to tertiary entrance requirements. For example, the Certificate II in Retail Operations attracts a tertiary entrance score in one state and not in another; another state requires students to sit an additional written exam if they want the tertiary entrance ranking.³⁸ This issue will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7.

Delivery of School-based New Apprenticeships

3.41 School-based New Apprenticeships (SBNAs) have not seen the growth exhibited by other VET in Schools programs. In a national evaluation of SBNAs they are reported at around 2 per cent of enrolments and 3 per cent of all New Apprenticeships. A key feature is the uneven pattern of participation around Australia across jurisdictions and industries. In 2001 Queensland had 62 per cent of commencements, the retail and hospitality sectors providing 55 per cent of commencements nationally. On the other hand, Victoria had 15.3 per cent, and NSW had only 5.5 per cent of commencements.³⁹

3.42 Different implementation models have been adopted between the states and territories. The defining features are that SBNAs:

- involve a Training Agreement, linked to an industrial award or agreement, and signed by the employer and the person in training;
- are employment based;
- have the training component delivered by an RTO;
- include attainment of the senior secondary certificate and a VET qualification; and
- require attendance at school and work.

3.43 A national evaluation by the Allen Consulting Group found that the implementation was very complex and challenging for most schools to manage as SBNAs involve a range of stakeholders in training, employment and schools.⁴⁰ Greater discussion of the outcomes of the review is included in Chapter 4.

38 SDA, *Submission No. 45*, pp. 9-10.

39 ANTA, *Exhibit No. 56*, p. 1.

40 ANTA, *Exhibit No. 56*, p. 3.

Provision and accessibility of vocational and enterprise learning programs and career education.

- 3.44 It was reported to the Committee that the growth in VET in Schools has resulted in the diminution of career education programs in some schools. VET in Schools provision has been used to satisfy the needs of vocational learning for post-compulsory students, and because of limited resources has reduced the access for students in the middle high school years.⁴¹
- 3.45 Evidence to the Committee from DEST outlined the support for enterprise education as part of the School to Work program, the Enterprise and Career Education Program, ECEF, and most recently a project to identify innovative approaches and best practice in enterprise education. The development of employability skills is a major project associated with vocational learning currently being considered.⁴²
- 3.46 Limited information was provided to the Committee on vocational learning programs prior to senior secondary programs. South Australia implemented a three year Enterprise and Vocational Education Strategy in 2000, with work continuing with a Futures Connect strategy.⁴³ Western Australia also introduced a three year strategic plan for the *Integration of Enterprise and Vocational Education across the Curriculum*.⁴⁴
- 3.47 Examples of programs involving vocational learning include:
- Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) Levels 4, 5 and 6 contains career and employment information within Economy and Society;
 - the *Real Game Series*;
 - work experience;
 - Australian Business Week School Program for Years 10 and 11;
 - the Victorian Quality Teacher Programme (QTP) for Vocational Learning project;⁴⁵
 - units of work integrating vocational skills for use in Years 9 & 10 currently under development; and

41 Career Education Association of Victoria, *Submission No. 50*, p. 2.

42 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, pp. 32-36.

43 South Australian Government, *Submission No. 97*, p. 12; Mrs Marlene Boundy, State Program Manager, Futures Connect Strategy, SA Department of Education and Children's Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, p. 1030.

44 WA Department of Education, *Exhibit No. 18*, p. 8.

45 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 86*, pp. 19-20.

- Young Achievement Australia, and The Australian Network of Practice Firms.⁴⁶
- 3.48 Often the responsibility for vocational learning rests with the careers adviser, if one is allocated. In Victoria, the careers position within a school may be supported by the Year level coordinators, the Student Welfare Coordinator, the Managed Individual Pathways or Transition Coordinator and SOSE subject teachers.⁴⁷
- 3.49 The take up of enterprise education across states and territories has been mixed, with South Australia and Western Australia making Enterprise Education explicit in their curriculum frameworks, while in other jurisdictions it is reported as continuing to be an add-on activity.⁴⁸ The Australian Network of Practice Firms provides a simulated business environment where students establish and run their own businesses. They are used in schools for a variety of training purposes, including the development of enterprise skills and attitudes. Working Community is a community based enterprise program designed for whole of year levels 9 and 10 students in Victoria.
- 3.50 The structure and delivery of career education varies across state and territories and in general policies have been described as weak.⁴⁹ In practice, most decisions related to the provision of career education are taken at the individual school level. The differences between states are evident in two respects:
- The first is the provision made for a staffing allocation of careers advisers - where it varies from one state having full-time careers advisers in each secondary school to other states having no policy regarding careers advisers.
 - The second major difference relates to the structure of career education within the curriculum. As for enterprise education, in some states it is explicit while in others it is when time permits.⁵⁰
- 3.51 Barriers to the effective delivery of vocational learning were identified by career educators. The pressure on traditional subjects and the lack of continuity for long term planning have an impact on the individual school's ability to support broader vocational learning programs. A lack of

46 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, p. 34.

47 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 86*, p. 21.

48 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 34; see also WA Department of Education, *Exhibit No. 18*.

49 OECD, 2002, *OECD Review of Career Guidance Policies*, Australia Country Note, p. 5, <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/17/47/1948341.pdf>>.

50 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 36.

understanding in schools of the difference between vocational learning and VET has resulted in VET provision being used to satisfy the needs of vocational learning for all students. The limit on resources affects the ability of schools to offer vocational learning programs in Years 7 to 9.⁵¹ The channelling of resources away from career education will be discussed more fully in Chapter 8.

Summary

- 3.52 This summary of differences between jurisdictions indicates the range of implications for vocational education programs. The variation affects the access that students have to opportunities such as work experience and structured work placements, the quality of delivery in relation to the number of hours for consolidating skills in schools and at the workplace, the available support provided by the school, the effectiveness of the program with paid employment as a feature, and access to further pathways by recognising achievements at a tertiary level.
- 3.53 A significant issue associated with the diversity of systems has been the definitions and recording of outcomes. Considerable work has been progressed through MCEETYA and ANTA MINCO to improve consistency in terminology and reporting. This has enabled the reporting of student outcomes of vocational education in schools as part of the 2002 Report from the MCEETYA Taskforce on Transition from School, published as part of the NCVET VET statistics for the first time.⁵² Other issues such as the implementation of the AQTF in the schools sector, the extent of work placements and the recognition of VET studies, among others, have been identified as needing greater national consistency.⁵³
- 3.54 Although there has clearly been significant work in advancing vocational education on a national front, criticisms from industry suggest that
- in practice, the differences between states acts to discourage industry from embracing VETIS.⁵⁴ The issue here is not which state government is right or wrong but the breakdown in national consistency between States.⁵⁵

51 Career Education Association of Victoria, *Submission No. 50*, p. 3.

52 NCVET, *Exhibit No. 105*.

53 ANTA MINCO, *Action Plan for Quality and VET in Schools*, Attachment A, November 2003.

54 VETIS is an acronym for VET in Schools.

55 SDA, *Submission No. 45*, p. 11.

Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends that as a high priority MCEETYA pursue greater national consistency in key aspects of vocational education affecting the recognition and value of VET in Schools, to ensure a more uniform approach to transition to further education, training and employment. This should include:

- **the collection of meaningful and accurate data;**
- **the adoption of common terminology;**
- **the recognition of VET for tertiary entrance;**
- **the role of and requirements for structured workplace learning;**
- **issues regarding nominal hours and units of competency;**
- **approaches to stand alone courses versus embedding of VET components;**
- **teacher training;**
- **policies for the use of TAFE and private RTOs; and**
- **reporting of participation and outcomes.**

3.55 The Committee commends many practices in the states and territories and the cooperative approaches to enhancing consistency. The Committee also notes that there is significant benefit in encouraging diversity to support regional requirements. However, the aims of the vocational education system and schooling system are national. There is considerable merit in identifying good practice, and ensuring that greater consistency is achieved to enable all students to reach their potential through partnerships with industry and the community to support vocational education in schools. Many of these issues will be taken up in later chapters to identify in greater detail recommendations to support better practice.

Reviews of vocational education

- 3.56 Reviews of vocational education in schools have occurred in most jurisdictions.⁵⁶ The reader is referred to these for closer examination of state and territory activity. For example, in NSW the review *Vocational education and equity in senior secondary schooling* sought to explore the educational and social patterns around vocational education in the new Higher School Certificate (HSC). As described in that review the new HSC was introduced in 2001 to make the Certificate more socially inclusive and reduce the streaming of students by bringing vocational courses within the matriculation framework and counting them towards the Universities Admission Index.
- 3.57 A key feature of the reviews is confirmation of the growth specifically in VET in Schools, and the implications of this for resourcing. The states and territories have expressed concern about the longer term implications of Commonwealth leadership and the short-term nature of funds required to establish a national framework for vocational education in schools. The expectations that schools could resource these initiatives from a restructuring of curriculum and reallocating resources has been raised as unrealistic in a number of submissions.⁵⁷ As noted previously, ACACA brought to the Committee's attention the range and scope of activities undertaken by the Boards of Studies and the associated resource implications for the maintenance of records, including units of competency, the provision of data for system level reporting and significant curriculum activity.⁵⁸

56 For example: NSW: *Vocational education and equity in senior secondary schooling*, September 2003 funded by the Australian Research Council, the NSW Department of Education and Training, and the NSW Board of Studies. Queensland: The Gardener Report: *The Review of Pathways articulation*; Western Australia: *Future Directions for VET in Schools 2001/02 Report*, Curriculum Council, and *Review of Vocational Education and Training in Schools December 2002*, WA Department of Education and Training 2003; ACT: *Pathways to the future: Report on the inquiry into vocational education and Training in the ACT*, 2003, Report No. 3 Standing Committee on Education, The Legislative Assembly for the ACT.

57 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, 40; Queensland Government, *Submission No. 93*, pp. 3 and 13; Independent Education Union, *Submission No. 73*, p.1.; Victorian Farmers Federation, *Submission No. 43*, p.2; VET Network, *Submission No. 27*, p. 2; Nyangatjatjara College, *Submission No. 24*, p. 2.

58 ACACA, *Submission No. 99*, pp. 5-6, and *Exhibit No. 85*.

Funding of vocational education in schools

3.58 ANTA funding to schools is based on the outcomes of accredited vocational education and training as part of the National Training Framework.⁵⁹ However, the National Goals of Schooling provide a broader definition of vocational learning that is not necessarily part of the National Training Framework as described in Chapter 2. Part of the agreement to the National Goals is that there should be sufficient resourcing to enable achievement of these goals by complementary Commonwealth and state funding approaches for both government and non-government schools.⁶⁰

The National Goals

3.59 Ministers, in their agreement as part of MCEETYA to the National Goals for Schooling, outlined a framework of five principles to resource the National Goals. As noted in Chapter 2, these National Goals include an emphasis on vocational education in schools. The framework of principles states that Commonwealth and state governments will work cooperatively and pro-actively to ensure that:

- The total level of resources available for schooling is adequate so that achievement of the National Goals for Schooling is a realistic objective for all students.
- Public funding across different schools and sectors is distributed fairly and equitably through a consistent approach to assessing student needs and through having regard to the total level of resources available for students.
- The total level of funding for government schooling is adequate to ensure access to high quality government schooling for all, and all governments' funding policies recognise this as a national priority.
- Public funding for schooling supports the right of families to choose non-government schooling and supports non-government schools on the basis of need, within the context of promoting a socially and culturally cohesive society and the effective use of public funds.
- Resourcing for all students is adequate for meeting the National Goals, notwithstanding the school or school sector they attend.⁶¹

59 ANTA MINCO, 2001, *Principles and Guidelines for Improving Outcomes for VET in Schools 2002-2004*, <<http://www.anta.gov.au/publication.asp?qsID=294>>.

60 MCEETYA, *Resourcing the National Goals for Schooling*, Preamble and pp. 1-3, <http://www.mceetya.edu.au/taskfrce/national_goals/framework.htm>.

61 MCEETYA, *Resourcing the National Goals for Schooling*, p. 1, <http://www.mceetya.edu.au/taskfrce/national_goals/framework.htm>.

- 3.60 These principles include an acknowledgement that the expectations and costs of schooling are increasing. New demands are being placed on capital and recurrent costs arising from developments in areas such as information and communication technologies (ICT), vocational education in schools, behaviour management, changes in curriculum and pedagogy, and teacher professional development.
- 3.61 The preamble accompanying the description of the principles notes that a national framework for funding schools will be supported by complementary state and territory and Commonwealth models for funding government and non-government schools. There is acknowledgement of the responsibility for promoting the interests and welfare of all students. There is thus an agreed commitment clearly documented to support vocational education in schools.

Commonwealth funding

- 3.62 DEST reports that the Commonwealth has supported the National Goals, the New Framework for Vocational Education in Schools and Footprints to the Future, through the provision of general recurrent funding. In 2003, \$6.5 billion of direct Commonwealth funding for all schooling was allocated, an increase of 7.9 per cent over 2002. Thirty-three per cent of this was allocated to government schools, with the remaining 67 per cent to non-government schools (reflecting the general pattern of Commonwealth-state funding responsibilities for government and non-government schools). Vocational education, as part of school curriculum offerings, is supported by this recurrent funding.⁶²
- 3.63 A brief summary of targeted programs follows to give an overview of the types of programs that have been developed to support young people since the mid 1990s.

VET in Schools

- 3.64 ANTA administers national programs and projects and distributes Commonwealth funding for the national VET system to states and territories. Between 1997 and 2001, \$100 million was distributed for VET in Schools, with a continuation of \$20 million per annum plus indexation until 2004. The ANTA VET in Schools Principles and Guidelines for 2002-2004 indicate that:

62 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, p. 6.

Specific allocations have been made for 2004 only at this stage with a view to consultation taking place early in 2004 relating to a revised funding formula for 2005/2006. ANTA will establish a consultation process early in 2004, and then forward advice to the ANTA Board and ANTA MINCO.⁶³

- 3.65 At the time of writing, negotiations on the ANTA Agreement 2004-2006 were not finalised as expected, and as such, funding arrangements were not agreed. However, it was agreed that ANTA VET Special Purpose funds for VET in Schools should continue for 2005-06 and that principles and guidelines be developed early in 2004 for consideration at the mid-2004 ANTA MINCO meeting.
- 3.66 The 2002-2004 Principles and Guidelines also specify that program planning in each state and territory requires the development of a funding framework which sets conditions that promote the integration of VET into schools and system budgets and operations, and the transfer of resources to VET from other activities. This is to be progressively implemented, with long term sustainable arrangements in place by the end of 2004.⁶⁴
- 3.67 Broad comparative data was not provided to the inquiry, but an indication of the programs that the Commonwealth, and to a lesser extent the states and territories, have implemented appears below. Funding arrangements are discussed further in Chapter 6.

Jobs Pathway Programme

- 3.68 Additional monies were allocated for the Jobs Pathway Programme (JPP). The JPP helps young people make the transition through school and from school to further education, training or employment. JPP service providers are contracted by the Commonwealth Government to assist eligible 14-19 year olds.

Enterprise and career education

- 3.69 ECEF had been funded prior to September 2003 to support the promotion of enterprise, career and vocational learning in Australia. This included \$100 million for the Australian Student Traineeship Foundation (ASTF) between 1996-97 and 2000-01, including extra funding for work placement coordination and community partnerships. A key role for ECEF was to

63 ANTA MINCO, 2001, *Principles and Guidelines for Improving Outcomes for VET in Schools 2002-2004*, p. 6, <<http://www.anta.gov.au/publication.asp?qsID=294>>.

64 ANTA MINCO, 2001, *Principles and Guidelines for Improving Outcomes for VET in Schools 2002-2004*, pp. 1-2, <<http://www.anta.gov.au/publication.asp?qsID=294>>.

develop processes to investigate and establish sustainable options for business and industry involvement with enterprise education. This included in-kind arrangements and an industry owned trust fund to develop viable ongoing alternatives and sustainability rather than reliance on Commonwealth funding.⁶⁵

- 3.70 From 30 September 2003 ECEF programs have been absorbed within DEST to reduce overlap and improve coordination.⁶⁶

The Government wishes to consolidate its transitions programmes to avoid duplication or replication and to ensure more effective use of resources. This will more strongly align the Commonwealth's initiatives in this area. It will also produce efficiencies in terms of the administration of Commonwealth programmes.⁶⁷

- 3.71 Funding for Transition (School to Work) programs within ECEF will be reduced from 2003-04 by this incorporation, assuming savings in administration.⁶⁸ The development of future career and transition arrangements in 2003-04 will be guided by the outcomes of Career and Transition (CAT) Pilots and Partnership Outreach Education Model Pilots (POEMS).⁶⁹

- 3.72 The Enterprise and Career Education Programme (ECEP) is another element of the Commonwealth's support for vocational education in schools. ECEP, with \$25 million over 2000-01 to 2003-04, funds strategic projects that enhance enterprise initiatives in schools. ECEP also supports the production of support materials in enterprise, such as professional development resources for teachers, and in career education, such as the *Job Guide* and the website *myfuture*.⁷⁰

- 3.73 In summary, evidence from DEST indicates that the Commonwealth provides support for a range of strategies for vocational education in schools. The Commonwealth provided over \$283 million between 1996-97 and 2000-01 to assist government and non-government education authorities expand vocational education and training in schools, particularly New Apprenticeships and school to work pathways. The funding also supported efforts nationally on the quality and sustainability

65 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 34.

66 DEST, <<http://www.dest.gov.au/ecef/default.htm>>.

67 DEST, <http://www.dest.gov.au/ecef/ecef_qa1.htm>.

68 DEST Budget Papers: Education Science and Training Portfolio Budget Statements 2003-04, Budget related paper No. 1.5, p. 43.

69 DEST Portfolio Budget Statements 2003-04, Budget related paper No. 1.5, p. 39.

70 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, p. 6.

of VET in Schools, including industrial relations, legislation, compliance with VET sector arrangements, teacher professional development and infrastructure including capital works. This included:

- \$100 million to ANTA for VET in Schools between 1997 and 2001;
- \$27 million for the School to Work Programme between 1996-97 and 1999-2000;
- \$100 million for the ASTF between 1996-97 and 2000-01 (this includes the commitment in December 1999 of an additional \$10 million for Work Placement Coordination for the 2001 school year and \$2 million for developing community partnerships, particularly to support New Apprenticeships for school students); and
- over \$56 million for the JPP between 1996-97 and 2000-01.

3.74 More details of Commonwealth programs and funding are provided in Appendix A and B of the DEST submission. Table 3.1, over, is a brief summary of Commonwealth funding.⁷¹

Funding of vocational education for Indigenous students

3.75 Commonwealth funding arrangements, including recurrent and targeted funding, monitors the extent of improvements in Indigenous participation and educational outcomes. In agreeing to the extension of the VET in Schools funding of \$20m per annum for the period 2002 - 2004, the Ministers of the ANTA MINCO also broadly agreed to the Principles and Guidelines for Improving Outcomes for Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Schools (2002-2004). One of the key priority areas identified for action through this funding is:

the introduction of specific strategies to improve access for students in rural and remote areas and for educationally disadvantaged students including Indigenous students and students with a disability⁷²

3.76 More specific references to Indigenous projects are discussed in Chapter 4. One of DEST's current strategic priorities is *Improving learning outcomes for Indigenous students*. Part of this will include cross portfolio flexible funding arrangements to improve outcomes.⁷³

71 DEST, *Submission No. 75*.

72 ANTA MINCO, 2001, *Principles and Guidelines for Improving Outcomes for VET in Schools 2002-2004*, p. 2, <<http://www.anta.gov.au/publication.asp?qsID=294>>.

73 DEST Portfolio Budget Statements 2003-04, Budget related paper No. 1.5, p. 41.

Table 3.1 Summary of Commonwealth contributions to vocational education programs

Commonwealth Programs	Years	Funding \$ '000
Key Competencies Program	1993/1994 – 1995/1996	20 000
Australian Student Traineeship Foundation (ASTF)	1998-1999	20 230
	1999-2000	20 380
	2000-2001	22 600
School to Work Program	1996-1997 – 1999-2000	24 000
VET in Schools:		
VET in Schools State/Territory Allocations		15 000
VET in Schools Expansion Projects		8 400
Enterprise Education:		
Enterprise Education in Schools Element	1996/1997 to 1998/1999	3 400
Employability Skills	2001	175
Enterprise and Career Education Foundation (ECEP) *	2001-2002	28 770
	2002-2003	23 820
Enterprise and Career Education Program	2000/2001 – 2003/2004	25 000
Indigenous Participation:		
Vocational and Educational Guidance for Aboriginals Scheme (VEGAS)	1999-2000	8 650
	2000-2001	7 820
	2001-2002	10 770
Working Together for Indigenous Youth (Australians Working Together)	2002-2004	6 000
Industry Partnerships:		
National Industry Skills Initiative (NISI)	1999-2002	10 000
Business Education Partnerships Advocates Program (BEPA) and Industry Project Officer Program (IPO)	2000	924
	2001-2002	1 480
Jobs Pathway Programme (JPP)	1996 - 2003	23 000 p.a.
School-based New Apprenticeships:		
The New Apprenticeship Access Program Funding	1997-2006	10 200
New Apprenticeships Incentives Program: Expanding School-based New Apprenticeships Initiative	2002-2003	4 200
	2003-2004	9 100
	2004-2005	9 200
Joint Policy Funding and Group Training New Apprenticeships Targeted Initiatives Program	2001-2002	7 998
		9 788
Teacher Professional Development:		
Quality Teacher Program	2000-2003	76 800
Australian National Training Authority:		
VET in Schools Funding	1997-2001; 2002-2004	20 000 p.a.
Skill Centres for School Students Program	1997, 1998 & 1999	5 000
	2000, 2001 & 2002	4 000
VET in Schools Recognition by both Industry and Higher Education Funding	2002	200
Partners in a Learning Culture: Australian National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy for Vocational Education and Training	2000-05	2 100

Source DEST, Submission No. 75, Appendix A, Commonwealth Initiatives/Programmes.

* Note: ECEF operations are now managed through DEST from 30 September 2003.

State and territory funding

- 3.77 Estimation of state and territory governments' funding to support vocational education is problematic due to the inclusion of costs of the provision of vocational learning programs into general funding in schools. The committed VET in Schools funds are easier to identify because of reporting and accountability requirements. New South Wales and South Australia provided the most thorough information of the level of expenditure required for vocational education.
- 3.78 In their estimates of costs in 2001, the NSW Government committed recurrent resources to the implementation of VET in Schools. For the NSW government sector, the total was calculated at \$58 million (excluding all capital costs). Of this amount an estimated \$34 million was in integrated costs and \$24 million was in additional costs of VET.
- 3.79 The NSW Department of Education and Training submission states that these calculations are conservative because they do not include estimates of the cost of organising and supervising work placements. The calculations also exclude the cost of work placement insurance and 'hidden costs' including TAFE NSW infrastructure costs such as record keeping and issuing credentials. NSW identifies that at \$3.89 million, the NSW government schools component of the ANTA VET in Schools Program for 2001 provided less than 20 per cent of the calculated additional cost of VET in Schools for government school students, and approximately eight per cent of the calculated total cost of VET in Schools for government school students.⁷⁴
- 3.80 An example of contributions to vocational education is provided below for South Australia:
- ANTA funds provide \$1.73 million per annum to support the expansion of VET in government and non-government schools. The funds are allocated to the three school sectors (government, non-government and catholic) on a population share basis, through the State Training Authority.
 - The Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) supports the planning and coordination of VET in government schools. These funds also support other aspects of the New Framework for Vocational Education in Schools. Non-government schools have been able to access the services provided by this funding.

74 NSW DET, *Submission No. 94*, p. 30.

- School funds generally support the salaries of school staff, who either provide the training or coordinate training provided by external bodies, including employers. In some cases, schools identify funds to purchase training from external providers such as institutes of TAFE and other registered training organisations.
- 3.81 The South Australian government is currently undertaking a costing analysis and initial calculations show that schools can sustain some activity associated with the delivery of VET using their existing per capita grant (global budget). However, in evidence to the Committee it was stated that secondary schools need further resources to sustain the higher cost of VET programs associated with:
- smaller class sizes;
 - cost of professional development for teachers;
 - coordination and management; and
 - costs associated with the maintaining and updating of facilities, equipment and machinery.⁷⁵
- 3.82 These are two examples of the resourcing specifically of VET in Schools and do not refer to other work in place regarding enterprise and career education. Such allocations include, for instance, the South Australian Futures Connect strategy which provides a framework for transitions and a learning plan and exit map, allocating \$4.5 million per year to fund thirty officers to assist with its implementation.⁷⁶
- 3.83 Overall, in evidence to the Committee it was difficult to identify specific funding that had been allocated by the states to vocational education. NSW provides the most extensive information on the breakdown of the major costs of VET in Schools for the NSW government sector, but this does not include amounts.⁷⁷ From other sources only part figures are available; for example, in Western Australia the state government provided \$1.2 million in addition to the ANTA \$1.4 million.⁷⁸ An

75 South Australian Government, *Submission No. 97*, p. 17; Mrs Marlene Boundy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, pp. 1030 and 1039.

76 Mrs Marlene Boundy, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, p. 1030.

77 NSW DET, *Submission No. 94*, Appendices, pp. 39-41.

78 Mr Gregory Robson, Executive Director, Teaching and Learning (Curriculum Policy and Support), WA Department of Education and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 913.

additional \$200,000 was allocated in 2002 to accommodate increased VET numbers.⁷⁹

- 3.84 The Committee believes that there is an argument for including VET funding in general school budgets to some extent. However, the magnitude of this integration is a key issue. The Committee would support this where a realistic analysis of the costs of VET had been completed, comparing the costs of vocational education with general education. It is very difficult for the Committee to form a view on the adequacy of funding when insufficient data has been received. *The Cost of VET in Schools* completed in June 2003⁸⁰ goes a substantial way to addressing the paucity of comparative information, but does not provide a comparison with general education and funding for TAFE on similar measures.

Concerns regarding funding

- 3.85 The resourcing of the growth in vocational education has been one of the greatest concerns presented to the Committee. The resourcing issue has been outlined by almost all witnesses to the inquiry, ranging from teachers and industry representatives to senior education department officers.⁸¹

- 3.86 The NSW Department of Education and Training states that:

VET in Schools programs that meet these (NTF) principles demand a higher level of investment than general education. Additional Commonwealth funding must be provided to support growth in participation and strengthen workplace training.⁸²

- 3.87 A description of resourcing from South Australia also indicates the concerns presented to the Committee on the inadequacy of current funding:

Since 1997, the Commonwealth has provided funds (\$20m per annum nationally, \$1.7m to South Australia) to support the growth of VET in Schools. In South Australia, the uptake of VET

79 Government of Western Australia, Department of Education and Training, 2003, *Review of Vocational Education and Training in Schools December 2002*, p. 13.

80 DEST, *Exhibit No. 89*.

81 *See for example*: National Council of Independent Schools' Associations, *Submission No. 79*, p. iv; Mr Bernie Fitzsimons, Senior Education Advisor, Catholic Education Office, South Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, p. 1059; Australian Federation of Special Education Administrators, *Submission No. 108*, p.7; Australian Education Union, *Submission No. 72*, p. 8; ACCI, *Submission No. 95*, pp. 8-9.

82 NSW DET, *Submission No. 94*, p. 4.

by school students has been considerable representing a 430% increase from 1997 to 2001. The Commonwealth funding has remained constant. In 1997, funds to South Australian senior secondary school students translated to \$6.57 per student hour and in 2001 they represented \$0.70 cents per student hour.⁸³

- 3.88 At the broader VET level, the lack of agreement on funding highlights the concerns the states have about the level and growth of funding, and the concerns the Commonwealth has in ensuring that funds have been used to expand VET opportunities in general and not used to replace existing state or territory expenditure.⁸⁴
- 3.89 Support for both positions is presented by an evaluation of national investment in VET which suggests that resourcing has not kept up with growing demand. In a review of Australia's National Investment in Vocational Education and Training, the funding of the university and vocational education and training sectors was analysed using NCVET data throughout the 1990s to 1999. In 2001 the review found that:
- Absolute funding levels per student are about one-sixth of that for Higher Education (albeit for a mix involving considerably more part-time students and shorter courses), but more importantly the downward trend in funding per student evident through the mid 1990's accelerated over the past few years. The Commonwealth's component has been cut back most in relative terms, but on this per students basis, State Government funding has also gradually declined.⁸⁵
- 3.90 The questions for recent years (post-2000) are therefore: Has there been a recognition of the per capita funding decrease in VET generally and how does this relate specifically to vocational education in schools? How has the schooling sector responded to the changing requirements?
- 3.91 The significant growth in vocational education in schools has resulted in less individual funding for students. The Committee notes that the current funding situation needs to be promptly addressed as there is strong debate on the meaning of 'adequate' resourcing as defined in the National Goals for Schooling. The Committee believes that it is time to move from rhetoric to sustainable implementation.

83 SA Government, *Submission No. 97*, p. 7.

84 See for example Dr Brendan Nelson, Minister for Education, Science and Training, *Queensland fails to convince states to back growth funding*, media release, 22 November 2003, MINCO01/03, <<http://www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/Nelson/2003/11/nminco01221103.asp>>.

85 Fitzgerald, V, 2001, *Skills in the Knowledge Economy: National Investment in Vocational Education and Training*, The Allen Consulting Group, pp. 30-31.

- 3.92 In addition to the need for increased recurrent funding to assist schools with the extra costs of VET, other associated aspects such as professional development and workplace coordination also require extra resourcing. These will be discussed in more detail in later chapters.

Summary

- 3.93 The combined support of government at all levels for policy and resourcing are integral to effective vocational education in schools. The principles and priorities for VET in Schools are clearly articulated. However, there has been much less focus on other components of vocational education, such as enterprise and career education.
- 3.94 There are significant differences between the states and territories on key features of vocational education, including: the nature of delivery, RTO status and external RTO involvement, hours of work placements and nominal hours for gaining competency, recognition of VET in tertiary studies, access to SBNAs and access to non-NTF vocational learning opportunities. These differences have been identified in some cases as a risk to the quality of VET in Schools.
- 3.95 The Commonwealth and states and territories are involved in a range of programs to assist young people's transition from school to work. The funding of such programs for vocational education in schools by the Commonwealth and the states and territories is a major issue that needs to be resolved to ensure the sustainability of vocational education.
- 3.96 The next chapter will describe the marked increase in student and school involvement in vocational education from the early 1990s to 2003. Funding to support this growth will be discussed in more detail as a structural factor in Chapter 6.

4

Growth and participation

- 4.1 Recent years have seen a rapid growth in participation in VET in Schools. This chapter examines the growth and participation in vocational education in schools examining the range of programs, including School-based New Apprenticeships and structured workplace learning, qualification levels, industry areas and gender differences. The effect of location and schooling sector is reviewed along with the effectiveness of vocational education in responding to Indigenous students' needs.

Overview

- 4.2 Vocational education is one component of a broadening of the senior secondary curriculum. Since 1990 enrolments in vocationally oriented studies have increased, with significant participation in one aspect of vocational education, VET in Schools, and to a lesser extent School-based New Apprenticeships (SBNAs). Developments in other aspects of vocational education, such as enterprise education, and their outcomes, are less apparent.
- 4.3 The pattern of involvement by types of students, educational sector, state and territory, and region varies significantly and leads to a diversity of outcomes. This chapter will focus mainly on accredited vocational education and training, reflecting the volume of evidence that was presented to the Committee.
- 4.4 In general, the picture of VET in Schools is one of strong growth since 1993, when the first trial programs were introduced. Since dedicated Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) funding was provided in 1996, VET in Schools has developed from isolated activity to a program widely adopted in the vast majority of senior secondary schools.

- 4.5 In 2002:
- 185,520 students were enrolled in VET in Schools programs, representing 44 per cent of all students enrolled in the senior secondary certificate;
 - 95 per cent of all schools offering senior secondary programs offered VET in Schools programs;
 - more than 50 per cent of programs were in three industry areas:
 - ⇒ tourism and hospitality;
 - ⇒ business and clerical; and
 - ⇒ computing;
 - over 37 million hours of training were delivered across Australia, with the average varying between 111 and 341 hours per student across the states and territories;
 - 112,403 students undertook structured workplace learning; and
 - over 7,500 students commenced SBNA's in 2002, with more than half commencing in Queensland.¹

Participation and retention at school

- 4.6 In August 2002, age participation rates for full-time school students were 92.5 per cent for 15 year olds, 80.9 per cent for 16 year olds and 62.3 per cent for 17 year olds. The number of part-time school students is increasing, 5.6 per cent higher than in 1997. The apparent retention rate of full-time school students from Year 7/8 to Year 12 was 75.1 per cent, an increase from the previous year. As in previous years since 1976, the female retention rate was higher than that for males.²
- 4.7 The target of 95 per cent retention rate of students to complete Year 12 or its vocational equivalent was recommended in the Finn Review in 1992, and more recently reiterated in 2001.³ Research into participation in the final year of school has found that the quality of earlier education and the level of school achievement impact significantly on the likelihood of students completing Year 12. In addition, the student's gender and socio-economic and cultural background are also associated with completing Year 12. There are also differences between school sectors and between metropolitan and non-metropolitan locations of schools. Therefore, there are many factors that come into play in the final years of schooling but the

1 MCEETYA, 2003, *National Data on Participation in VET in Schools: Programs and School-based New Apprenticeships for the 2002 School Year*, pp. 25 and 27.

2 ABS, 4221.0, *Schools Australia*, 2003.

3 Fullarton, S et al., 2003, *Patterns of participation in year 12, LSAY Research Report 33*, ACER p. 1.

growth in the availability of VET courses is one factor that has encouraged less academically focussed students to complete Years 11 and 12.

- 4.8 Subject selection in senior secondary years has a significant influence on education and career options after leaving school. Students from higher socio-economic and Asian backgrounds are more likely to participate in courses such as mathematics, chemistry and physics, that traditionally are avenues to university. Students from lower socio-economic groups are more likely to participate in courses leading directly into vocational education and training or into the workforce with no additional formal education or training.⁴
- 4.9 Examination of subject selections in the past decade reveals that there has been a broadening of distribution of selections, with a reduction in:
- the proportion of students taking two subjects from traditional areas of specialisation: two mathematics subjects or the combination of physics and chemistry, or two subjects from humanities and social sciences; and
 - the enrolments in the four largest key learning areas (English mathematics, society and environment, and the sciences), dropping from 76 per cent in the early 1990s to 71 per cent in 2001.

This has combined with increasing enrolments in vocationally oriented studies, such as computer studies and technical studies as well as the arts. Within economics and business there has been growth in business studies away from accounting.⁵

Growth in VET

- 4.10 In the ten years from 1992 to 2002, the number of students in Australia's public VET system, including school students undertaking VET courses, increased from around 1.04 million to 1.69 million. From 1994 to 2000 the average growth rate was around 6 per cent per annum. This stabilised after 2000 with a 0.3 per cent increase in student numbers between 2001 and 2002.⁶ In 2000, 8 per cent of VET was undertaken in schools.⁷

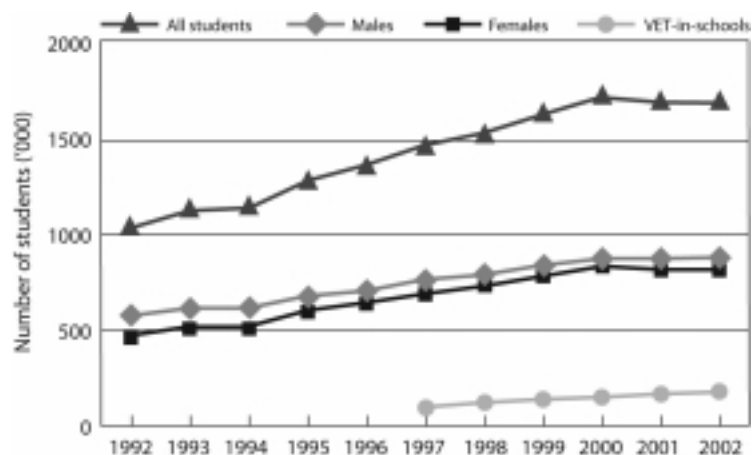
4 Fullarton, S et al., 2003, *Patterns of participation in year 12, LSAY Research Report 33*, ACER pp. 1, viii.

5 Fullarton, S et al., 2003, *Patterns of participation in year 12, LSAY Research Report 33*, ACER p. viii.

6 NCVER, 2003, *Australian Vocational Education and Training Statistics. Students and Courses 2002: At a glance*, p. 12.

7 NCVER, 2002, *Vocational education and Training: Programs and outcomes. An overview*. Statistics 2000, p. 3.

Figure 4.1 Number of students in VET ('000s), 1992–2002



Source NCVET, 2003, *Australian Vocational Education and Training Statistics Students and Courses 2002: At a Glance*, p. 12.

4.11 A major area of growth has been in VET in Schools:

There has been a continued increase in VET-in-schools, through states, territories and the Commonwealth actively promoting VET-in-schools as a pathway from school to post-school activities. This has made VET-in-schools an important alternative to more traditional pathways.⁸

4.12 In 2002 there were 185,500 students participating in VET in Schools, treble what it was just six years earlier, with similar proportions of males and females participating, with over 37 million hours of training.⁹ The number of VET in Schools students increased by 9.3 per cent from 2001, and the number of schools participating increased by 2,097 schools, with 95 per cent of all schools offering a senior secondary program. Forty-four per cent of students undertake VET in their senior secondary certificate, up from 16 per cent in 1996.¹⁰

4.13 NSW had the largest number of students participating in VET in Schools with 64,400, followed by Queensland with 50,700 students. However, Queensland had the largest proportion of hours with over 15.5 million annual hours. This reflects the different policy emphases of the various jurisdictions, where the number of students participating is larger for

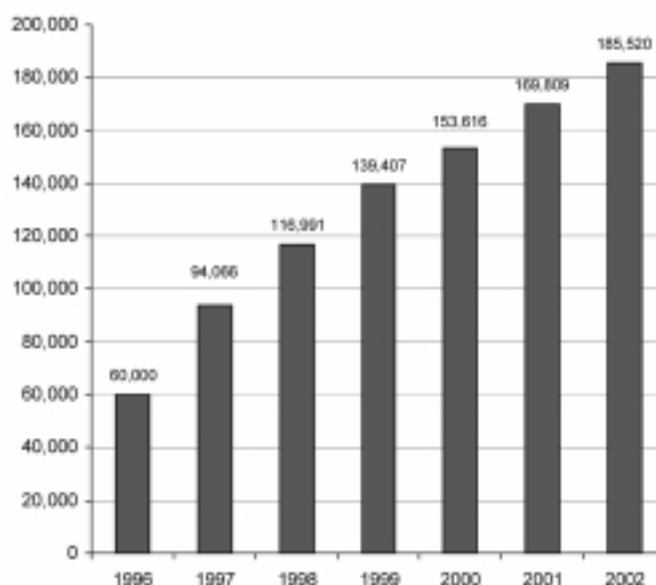
8 NCVET, 2003, *Australian Vocational Education and Training Statistics. Students and Courses 2002: At a glance*, p. 2.

9 NCVET, *Exhibit No. 105*, pp. 119, 122.

10 MCEETYA, 2003, *National Data on Participation in VET in Schools Programs and School-based New Apprenticeships for the 2002 School Year*, pp. 1 and 5.

various jurisdictions, but the depth at which students engage in these courses, measured in contact hours, is less.¹¹

Figure 4.2 Number of students enrolled in VET in Schools programs in Australia 1996-2002



Source *National Data on Participation in VET in Schools Programs and School-based New Apprenticeships for the 2002 School Year, MCEETYA Taskforce on Transition from Schools, p. 5.*

4.14 Inconsistencies across states and territories in the number of hours attributed to units of competency, which can then be aggregated to form certificates, make broad conclusions difficult. As the achievement of competency by students is standards-based rather than time-based, the calculation of average hours has to be estimated. The standard unit of Average Annual Hours Curriculum is the hours specified in curriculum statements or nominal hours attached to modules or units of competence. These hours do not include hours associated with work experience, industry placement or field placement.¹²

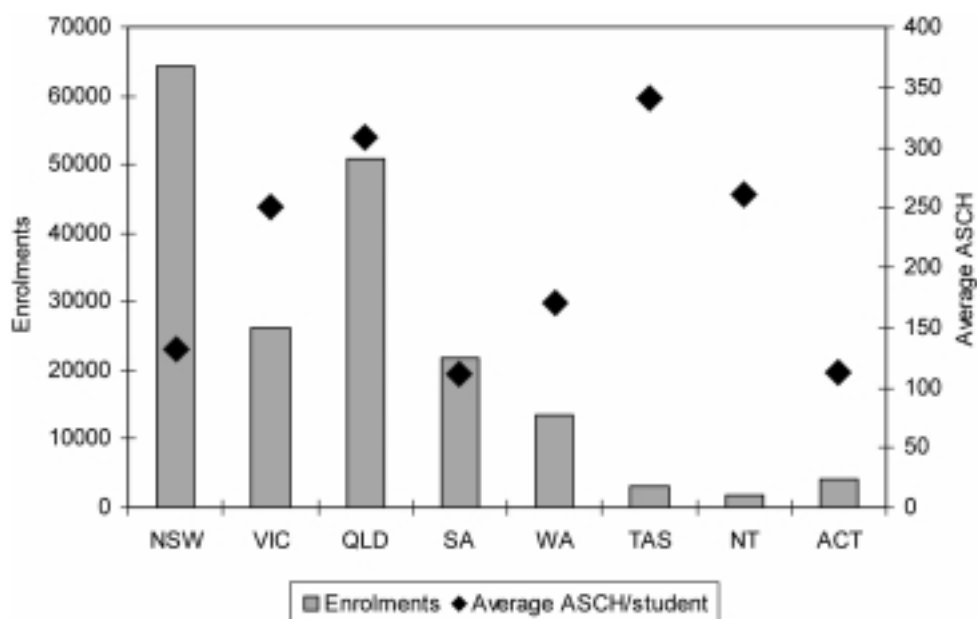
4.15 Figure 4.3 provides a broad picture of the variation in enrolment and hours across the states. The average amount ranges from a low in South Australia of 111 hours to a high in Tasmania of 341 hours. This range of participation then has implications for attempts to persuade industry of the effectiveness of VET in Schools where there are substantial jurisdictional differences.¹³

11 MCEETYA, 2003, *National Data on Participation in VET in Schools Programs and School-based New Apprenticeships for the 2002 School Year*, pp. 15.

12 MCEETYA, 2003, *National Data on Participation in VET in Schools: Programs and School-based New Apprenticeships for the 2002 School Year*, p. 13.

13 MCEETYA, 2003, *National Data on Participation in VET in Schools: Programs and School-based New Apprenticeships for the 2002 School Year*, p. 15.

Figure 4.3 Average Annual Hours Curriculum and VET in Schools enrolments in 2002



Source *National Data on Participation in VET in Schools Programs and School-based New Apprenticeships for the 2002 School Year, MCEETYA Taskforce on Transition from Schools, p. 15.*

Participation in structured workplace learning

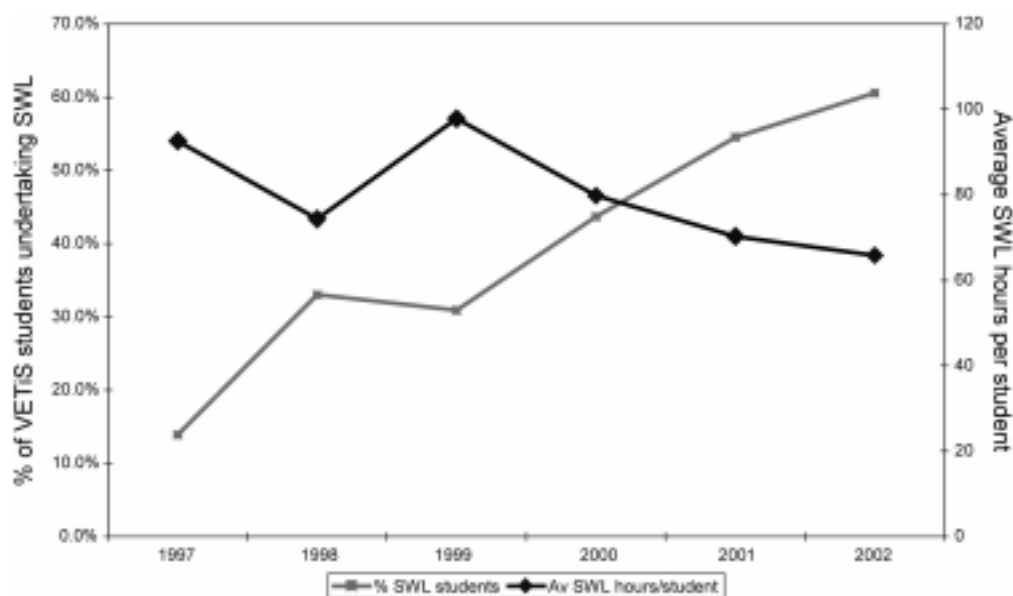
- 4.16 Not all states and territories require structured workplace learning (SWL) as not all VET in Schools programs require students to undertake work placement. However, Tasmania and NSW have mandated a workplace component for all VET courses.¹⁴ Almost 61 per cent of VET students were involved in SWL during 2002 compared to 44 per cent in 2000. Although the demand for SWL is increasing, the average number of hours is showing a downward trend, perhaps reflecting the finite number of placements that schools can access while maintaining a positive relationship with employers.¹⁵
- 4.17 On average these students participate in 70 hours a year of structured workplace learning, although actual levels vary widely from state to state. However, there is a concern that the 40 per cent not undertaking SWL may not be able to demonstrate relevant skills in the workplace. This issue holds for any purely institutional pathway and has obvious implications for industry confidence in VET qualifications and for the effectiveness of transition to the workplace. The ANTA submission to the inquiry states that growth in structured workplace learning opportunities in VET in Schools programs is a key objective.¹⁶

14 ANTA, *Submission No. 90*, p. 21.

15 MCEETYA, 2003, *National Data on Participation in VET in Schools: Programs and School-based New Apprenticeships for the 2002 School Year*, p. 16.

16 ANTA, *Submission No. 90*, p. 21.

Figure 4.4 Percentage of VET in Schools students undertaking structured workplace learning (SWL) and the average hours spent in SWL, 1997-2002



Source National Data on Participation in VET in Schools Programs and School-based New Apprenticeships for the 2002 School Year, MCEETYA Taskforce on Transition from Schools, p. 19.

- 4.18 More detailed research on structured workplace learning was undertaken for the Enterprise and Career Education Foundation (ECEP) in 2000, with statistics supplied by school VET coordinators.¹⁷ ECEP forecast that over 100,000 students were to participate in SWL in 2001, consistent with the findings above. Equal proportions of males and females participated but there were marked patterns of gender differentiation which will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter. There is also evidence of significant participation by Indigenous students, those from non-English speaking backgrounds and students with a disability. Over 40,000 employers participated in 2000, an increase of over 30 per cent on 1999.
- 4.19 The Committee notes the value of structured workplace learning as an important component in developing workplace skills, and ensuring credibility with industry of the effectiveness of vocational education in schools. The coordination and location of placements has been identified as a significant challenge for schools.¹⁸ Consideration of the issues associated with work placements continues in Chapters 5 and 6.

17 McIntyre, J and Pithers, R, 2001, *Structured Workplace Learning 2000: A review of structured workplace learning of students studying vocational education and training in schools, supported by programs funded by ECEP*, UTS Research Centre for Vocational Education and Training, p. 5.

18 For example: Mr Lee Wright, Principal, Junee High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 July 2003, Junee, NSW, p. 765; and Mr Roderic Grosvenor, School to Work Project Officer, AIST, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 October 2003, Hobart, p. 1399.

Qualification levels

- 4.20 The pattern of qualifications in vocational education and training differs significantly between states and territories. The publication produced by NCVER, *Australian Vocational Education and Training, Students and Courses 2002: In detail*, provides a comprehensive summary of VET in Schools activity in the public education system in Australia in 2002. This includes private providers who are in receipt of public funding. Part of this collection is drawn from information provided to the MCEETYA Transition from School Taskforce, which has already been drawn upon substantially in this chapter. 2002 was the first time that NCVER reported on VET in Schools activity separate from other VET activity.¹⁹
- 4.21 The proportions of general VET students and VET in Schools students studying for different qualifications in 2002 are listed below. Clearly, the majority of qualifications in VET in Schools are at the Certificate II level, with only 8 per cent at the higher levels compared to 46 per cent at other VET providers, mainly at institutes of TAFE.

Table 4.1 Distribution of qualifications in general VET and VET in Schools, 2002

Qualification level	Proportion of students (%)	
	General VET	VET in Schools
Certificate IV or higher	23.3	0.5
Certificate III	22.7	7.5
Certificate II	17.1	64.5
Certificate I	5.2	14.2
Other	31.6	13.4
Total	100.0	100.0

Source Australian Vocational Education and Training Students and Courses 2002 VET in Schools Table 2, p.119; and Australian Vocational Education and Training At a glance 2002 Table 7, p.10, NCVER, 2003. Note: Other refers to non-AQF courses or subjects only.

- 4.22 The predominance of specific levels of qualification for VET in Schools students varies between states and territories. For example, in Victoria 21 per cent are at Certificate III level, 70 percent of qualifications are at the Certificate II level and 3 per cent at Certificate I level. This compares very differently to Queensland, with 2 per cent at Certificate III level, 78 per cent at Certificate II and almost 20 per cent at Certificate I level.

¹⁹ NCVER, 2003, *Australian Vocational Education and Training, Students and Courses 2002: In detail*, p. 7.

Table 4.2 Students in schools by major qualifications by state/territory, 2002

Qualification	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
Proportion of students (%)									
Certificate IV or higher	0.8	0.0	0.1	0.0	1.2	0.5	3.4	0.0	0.5
Certificate III	6.4	21.4	2.1	0.9	4.0	3.6	0.0	0.0	7.5
Certificate II	74.8	70.0	78.0	5.4	60.6	51.4	38.9	0.0	64.5
Certificate I	14.1	3.2	19.8	6.7	29.8	44.5	41.9	0.0	14.2
Other	3.8	5.2	0.0	86.9	4.4	0.0	15.8	0.0	13.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source Australian Vocational Education and Training Statistics: Students and Courses 2002, VET in Schools Table 2, p.119, Exhibit No. 105, NCVET, 2003. (ACT figures not available)

Programs

- 4.23 The growth in enrolments has been matched by growth in program breadth. For example, in the Victorian system 39 certificates were on offer in 1999, while a year later in 2000 this had risen to 67.²⁰
- 4.24 All jurisdictions offer VET in Schools Programs in at least thirteen of the eighteen industry areas. VET in Schools programs are offered in all or most states and territories in the areas of:
- Arts, Entertainment, Sport and Recreation;
 - Automotive (except Queensland, where training is provided mainly via School-based New Apprenticeships);
 - Building and Construction;
 - Business and Clerical;
 - Communications (except the ACT and Queensland);
 - Community Services, Health and Education;
 - Computing;
 - Engineering and Mining;
 - Food processing (except Queensland, where training is provided via School-based New Apprenticeships);
 - Primary Industry (except the ACT);
 - Process Manufacturing (except Victoria, Tasmania and the Northern Territory);
 - Sales and Personal Services;
 - Science, Technical and Other (except New South Wales and the Northern Territory);

20 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 86*, p. 10.

- Textiles, Clothing, Footwear and Furnishings (all states except Tasmania);
 - Tourism and Hospitality; and
 - Utilities (except Queensland, Tasmania and the ACT).²¹
- 4.25 Finance, Banking and Insurance, and Transport and Storage are offered as VET in Schools in a minority of states and territories.²² Further analysis of programs follows, and demonstrates the uneven pattern of participation.

Major field of education or industry area

- 4.26 The distribution of students by industry grouping or major field of study demonstrates that the delivery of programs is in five main groupings. Across Australia almost 25 per cent of students undertook management or commerce studies, followed by 18 per cent in information technology, about a further 18 per cent in food, hospitality and personal services, 10 per cent in engineering and 9 per cent in mixed field programs.²³ Less than 5 per cent of students were undertaking building and architecture studies or agriculture.
- 4.27 Patterns of enrolment by industry area vary across the country. South Australia reports 41 per cent of students in mixed field programs, and Victoria reports no students in this category. This difference relates to reporting differences and the way that VET in Schools is delivered, with some states mainly offering industry-specific programs, in contrast to other states' approach of more generic programs embedded within curriculum.²⁴ Information technology enrolments range from just over 10 per cent of Tasmanian VET students to 23 per cent, more than double that amount, in Queensland.

21 MCEETYA, 2003, *National Data on Participation in VET in Schools: Programs and School-based New Apprenticeships for the 2002 School Year*, p. 8.

22 ANTA, *Submission No. 90*, pp. 13-14.

23 Mixed field programs include for example general education programs, social skills programs, and employment skills programs, NCVET, *Australian Vocational Education and Training, Students and Courses 2002*, Appendices, p. 160.

24 ACACA, *Submission No. 99*, p. 5.

Table 4.3 VET in Schools students by major field of education by state/territory, 2002

Field of education	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
Proportion of students (%)									
Natural and physical sciences	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Information technology	19.7	22.0	23.3	2.6	11.9	10.5	8.2	0.0	17.8
Engineering & related technologies	9.2	16.1	5.1	5.4	12.8	8.9	9.9	0.0	9.5
Architecture & building	7.0	2.0	3.5	1.8	2.7	3.1	0.9	0.0	4.4
Agriculture, environmental studies	3.8	5.4	2.7	3.8	5.0	5.6	3.0	0.0	3.9
Health	0.1	0.0	0.0	4.9	0.5	0.3	2.6	0.0	0.6
Education	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.3
Management & commerce	22.2	13.0	38.0	36.0	35.3	15.3	18.5	0.0	24.6
Society & culture	4.5	9.7	4.3	0.3	8.2	19.5	3.5	0.0	5.5
Creative arts	2.8	12.1	0.4	0.6	1.5	3.3	17.6	0.0	3.9
Food, hospitality & personal services	29.2	19.5	1.5	3.2	11.9	10.4	11.2	0.0	17.8
Mixed field programs	1.5	0.0	21.1	41.3	6.0	23.1	12.9	0.0	8.9
Not known	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.8	100.0	2.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source Australian Vocational Education and Training Statistics: Students and Courses 2002, VET in Schools Table 4, p.121, Exhibit No. 105, NCVET, 2003. (ACT figures not available)

4.28 However, the number of annual hours tells a slightly different story. The 18 per cent of students studying IT are responsible for only 3 per cent of the hours spent, whereas in food and hospitality services the 18 per cent of students are responsible for closer to 10 per cent of hours. The largest proportion of hours is in the management and commerce field, with 36 per cent of all annual hours being undertaken in this field. State differences are also apparent here, with Western Australia having over four times the annual hours and subject enrolments in agriculture and environmental studies of any other jurisdictions.²⁵

4.29 The distribution of enrolments, which counts one student studying two VET courses as two enrolments, rather than of total students, presents a

25 NCVET, Exhibit No. 105, Table 5 and Table 6, pp. 122-123.

slightly different picture. A comparison with general VET enrolments (i.e. VET delivered by TAFE and private providers) is also provided in Table 4.4 to determine if there is a skewed distribution for VET in Schools enrolments.

- 4.30 The top four areas of enrolments in general VET are: management and commerce, engineering and related technologies, mixed field programs, and society and culture. For VET in Schools, the top four areas of enrolments are management and commerce, mixed field programs, engineering and related technologies, and food, hospitality and related services. This pattern is similar, with the main differences being the lower proportion of students in schools undertaking information technology, architecture and building, and education. The level of enrolments in education is a feature of the qualification required, Certificate III and above.

Table 4.4 General VET and VET in Schools subject enrolments by subject field of education and sex, 2002

Field of education	General VET			VET in Schools		
	Proportion of subject enrolments (%)					
	Male <i>a</i>	Female <i>b</i>	Total <i>c</i>	Male <i>a</i>	Female <i>b</i>	Total <i>c</i>
Natural and physical sciences	2.7	2.2	2.4	4.4	2.2	3.4
Information technology	7.1	3.7	5.5	3.3	1.8	2.7
Engineering & related technologies	23.7	3.8	14.2	19.1	5.3	12.8
Architecture & building	7.2	0.9	4.2	3.5	0.1	2.0
Agriculture, environmental studies	4.4	1.8	3.2	4.3	2.0	3.2
Health	7.0	7.9	7.4	8.6	10.2	9.4
Education	2.2	2.9	2.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Management & commerce	19.8	33.2	26.1	25.6	34.5	29.6
Society & culture	6.1	15.6	10.6	3.1	4.5	3.7
Creative arts	3.5	4.8	4.2	5.8	5.3	5.6
Food, hospitality & personal services	4.9	7.9	6.4	5.6	16.0	10.4
Mixed field programs	11.4	15.3	13.3	16.6	18.0	17.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No. of enrolments ('000)	6,544.8	5,953.4	12,514.1	1,001.3	834.9	1,836.2
% of all enrolments	(52.4%)	(47.6%)		(54.5%)	(45.5%)	

Source Australian Vocational Education and Training Students and Courses 2002: In detail. Table 20 Australia, p. 31. plus VET in Schools Table 6, p.123, Exhibit No. 105, NCVER, 2003. Note: a) Proportion of female subject enrolments, b) proportion of male subject enrolments, c) proportion of all subject enrolments.

- 4.31 VET in Schools has higher enrolments in health, management and commerce, food, hospitality and personal services, and mixed field studies. Of particular note are the gender differences which are more extreme in the food, hospitality and personal services category, and natural and physical sciences. Other gender differences are also apparent with similar proportions both in VET in Schools and in general VET. This will be discussed more fully in the next section. There was little information provided to the Committee on the reasons for the nature of choices.
- 4.32 Research outside the inquiry suggests that the pattern of subject participation reflects a number of influences including:
- student aptitude – earlier achievement and interests;
 - student background – gender and socio-economic status;
 - school influences – curriculum structures and system-wide opportunities; and
 - community influences – labour market opportunities and views on future career possibilities.²⁶
- 4.33 Other descriptions of participation in VET report on the ANTA Industry Groupings rather than field of education. The Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) Taskforce on Transition from School collates enrolments in VET in Schools programs and identifies clear patterns of industry provision, with Tourism and Hospitality, Business and Clerical, Computing and General Education and Training accounting for over half of all enrolments. This is similar to the education field groupings. The MCEETYA report comments on this skewed pattern and the implication for skill shortages and industry needs. This provision reflects what has traditionally been provided and what can easily be adopted by schools, but there is substantial broadening of VET offerings, with new programs being delivered requiring new processes and relationships to be established.²⁷
- 4.34 The Committee is encouraged by recent actions of governments and education authorities to pursue a greater diversity in vocational education offerings, but considers that a next step may be to examine the influences outlined above on subject participation, to ensure that students are supported in considering a broader range of opportunities.
- 4.35 The submission from the Association of Independent Schools of Queensland indicated that the number and type of VET programs offered by schools depends on student demand, school location, availability of

26 Fullarton, S et al., 2003, *Patterns of participation in year 12, LSAY Research Report 33*, ACER p. 58.

27 MCEETYA 2003, *National Data on Participation in VET in Schools: Programs and School-based New Apprenticeships for the 2002 School Year*, p. 11.

human and physical resources either at the school or available to the school, access to suitable programs and providers external to the school, and employers willing to offer opportunities for structured workplace learning and/or traineeships and apprenticeships.²⁸

- 4.36 The Committee appreciates that this is a complex range of factors to consider and address, and is concerned that for a number of schools where resources are limited this complexity will dissuade schools from advancing vocational education quality and participation. The importance of school systems in providing support, and industry being engaged and being aware of the positive outcomes, is crucial to successful implementation. In setting priorities it is important to still ensure that as a minimum, students are provided with generic workplace and employability skills.
- 4.37 The Committee notes that the pattern of participation varies across the states in every facet of VET study, the only common theme being that participation in management and commerce is high. This may relate to schools' greater ability to offer such programs, with lower demands for infrastructure, availability of expertise and access to placements. The pattern of participation for this field is similar to general VET and may reflect the generic nature of the applicability of competencies developed. For other fields, especially in areas of identified skill shortages, it would be beneficial to examine states' practices where particular fields of education are a strength, to identify background factors and good practices.

School-based New Apprenticeships

- 4.38 School-based New Apprenticeships²⁹ are intended to increase vocational education for students while encouraging them to remain at school. They are more tightly linked to specific industry pathways than other, more general, vocational experiences.
- 4.39 In 2001 ANTA commissioned a national evaluation of SBNAs, investigating how to improve and expand the SBNA pathways. In November 2002 the review, the *National Evaluation of School-based New Apprenticeships*, reported that SBNAs are gradually becoming established, being about 2 per cent of the total VET in Schools enrolments and 3 per cent of total New Apprenticeships. The evaluation provides a more extensive discussion of SBNAs than is possible here.³⁰

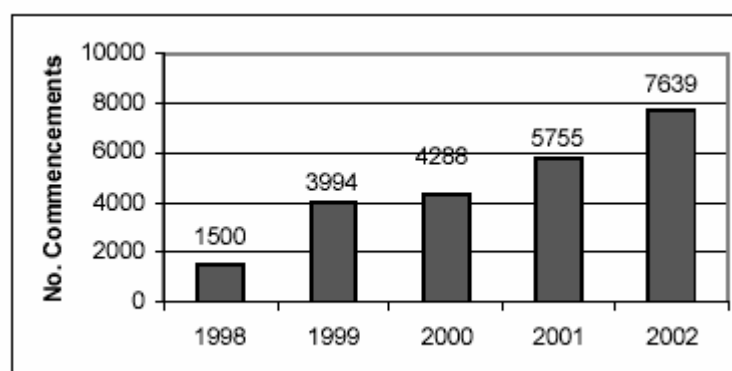
28 Association of Independent Schools of Queensland, *Submission No. 81*, p. 5.

29 In some jurisdictions School-based New Apprenticeships are referred to as SNAPs.

30 ANTA, *Exhibit 56*, p. 1.

- 4.40 For the year 2002, 7,639 Training Agreements were commenced, growing from approximately 1,500 in 1998. Seventy per cent of these were in government schools.³¹ The growth in the last year has been strong; however, the uneven pattern of uptake has been a cause of concern. Queensland has been very successful, with 62 per cent of commencements in 2001, Victoria had 15.3 per cent while NSW had only 5.5 per cent. (VET in Schools participation is at significant levels in these jurisdictions.)

Figure 4.5 Secondary school students commencing School-based New Apprenticeships, 1998-2002



Source MCEETYA, 2003, National Data on Participation in VET in Schools Programs & School-based New Apprenticeships for the 2002 School Year, *MCEETYA Taskforce on Transition from Schools*, p. 21

- 4.41 The pattern of industry participation is also uneven. In 2001 about 40 per cent of commencements were in the retail sector, with Sales and Personal Services showing significant growth since 1999, and 15 per cent of commencements in Tourism and Hospitality. The other major industry groups where there are higher numbers of commencements include the Business and Clerical and Primary Industry categories. With the exception of Primary Industry, these sectors are traditional employers of young people, with high proportions of part-time work.³²
- 4.42 Explanations of the different rates at which states and territories take up apprenticeships across industry sectors suggest that they do not appear to be correlated to the relative size of the industry, nor to skill shortages. There has been a decline in Automotive, and Engineering and Mining industry category commencements from 1999 to 2001.³³ The Committee believes that the uneven participation across industries and states and territories needs to be addressed.

31 MCEETYA, 2003, *National Data on Participation in VET in Schools: Programs and School-based New Apprenticeships for the 2002 School Year*, pp. 21-24.

32 ANTA, *Exhibit 56*, p. 22.

33 ANTA, *Exhibit 56*, p. 24.

- 4.43 The Committee had the opportunity to speak to students involved in SBNA's during the course of the inquiry, and was impressed by the dedication shown and the commitment to employers and also to completing Year 12 studies. There appeared to be considerable value in this option of ensuring general education and literacy and numeracy skills were developed while still at school, while simultaneously developing interest and expertise in a specific industry. However, this pathway may not be suitable for many students who are not yet committed to a particular vocation. The commitment to structured workplace training required from the employer in taking on an SBNA is considerable, and the goodwill of employers may be tested if students are only 'tasting' the industry or occupation.³⁴ Other vocational education programs may be more suitable for students in the exploratory phase.
- 4.44 The Committee supports the findings of the *National Evaluation of School-based New Apprenticeships*, which include: the need to identify success factors for industry participation to widen the spread of industry involvement, clarifying school and stakeholder partnerships, and resourcing and normalising SBNA's particularly in areas of skill shortage. The evaluation recommended that there is a need to:
- explicitly outline and confirm the multiple objectives and program implementation models;
 - specify the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders;
 - set projections for participation in the states and territories so that stakeholders have a sense of the magnitude and any special emphasis that is to be placed on industry sectors;
 - develop a series of practical models, including advice on infrastructure, funding, employer responsibilities etc. where the objectives are explicit, to enable informed choice of an approach:
 - ⇒ enterprise-driven model;
 - ⇒ school-driven model; and
 - ⇒ coordinated model (for example, led by a Group Training Organisation);
 - explain the following critical success factors at the local level:
 - ⇒ the importance of infrastructure in effectively coordinating implementation;
 - ⇒ options for achieving critical mass in participation;

34 Miss Maree Brookes, Senior Human Resources Officer, Austal Ships Pty Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 August 2003, Henderson, WA, p. 900.

- ⇒ giving School-based New Apprenticeships greater visibility and legitimacy in the suite of offerings at the post-compulsory level;
 - ⇒ ensuring that schools remain closely involved in the process, and building in coordination between parties to achieve continuous improvement and responsiveness to changing circumstances; and
 - ⇒ providing clear pathways to subsequent employment within enterprises; and
- address resourcing issues.³⁵

Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends that Commonwealth, state and territory education authorities and industry bodies address the findings and implement the proposals of the ANTA National Evaluation of School-based New Apprenticeships in order to increase the participation of students and industry in SBNAs, particularly in areas of skill shortage such as the traditional trades.

Sector

- 4.45 As noted previously, the number of students enrolled in VET in Schools programs in Australia has grown from 16 per cent of students undertaking VET in their senior secondary certificate in 1996 to 44 per cent in 2002. The growth in enrolments from 1997 to 2002 across the school sectors has ranged from 124 per cent in the government sector and 158 percent in the Catholic sector to 252 per cent in the Independent sector.³⁶ Strong growth has occurred in all three school sectors, although the levels of participation as a proportion of Year 11 and 12 students vary, with the government sector having the highest level of participation.

35 ANTA, *Exhibit 56*, p. 5.

36 MCEETYA, 2003, *National Data on Participation in VET in Schools: Programs and School-based New Apprenticeships for the 2002 School Year*, p. 5.

Table 4.5 Number of students enrolled in VET in Schools programs in Australia 1996 – 2002

Sector	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2001 as % of FT Yr 11 & 12
Govt	NA	53,258	66,366	83,367	97,982	109,900	119,442	42.9%
Catholic	NA	12,165	17,825	22,202	25,778	28,925	31,335	33.0%
Independent	NA	5,043	8,300	11,035	14,252	15,721	17,752	23.2%
TAFE	NA	23,600	24,500	22,803	15,604	15,263	16,991	NA
Total	60,000	94,066	116,991	139,407	153,616	169,809	185,520	41.3%

Source MCEETYA, 2003, *National Data on participation on VET in Schools: Programs and school based New Apprenticeships for 2002 school year*, p. 5; and ANTA, *Submission No. 90*, p. 17, Figure 7.

- 4.46 Further analysis from the MCEETYA data is difficult as figures are supplied for government and Catholic schools as the total number of enrolments. Aggregate data for both government and Catholic schools is then included, with the percentage of industry group enrolments calculated as percentages for all enrolments.³⁷
- 4.47 One of the larger deliverers of vocational education in schools is the non-government sector in Queensland. Queensland Catholic schools had over 17,600 enrolments in VET in Schools programs in 2002. In the 78 Catholic Senior Secondary Schools in Queensland in 2001, 55 per cent of all Year 11 and 12 students were enrolled in vocational curriculum. Since 1997 the number of students enrolled in VET has risen by 110.4 per cent.³⁸ The Association of Independent Schools of Queensland enrolled almost 6000 students in 2001 in VET in Schools, with almost 1000 School-based New Apprentices since 1998.³⁹ An example of delivery in a Queensland Catholic school that the Committee visited is Marymount College.⁴⁰

37 MCEETYA, 2003, *National Data on Participation in VET in Schools: Programs and School-based New Apprenticeships for the 2002 School Year*, pp. 8-12.

38 Queensland Catholic Education Commission, *Submission No. 66*, p. 1.

39 Association of Independent Schools of Queensland, *Submission No. 81*, pp. 4-5.

40 Marymount College, *Transcript of Evidence*, Burleigh Waters, 8 April 2003 and *Exhibit 55*.

Marymount College

The Committee visited Marymount College in Burleigh Waters, Queensland in April 2003 and was impressed by its dedication to vocational education, with the provision of a vocational education and careers coordinator and administrative assistant reflecting this commitment. In 1972, the college became the first Catholic co-educational college in Queensland, with an enrolment of 120 students. Marymount College now has an enrolment of around 905 students.

The College has an extensive vocational educational program with a range of Category 'A' and 'B' subjects which provide accreditation for a number of VET courses and certificates. These subjects include English communication, tourism, business communication and technologies, business procedures, hospitality practices, industrial skills, trade and business maths, computer studies, early childhood practices, information technology systems and hospitality studies. Within these subjects, 'on-the-job training' is promoted through school functions, enterprises, industry activities, multimedia projects and community link projects.

The College has also been involved in a wide-ranging workplace learning program in conjunction with the South Coast Industry Schools Coordinating Organisation (SCISCO), a cluster organisation which brings students, teachers and industry together. This has been highly successful. All Year 11 and 12 students (approximately 360) participate in the program. Year 10 students are also encouraged to undertake work experience. In 2002, over fifty students gained school based apprenticeships and traineeships from the program. This is the highest number of any Catholic secondary school in Australia. In 2003, 52 students were completing School-based New Apprenticeships and traineeships.

The College has been able to expand its services in vocational education through the receipt of funding for teacher placement in industry and through funding for the high level of VET in the program. An assistant to the vocational education coordinator is employed to ensure that the heavy demands of record-keeping are fulfilled, to assist in industry liaison and promoting employment opportunities for students. The Marymount College Careers Expo, which has been an annual event for eight years, brings together over 150 practitioners and advisers for students.

The New Apprenticeship scheme has been highly successful with both OP eligible and non-OP eligible* students obtaining positions as trainees. Over the last two years, 60 Year 12 students were successful in obtaining either direct entry to Gold Coast Institute of TAFE to Diploma/Bachelor courses or direct entry to Griffith University courses, assisted by their vocational commitment.

* OP = Overall Position, a 1-25 ranking assigned by Queensland's Tertiary Entrance Procedures Authority, equivalent to the Tertiary Entrance Rank (TER) in other states.

Gender differences

- 4.48 VET has traditionally been associated with trade-related courses for predominantly male-dominated trades. VET in Schools, however, appears to be an equally appealing option for male and female students, although with slightly higher representation of males (refer to Table 4.4 above). The higher participation of males may reflect a preference for more interactive

and experiential learning. There are clear gender differences in the choice of school VET courses.⁴¹

- 4.49 Females were more likely to choose business and clerical, work skills and food, hospitality and personal services courses. Males were more likely to choose technology and trades and primary industry courses.⁴² These choices reflect a continuation of work role stereotypes. Teachers and industry representatives speaking to the Committee reflected on their experiences in trying to encourage girls into construction and automotive programs with minimal success. In Tasmania a new school cluster program in electro-technology has no female students in a group of twelve to fifteen.⁴³ In South Australia, the program Doorways 2 Construction has also been marketed on a cluster basis and in 2003 had only one per cent female participation. At Salisbury High School in Adelaide, where there has been good participation in a range of programs, teachers commented that only one girl had participated in the horticulture program.⁴⁴
- 4.50 The Committee had insufficient opportunity to adequately pursue the gender division in participation, but believes that opportunities to market the full range of employment options and careers to both sexes should be supported. The Photonics Institute provided an example of a female student altering her career aspirations after participating in an e-summer school. The student commented that she had expected to have a job in childcare at the end of school but that after completing the summer school she wanted a job in telecommunications.⁴⁵
- 4.51 The impact of subject selection and participation in programs during school, such as VET in Schools, has life long implications and should be considered as an important component of vocational education, including careers counselling. Research in Victoria has found that patterns from past years continue in outcomes from VET in School students exiting Year 12. More girls go into tertiary education (both VET and university), more boys go into apprenticeships and more girls go into traineeships.⁴⁶ Further discussion of pathways is included in Chapter 9.
- 4.52 In evidence to the Committee, it was reported that labour market outcomes are linked with choices made by male and female students in

41 AEU, *Submission No. 72*, p. 56.

42 NCVET, *Submission No. 82*, Attachment 3, p. 24, and *Exhibit No. 105*, Table 6, p. 123.

43 Hydro Tasmania site visit, Ms Elaine Brown, VET in Schools Development Officer, 1 October 2003, Hobart.

44 Construction Industry Training Board, *Submission No. 37*, Ms Alice George, Assistant Principal Senior School, Salisbury High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, p. 1108.

45 Photonics Institute, *Submission No. 100*, p. 3.

46 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 86*, p. 13.

high school. These choices (in relation to both VET and non-VET subjects) are associated with far greater incidence of full-time employment by age 24 for males than for females. Gender differences in full-time labour market participation significantly widen for 'at risk' students.⁴⁷ The Committee believes that greater emphasis on career guidance and industry promotion needs to occur to maximise the potential opportunities for all students.

Rural, regional and remote regions

- 4.53 VET students in rural and remote locations formed one of the equity groups designated in the National Strategy for VET 1998-2003.⁴⁸ It has been found that overall, students in general VET programs from non-metropolitan areas have equal levels of participation and achieve equal or better outcomes than students in metropolitan areas.⁴⁹ Therefore, there is no apparent widespread disadvantage for these students.
- 4.54 However, national comparison of VET in Schools participation between metropolitan and non-metropolitan students is more difficult to identify. Research based in Victoria indicates that VET in Schools enrolments were highest in non-metropolitan areas. Country regions with higher VET in Schools enrolments had a higher transfer rate to study than to work. However, participation in the workforce overall is higher for non-metropolitan VET in Schools graduates than for city graduates.⁵⁰ Additionally, VET in Schools enrolments tend to be highest in regions which have the lowest socio-economic profile.
- 4.55 An example of this is demonstrated in Figure 4.5, with north-west Melbourne and outer-west Melbourne showing the highest participation in VET in Schools in metropolitan Victoria. Rural areas such as the Goulburn Valley have continuing higher VET in Schools participation in Year 12.
- 4.56 The Committee notes that the Victorian data in relation to socio-economic profile and vocational education activity suggests that VET in Schools is providing curriculum breadth and alternative options to address the

47 AEU, *Submission No. 72*, p. 56.

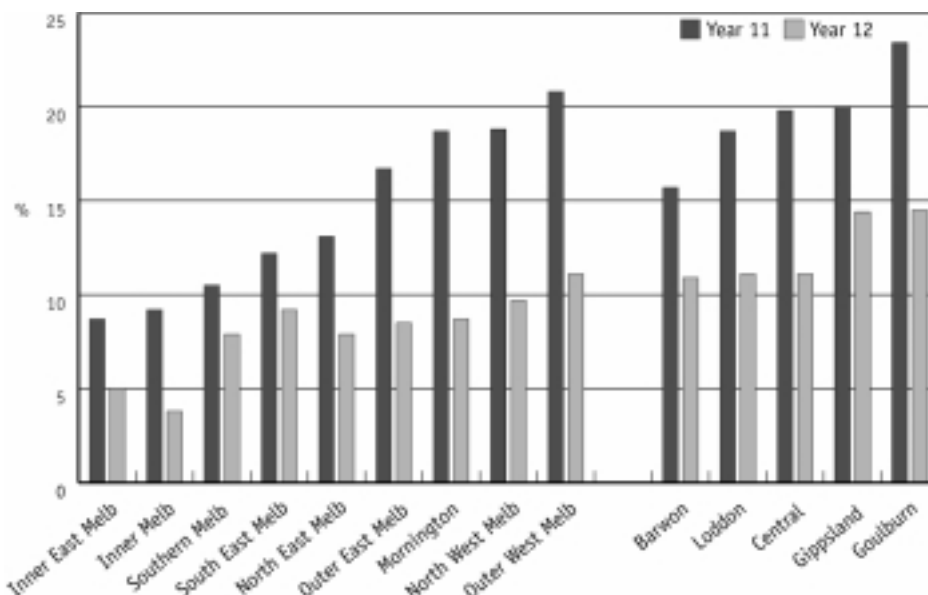
48 ANTA, 2003, *Annual National Report of the Australian Vocational Education and Training System 2002, Volume 3, Report on the Key Performance Measures for the Australian vocational Education and Training System*, p. 65.

49 ANTA, 2003, *Annual National Report of the Australian Vocational Education and Training System 2002, Volume 3, Report on the Key Performance Measures for the Australian vocational Education and Training System*, p. 78; see also Golding, B. and Pattison, S, 2004, *Location and equity in VET, Equity in vocational education and training: Research readings*, NCVER.

50 Victorian Government *Submission No. 86*, p. 11; see also Victorian Department of Education and Training, *Transitions from the VET in Schools Program the 2000 Year 12 cohort*, July 2002, prepared Educational Outcomes Research Unit, University of Melbourne, p. 7.

narrower curriculum of the past, which may have been marginalising students from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Figure 4.6 VET in Schools participation rates (Victoria) by Labour Force Region and Year level, 2000



Source Victorian Department of Education and Training *Transitions from the VET in Schools Program the 2000 Year 12 cohort, 2002*, prepared by Educational Outcomes Research Unit, University of Melbourne, p.7.

- 4.57 In New South Wales, a case study of Warialda High School indicates the strength of VET in rural communities. Warialda is in the north-west of the state, 648 kilometres from Sydney and isolated from regional centres. Of a total enrolment of 289 students, there are 70 senior school students, some of whom spend up to three hours a day travelling to and from the school.
- 4.58 Warialda has tailored its Higher School Certificate VET program to offer a broad range of subjects that meet student interests and local industry needs. School-based traineeships are offered in Retail, Business Services and Administration, Hospitality and Primary Industries. Other programs are delivered by qualified teachers or by TAFE NSW in such course areas as Nursing, Aged Care, Business Services, Electro-technology and Childcare. In 2002, 92 per cent of students were studying at least one VET subject, 36 per cent two VET subjects and 27 per cent three or more VET subjects. The number of students undertaking part-time traineeships has grown from two in 1999 in one industry to 36 in 2002 across four industry areas.⁵¹
- 4.59 However, in more geographically dispersed states and territories, regional, rural and remote students face obvious disadvantages, particularly in terms of achieving a critical mass for VET in Schools delivery, and in

51 NSW Department of Education and Training, *Submission No. 94*, p. 9.

accessing work placements. ECEF commented that efforts to increase the participation of such students in VET in Schools programs have been made in a number of jurisdictions through the establishment of skills centres and the promotion of new flexible delivery models.⁵²

4.60 Project work was undertaken in the late 1990s to identify the most appropriate forms of vocational education and training delivery in rural and more remote schools in the Northern Territory, Queensland and Western Australia. Examples of models are documented in a *Handbook of Case Studies* that supplements the report of this School to Work project.⁵³ Given the locations of the project, many of the findings are applicable to supporting vocational education for Indigenous students. This will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

4.61 The report identified different models in operation:

In the **Northern Territory** there are three models: combined vocational learning, accredited vocational education and Structured Workplace Learning; vocational learning and; accredited vocational education and training using local trainers and/or coordinators. In **Queensland** there are three models: P- 10 schools combine year levels to form a critical mass and vertical timetable; State high schools link vocational education outcomes to study area specifications and; access to vocational education at a comprehensive range of levels, including vocational learning, vocational education and training and part-time New Apprenticeships in schools. A fourth model is being developed in Queensland and elements will be trialed in 2000: vocational learning and work experience in Year 9 in preparation for post-compulsory vocational education and training. In **Western Australia** there is one model: vocational education and training incorporating vocational learning and enterprise-based education.⁵⁴

4.62 These models all emphasise the importance of vocational learning in conjunction with vocational education and training. A range of factors were identified as critical to the effective delivery of vocational education and training in remote and rural communities. These include:

- use of culturally appropriate, and where possible, local, trainers;

52 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 48.

53 DETYA, 2000, *A handbook of case studies: Models of delivery of vocational education and training in schools in rural and remote areas*.

54 DETYA, 2000, *A handbook of case studies: Models of delivery of vocational education and training in schools in rural and remote areas*, pp. 1-2.

- incorporation of vocational learning with accredited vocational education;
 - use of appropriate distance and online learning;
 - awareness in schools and their communities of their roles in successful vocational education initiatives;
 - flexibility of programs and their ability to respond to local needs;
 - professional development of teachers and their need to access information.⁵⁵
- 4.63 In order to ensure the effectiveness of VET in Schools for students in rural and remote areas, the accessibility of services and facilities targeted to local socio-economic circumstances and needs is essential.⁵⁶ The professional development of staff who are appropriately trained and prepared for the requirements of remote and rural communities is also necessary to support disadvantaged geographical regions of Australia.

Indigenous students

- 4.64 There has been considerable focus on education and training for Indigenous students since the late 1990s, as part of the National Strategy for VET 1998–2003, which includes Indigenous people as a focus. Additionally, Australia's National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander National Strategy for VET for 2000–2005, *Partners in a Learning Culture*, has been developed with key stakeholders to identify VET issues and set measurable outcomes to improve VET for Indigenous Australians. A blueprint has also been developed to support the national strategy. It identifies where effort is needed to achieve equitable outcomes for Indigenous Australians.⁵⁷
- 4.65 Research completed in 2003 for NCVET reviewed the last five years of progress in addressing vocational education and training for Indigenous people across the whole VET sector. Indigenous students were found to have a relatively high level of participation in enrolments, especially for males, although Indigenous students tend to undertake training at the lower qualification level. Certificates I and II comprised the greater share of enrolments among the 15-24 year old age group. However, despite

55 DETYA, 2000, *A handbook of case studies: Models of delivery of vocational education and training in schools in rural and remote areas*, p. 2.

56 Golding, B and Pattison, S, 2004, Location and equity in VET, *Equity in vocational education and training: Research readings*, NCVET.

57 ANTA, 2000, *Partners in a Learning Culture: Australia's National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy for vocational education and training 2000–2005*.

improved pass rates and employment outcomes these are still well below those for non-Indigenous students.⁵⁸ Similarly, findings from the report *Indigenous People in VET: a statistical review of progress* between 1997 and 2001 found that participation of young Indigenous people in VET is very strong, at rates above those of other students, but that against other indicators such as completions Indigenous students are not faring as well as non-Indigenous students.⁵⁹

- 4.66 In 2002 there were 121,647 Indigenous full time school students, a 5.4 per cent increase over the number reported in 2001. Approximately 57 per cent of Indigenous students attended schools in NSW or Queensland. Apparent retention rates for full-time Indigenous school students from Year 7/8 to both Year 10 and Year 12 have continued to rise over the last five years to 86.4 per cent in Year 10, and from 30.9 per cent to 38 per cent in Year 12.⁶⁰
- 4.67 In the wider VET system, in 2000, 51,700 Indigenous students undertook vocational education and training, an increase of over 60 per cent from 1996. Twenty-nine per cent of these students were aged less than 19 years, which is a greater proportion than compared to all students in this age group (22 per cent). Indigenous VET students tend to have lower levels of school attainment, with only 17 per cent having completed Year 12, and 34 per cent having only completed Year 9 or lower.⁶¹
- 4.68 There has been a steady increase in Indigenous Australian participation in New Apprenticeships, up from 890 in March 1996 (0.6 per cent of total numbers in training) to 1,480 in March 2002 (representing 2.2 per cent of total commencements).⁶² However, the growth has not been as substantial as for non-Indigenous people.
- 4.69 The lower retention of students at Year 10 and Year 12, and lower level of qualifications, have implications for vocational education in schools, with the major target of accredited training in senior secondary schools not providing for Indigenous students. A review of the transitions of Indigenous students found that reasons for higher dropout rates include a lack of relevant courses, lack of culturally appropriate curriculum, pedagogy and assessment and low literacy levels, which are first apparent

58 Dumbrell, T, de Montfort, R and Finnegan, W, 2004, Equity in VET: An overview of the data on designated equity groups, in *Equity in vocational education and training: Research readings*, NCVET.

59 NCVET, 2003, *Indigenous People in VET: a statistical review of progress*, p. 7.

60 ABS, 4221.0, *Schools Australia*, 2003.

61 NCVET, 2002, *Australian vocational education and training statistics 2000: Indigenous students in vocational education and training - At a glance*

62 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, Appendix B, p. 82.

in primary school.⁶³ It also includes other factors related to the community and home environment and inadequate support networks.

- 4.70 A holistic approach to education, employment and community services is needed to address Indigenous students' needs. While in Alice Springs the Committee was made aware of the background issues that act as barriers to Indigenous students' attendance at school. These include health issues and hygiene, the need for positive role models and mentoring, past poor experiences with education programs and a lack of infrastructure to ensure that basic health and housing needs are met.⁶⁴ In addition, funding problems create significant uncertainty for providers and clients.
- 4.71 A range of strategies has been introduced to address the lower retention and specific needs of students, most often in rural and remote geographic regions. In 2000 over 65 per cent of Indigenous students lived in rural and remote areas.⁶⁵

Current practices

- 4.72 Examples of programs for vocational education in schools include the Wadu Strategy: Vocational Learning for Indigenous Australians.⁶⁶ Resources have been developed as part of the Wadu National Vocational Learning Strategy for Young Indigenous Australians. Its aim is to promote the development and implementation of high-quality vocational education programs for Indigenous students through the provision of professional development activities and resources. As part of the Wadu Strategy, the Enterprise and Career Education Foundation provided financial support for a number of demonstration projects to test out innovative vocational education programs for Indigenous secondary students.
- 4.73 Some programs were broad and generic, such as the Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Program (IESIP). This funded more than forty schools to provide over 200 Indigenous students with programs that delivered

63 Long, M, Frigo, T, Batten, M, 1998, *The School to Work Transition of Indigenous Australians. A Review of the Literature and Statistical Analysis*, ACER, p. ix.

64 Members of Tangentyere Council: Ms Amanda Ahmat, Manager, Tangentyere Job Shop, Ms Heather Loughton, Coordinator IHANT Employment and Training Unit, Mr Peter Lowson, Coordinator Youth Activity Services, Ms Leone Sheedy, Coordinator, Yarrenyty-Arltere Learning Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 May 2003, Alice Springs, pp. 644-651; Mrs Kathryn James-Walsham, Field Officer, Group Training Northern Territory, *Transcript of Evidence*, 30 April 2003, Alice Springs, p. 589.

65 NCVER, 2002, *Australian vocational education and training statistics 2000: Indigenous students in vocational education and training - At a glance*, p. 5.

66 Wadu is a word from the Kurna people of the Adelaide Plains in South Australia, which means 'together in partnership and trust'.

elements of the relevant state or territory's Work Education Framework.⁶⁷ Others are more industry-specific, focussing on completing modules within a Retail traineeship, or on providing training for prospective local employment such as primary industries, in tractor operation or sheep handling.

Examples

Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Program (IESIP)

- 4.74 In South Australia, participation of Indigenous students involved in vocational education has increased since 2001 as a result of specific targeted programs to address the needs of the communities, and participation in senior secondary schooling. As an example of IESIP funding, VET pathways for Indigenous students in the area of music were developed. Entitled Transition to SACE Studies, this program embedded Certificate II AUSMUSIC modules within South Australian Certificate of Education music subjects, allowing three rural and two metropolitan high schools with significant numbers of Indigenous students the opportunity to study music for the first time. This resulted in increases in the level of attendance of Indigenous students in senior secondary studies. The curriculum was developed in partnership with the community, and included local Indigenous artists. The program developed in Ceduna Area School, for example, was tailored around music production techniques and community radio.⁶⁸
- 4.75 Other examples provided to the Committee include the involvement of students in the south of Adelaide (Southern Futures) with the Department of Health, local government and community elders in developing a medicinal herb garden. State funding to regions such as the Anangu region in northern SA has enabled local community decision making. In each local community, vocational education committees have been established to ensure that community members and other local key stakeholders are actively involved and set the agenda for the delivery of vocational education.⁶⁹
- 4.76 Work in 1999 from ten projects on VET in Schools with Indigenous students, funded under the IESIP, suggests that providing Indigenous secondary students with employment-related training and/or industry-specific skills can assist in encouraging student attendance and retention at

67 ECEF, 2000, WADU Resource: Vocational Learning for Indigenous Australians, <www.ecef.com.au/WADUResource/objects/081.htm>.

68 South Australian Government, *Submission No. 97*, p. 26.

69 South Australian Government, *Submission No. 97*, pp. 26-27, and Attachments 11 and 13.

school, while also providing pathways into further education and training, or employment.⁷⁰

4.77 Common key elements in these IESIP projects were that the:

- design and delivery of courses were tailored to local needs with a high degree of flexibility, mostly with the cooperation of a number of parties: schools, TAFE institutions, representatives of Indigenous communities, employers either individually or in association, municipal and other community groups;
- provision of information about careers and ways to achieve students' goals was assisted by mapping pathways through further education or training options or directly to employment on an individual basis;
- cultural support, through mentoring and access to people who could function as role models and building a sense of common identity and purpose (through means such as camps and excursions), was strong; and
- provision of workplace experience, ranging from visits to more substantial work placements, was effective. Longer work placements were generally found to be of greater value, because of the prospect of building fruitful relationships with employers.

New Apprenticeships

4.78 Western Australia has focussed on improving the uptake of apprenticeships and traineeships for Indigenous students in schools throughout Western Australia. The Western Australian Department of Education and Training is currently piloting Aboriginal School Based Traineeships (ASBT), an arrangement with the Commonwealth Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST), to improve on early successes.⁷¹ A central element is the involvement of the Indigenous community through parents, Community Development Employment Project (CDEP) management organisations and community consultation.

4.79 The program has been running throughout Western Australia since 1999. Anecdotal evidence shows that in most regions where the program has been operating, there has been an increase of Indigenous students in Year 10 wanting to stay on at school. For example, in the Swan District region, there are more than fifty students who have expressed an interest in participating, while in the Peel region there is a reported 300 per cent

70 McRae, D et al. 2000, *What has worked (and will again) The IESIP Strategic Results Projects*, Australian Curriculum Studies Association and National Curriculum Services, Canberra, p. 39.

71 Mr Malcolm Goff, Acting Deputy Director General, Training, WA Department of Education and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 906.

increase in expressions of interest. From a total of 260 traineeships offered, there has been a commencement rate of 70.5 per cent with an overall retention rate of 89.3 per cent.⁷² The Committee is very encouraged by this targeted approach to assisting young Indigenous people and looks forward to other jurisdictions considering the application of this model to their systems.

- 4.80 Other examples were provided in the Northern Territory at Nyangatjatjara College, an independent secondary Indigenous college with a main campus at Yulara, near Uluru. The students come from remote Aboriginal communities (Imanpa, Docker River and Mutitjulu) that experience the lowest socio-economic situations in Australia, and English is not their first language. Work experience programs have been implemented as there is the potential for employment in the hospitality and tourist industries at Yulara. A small number of students have begun apprenticeships in the resort, supported by training in social skills and in improving literacy and numeracy skills.⁷³
- 4.81 The Committee witnessed the importance of successful role models here where four students of Nyangatjatjara College were working as apprentices at the Outback Pioneer Hotel at Yulara through the New Apprenticeships program and an arrangement with Centralian College in Alice Springs. This program includes many of the features of the IESIP outlined above.
- 4.82 Members were impressed by the very positive relationship between the resort management and the students, and by the impact of the four students' success on their peers. At Nyangatjatjara College the Committee was told that a lot of students were now asking when they could start their apprenticeship:
- So what is happening here is that these four apprentices are setting the standards and a lot of the younger ones look up to them. They are their role models. One issue we keep very much in mind is the importance of these four students being very successful and completing their apprenticeship. It is not the be-all and end-all, of course, but it is important for them and for the younger ones to have that sort of role model. There is a lot of interest.⁷⁴
- 4.83 On the other hand, the experience at Nyangatjatjara College illustrates the need for long-term development of relationships and careful planning of such initiatives, and the difficulty encountered trying to match them with

72 WA Department of Training, *Submission No. 70*, pp. 10-11.

73 Nyangatjatjara College, *Submission No. 24*, p. 1

74 Mr Jorge Gonzalez, Nyangatjatjara College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 May, 2003, Yulara, p 670.

existing program structures. The Transition to Work coordinator at the College, Mr Jorge Gonzalez, told the Committee that:

As you can imagine, being in a remote area, the process of negotiation to try to implement such a program was very lengthy, very intricate, and dealing with the bureaucracy sometimes was frustrating because we did not fit into the framework of some of the bodies out there offering services to other people.⁷⁵

Other programs

- 4.84 Other programs for Indigenous students from remote communities in the Northern Territory have also had successes. Yirara College is an independent boarding secondary school in Alice Springs that from 1997 has received Commonwealth funding to expand its vocational education programs. The programs were introduced to address poor retention levels among students (in particular, older students), improve their literacy and numeracy levels and also living and work-related skills.
- 4.85 Seventy-five students (out of 200) are accessing the vocational education programme at Yirara College; fifteen students have participated in work experience in the past twelve months, and twenty-five students have enrolled in accredited courses outside the College. A major concern is that low literacy is impeding the progress of such students.⁷⁶
- 4.86 Centralian College in Alice Springs provides for two major groups of Indigenous VET in School students: those in major population centres and those in remote communities. The first group participates in a mainstream Northern Territory Certificate of Education (NTCE) program or a traditional training program delivered on campus or in a major population centre. Those 26 per cent of NTCE students who are Indigenous participate in VET in Schools programs in similar numbers with similar outcomes to the entire cohort. They are supported through Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers, the Aboriginal Student Support and Parental Awareness Committee and supportive individual members of staff. All members of the College staff are required to undertake a cross-cultural awareness course.
- 4.87 The second group of Indigenous VET in Schools students live in remote communities. The issue of accessibility is addressed by the College in a number of ways. This includes having lecturers permanently stationed in remote communities, fly-in and fly-out programs, drive-in and drive-out delivery over a period of days, using established Training Centres, bringing students onto the main campus or the use of Mobile Adult

75 Mr Jorge Gonzalez, Nyangatjatjara College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 May, 2003, Yulara, p 667.

76 Yirara College, *Submission No. 19*, pp. 2-3.

Learning Units (MALU). One MALU consists of a traditional workshop for metal and wood fabrication. The second unit is equipped with computers and is used for retail, information technology and remote local area government courses.⁷⁷

- 4.88 The submission from Centralian College notes that the complexity of factors including remoteness, high costs of delivery, low levels of literacy and numeracy, communities under stress or a lack of engagement with the formal education and training system ensures that simplistic solutions to accessibility and vocational education have high chances of failure. A concern cited is the role being given to the CDEP:

In many communities CDEP is now seen as a desirable work related outcome in the place of 'real' employment. This impacts on the participant's view of the types and amounts of training that might be undertaken. The general outcome is to lower the levels of expectation or even negate the perception of a need for training.⁷⁸

- 4.89 In urban settings, examples of vocational education for Indigenous students are also showing positive results. The Committee visited Northland Secondary College in Victoria, which has 76 students out of 324 that are Indigenous (Koori), one of the largest proportions of any school in Victoria. A complaint has been the lack of jobs on completion of apprenticeships or traineeships. Students are now not encouraged to go into traineeships unless there is a real job for them. To address this concern, formal agreements have been established for Indigenous trainees with the Victorian Department of Justice.⁷⁹ Involving the Koori community in the setup of other programs such as multimedia, music and the arts is a key component to ensure an inclusive curriculum. Additional support has been provided by Koori educators to act as role models and provide a broad range of support.

Additional support

- 4.90 The importance of support for Indigenous students was emphasised in Gladstone, Queensland in areas with specific skill shortages. Gladstone Indigenous Vocation and Enterprise Network (GIVEN) is a district-wide program aimed at building the partnerships, pathways and programs to enable rural and urban Indigenous students to access vocational and enterprise education opportunities and to achieve employment outcomes

77 Centralian College, *Submission No. 30*, pp. 10-11.

78 Centralian College, *Submission No. 30*, p. 10. See also Ms Carmelita Dunn, General Manager, Indigenous Education Division, Northern Territory Department of Employment, Education and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 April 2003, Darwin, p. 453.

79 Ms Raffaella Galati-Brown, Principal, Northland Secondary College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 3 September 2003, Melbourne, pp. 1285-1286.

that are at least equal to those of mainstream students. Part of the program is focused on individual support, with all Indigenous students having their own portfolio for the future, incorporating learning pathway plans, individual aspiration plans and progress monitoring tools. This is associated with culturally appropriate enterprise education programs conducted in partnership with TAFE, through a TAFE Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander access course. Employment opportunities are also being developed with industries such as Comalco and Boyne Smelters. Part of this involves altered application processes and Indigenous mentoring programs.⁸⁰

- 4.91 The need for greater levels of support for Indigenous students was a common theme of evidence to the Committee.⁸¹ In all discussions the distance and accessibility of support workers to schools, regions and students was an almost overwhelming challenge. Witnesses commented on students disengaging from school and associated vocational education programs. Without the provision of additional resources to assist with literacy and numeracy, and to encourage and monitor students' participation, the development of strategies for higher levels of achievement will not result in effective implementation.⁸²
- 4.92 The DEST submission indicated that further research is needed on the relationship between VET in Schools and retention. In the *Partners in a Learning Culture Blueprint for Implementation*, ANTA included recommendations to assist in establishing qualitative and quantitative information regarding Indigenous VET in Schools participation. All governments recognise the need for further work to facilitate improved learning outcomes and positive post-school pathways for Indigenous students.
- 4.93 Access to appropriate career information and guidance is also recognised as critical for Indigenous young people. There are five Career and Transition (CAT) Pilot projects which have a specific focus on Indigenous young people, with two of these having a dedicated Indigenous CAT Adviser.⁸³ Chapter 8, on career education, considers this issue further.

80 Mr Robert Buck, Coordinator, Gladstone Indigenous Vocation and Enterprise Network (GIVEN), *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 April 2003, Gladstone, pp. 438-442.

81 Miss Shannon Spark, Manager, Darwin VET in Schools Workplacement Centre, Northern Territory Industry Training Bureau, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 April 2003, Humpty Doo, NT, p. 527; Mr Michael Harrison, Chief Executive Officer, Group Training NT, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 April 2003, Humpty Doo, NT, p. 533; South Australian Government, *Submission No. 97*, p. 26. Victorian Government, *Submission No. 86*, p. 28.

82 Ms Carmelita Dunn, General Manager, Indigenous Education Division, Northern Territory Department of Employment, Education and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 April 2003, Darwin, p. 453.

83 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, Appendix B, p. 82.

Summary

- 4.94 This chapter has provided a summary of the growth and participation in vocational education. Specific reference has been made to the growth in student numbers, enrolments, the range of programs, annual curriculum hours, structured workplace learning and to a lesser extent School-based New Apprenticeships.
- 4.95 The examination of this information, and review of the distribution of qualifications, gender choices, fields of education and industry groupings lead the Committee to the conclusion that the outputs of the system are highly diverse. The implications of this diversity will be discussed more fully in later chapters.
- 4.96 The effect of location and cultural background highlights the challenges of providing access to vocational education in geographically remote communities. Positive outcomes are being realised, where there is essential support, in participation in vocational education for Indigenous students.
- 4.97 The complexity of addressing background factors is recognised by the Committee. The Committee supports strategies that acknowledge and incorporate the Indigenous community as encouraging students to stay at school, as a first step. The importance of community factors for all students in shaping students' choices, and supporting work placements is integral to the vocational education process.
- 4.98 The question remains as to how this participation in vocational education then links to post-school outcomes to determine its effectiveness for all students. Outcomes from participation in vocational education are discussed in the context of pathways in Chapter 9.

5

The impact on schools

Overview

- 5.1 The growth in vocational education has impacted on most aspects of school life. This chapter discusses the impact on schools of the growth in vocational education. It also discusses structural and administrative issues such as school programming and timetabling and the responses of students to workload demands. The effect on teachers of the introduction and growth of vocational education, and the need for greater professional development and pre-service training, were identified to the Committee as significant issues. The requirement of schools offering VET programs to meet the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) criteria has also required significant investment to develop expertise and to meet reporting standards. This issue, and the position in relation to schools as registered training organisations (RTOs), is reviewed and the chapter concludes with consideration of the sustainability of current arrangements.
- 5.2 The impact of vocational education cannot be viewed in isolation. Prior to the growth in vocational education was the significant increase in school retention from the 1980s and changes to curriculum frameworks around the nation. Significant reform as a result of these two factors has required substantial changes to the organisation and culture of schools, which have impacted greatly on teachers, especially those responsible for delivering VET to students. The requirements of VET and its rapid growth since the mid 1990s have also affected staff and programs of non-VET general education courses.
- 5.3 This chapter focuses on practitioner perspectives, moving from the review of policy and broad trends in previous chapters to consideration of the practice of vocational education in schools. As Ms Christine Klee, Director of VET at Redlands College in Queensland, writes:

The road from policy to practice is indeed long and winding and often it is up to the VET coordinator to interpret then apply the directives handed down from administrators to ensure that policy becomes reality.¹

- 5.4 The Western Australian Curriculum Council submitted to the inquiry that the impact of VET in Schools has contributed significantly to:
- engaging students who may otherwise not have returned to post-compulsory schooling;
 - motivating students through national recognition of their achievement;
 - enabling student achievement of nationally agreed career education outcomes;
 - promoting pathways from school into further VET;
 - fostering development of generic competencies and employability skills critical to career and transition planning;
 - transforming pedagogy by integrating a practical, workplace orientation in student learning programs; and
 - transforming school environments through promotion of linkages with the local community, industry and workplaces.²
- 5.5 Evidence presented to the Committee in formal submissions and hearings, and informal discussions with students and teachers in schools across the country, repeated this message. It is clear that the impact of VET on schools has been significant. It has been felt by all members of school communities, and has affected many facets of school operations. The challenge for education authorities and the community is to maintain the enthusiasm of participants while dealing with a range of issues for VET and general education which the growth in VET has caused.

Impact on school programming

- 5.6 The applied nature of the learning in VET programs, often combined with infrastructure changes and the need for work placements, has fundamentally altered school environments. Comments from the Western Australian Council of State School Organisations reflect the community's awareness of the changes:

The impact of vocational education on other school programs has not been adequately assessed to date. Anecdotal evidence is ambivalent. Schools have had to find or raise the funds to 'turn

1 Klee, C, 2002, 'A practitioner's view of vocational education and training in schools', *Exhibit No. 40*, p. 51.

2 Western Australian Curriculum Council Secretariat, *Submission No. 65*, pp. 1-2.

over' classrooms and facilities, make adjustments to school structures, entice appropriate staff, and struggle with the challenge of retaining students in the school who otherwise would have left long ago - and coping with their often very different learning needs and behaviours.³

- 5.7 Communities have been asked to support VET initiatives but there are calls for a more inclusive planning approach, with the whole school community being asked to participate in decision making to support the changes, and to be accountable, rather than parents being seen solely as a fundraising source for new VET facilities.⁴
- 5.8 Another response to the inquiry, from NSW, recognized the value of vocational courses and opportunities for students but suggested that in the planning and administration of vocational education there needs to be more detailed consideration of course requirements and of the time lost to other compulsory courses.

The Tamworth Teachers' Association wishes to draw notice to the concerns of a large number of teachers in Tamworth secondary schools regarding the impact of VET courses on core teaching hours and subjects. Compulsory work placement of up to 70 hours per course and external timetables, driven by TAFE, remove students from other in-school classes, having a resultant impact on the delivery of those courses. The impact is still greater on those students taking multiple VET courses. Recognition of this trend needs to incorporate controls in the future, to guarantee the delivery of the core curriculum.⁵

- 5.9 This frequently expressed view reflects the pressure on staff and students to meet the demands of VET, and suggests that an effective balanced approach to general and vocational education has not yet been achieved. It also suggests that as a major provider TAFE may not have been providing the flexibility sought by the teachers to timetable learning plans which best cater for students.

3 Western Australian Council of State School Organisations, *Submission No. 63*, p. 9.

4 Western Australian Council of State School Organisations, *Submission No. 63*, p. 10.

5 Tamworth Teachers Association, *Submission No. 89*, p. 1.

Impact on non-VET programs

Other program numbers and enrolments

- 5.10 As discussed briefly in the previous chapter on subject selection, *Patterns of Participation in Year 12*⁶ identified increasing participation in vocationally oriented courses over the period 1990 to 2001. There has been growth in computer studies and business studies and declining enrolments in the humanities, biological and physical sciences. Over this period there has also been a trend of reductions in the number of students undertaking specialisations, such as double units in mathematics, physics and chemistry, and two subjects in the humanities and social sciences.
- 5.11 This national research is based on all students, not just those undertaking VET programs. As such it can only provide an indication of trends, not the impact of VET on individual students or schools. Table 5. 1 does demonstrate that there have been reductions in English and mathematics, and a decrease in a range of Society and Environment programs, as well as Science.

Impact on students

- 5.12 Much of the discussion of the practical implications of VET for schools has focussed on the school systems and staff, without much consideration of the effect on students. During the course of the inquiry the Committee met many students at schools across Australia to gain their views on the benefits and challenges of vocational education.
- 5.13 Overwhelmingly, the students were very positive about their experiences and had to be prompted to make recommendations on possible improvements to the system. However, core themes that arose related to workload, career advice, transport and work placements.

6 Fullarton, S et al., 2003, *Patterns of participation in year 12, LSAY Research Report 33*, ACER, p. viii.

Table 5.1 Year participation rates in subject areas, 1993-2001

Key Learning Area	Subjects	Percentage of Year 12 students	
		1993	2001
English	English	92.1	88.0
Mathematics	Mathematics	86.3	84.3
Society and Environment	History	21.1	18.2
	Geography	18.3	12.0
	Politics and Social Studies	15.2	7.0
	Economics	17.8	7.0
	Legal Studies	15.2	11.8
	Accounting	12.0	6.4
	Business Studies	9.2	22.7
	Secretarial Studies	4.3	1.4
	Tourism and Hospitality	1.9	2.2
	Religious Studies	17.6	15.5
Science	Chemistry	22.6	17.8
	Physics	20.4	16.6
	Biology	31.7	25.4
	General/Multi Strand Science	7.2	7.0
	Psychology	5.1	6.9
	Other Sciences	4.2	3.2
Arts	Creative and Visual Arts	17.4	20.9
	Performing Arts	7.3	10.0
	Music	3.6	6.2
LOTE		8.7	10.0
Technology	Computer Studies	20.7	27.0
	Technical Studies	16.9	16.4
	Home Science	11.0	6.1
	Food/Catering	3.8	9.8
	Agriculture	2.4	2.6
	Child Studies	Na	4.2
Health and Physical Education	Physical Education	17.6	15.0
	Health	1.9	9.9
Not classified/other		1.7	0.1

Source Adapted from: Fullarton, S, Walker, M, Ainley, J and Hillman, K 2003, *Patterns of participation in year 12, LSAY Research Report 33, ACER, Table 9: p. 28. Note: Data refer to the percentage of Year 12 students taking one or more subjects from the area.*

Student workload

- 5.14 The effect of timetabling must be considered when workload issues are raised. Most Year 12 students throughout Australia undertake between four and six courses, (average 5.3).⁷ Where students miss classes and are required to make up the content and activities, this increases their workload, especially if the student is undertaking more than one VET course. An example was provided in Western Australia:

For some students it does create challenges with managing their workloads. They come back to a class situation after regularly missing classes. So they have an increased workload compared to their peers, and catching up is often difficult in an educational climate where curriculum is process driven rather than content driven. In the old days it was easy to catch up content, but if students are working on group projects or tasks it is very difficult for them to manage.⁸

- 5.15 Similarly in NSW, managing work placements to ensure that the sufficient time was available for studying for exams was a concern:

I found it quite difficult to do my work placement. I still have not completed enough hours, because I had exams during the time that everyone else was going on work placement and I could not afford to take the time off due to exams.⁹

- 5.16 Comments such as this suggest that there has been insufficient accommodation of VET students' needs in the regular school timetable. (This is discussed again below, in section 5.27-5.30.) The extent to which a school has addressed this is likely to reflect the number of students involved in VET programs, and the commitment made by the school and by the non-VET teachers on the staff.

- 5.17 Concerns for students' success in the whole of the senior certificate were also expressed to the Committee:

Workload is another important consideration for students when undertaking VET in Schools programs. The requirements in some states do seem to be enormous, on top of the school work which is expected in Years 11 and 12. Again, it is logical that if there is too much one suffers and the student is set up for failure. The wellbeing of students is of great concern to us. For this reason and

7 Fullarton, S et al., 2003, *Patterns of participation in year 12, LSAY Research Report 33*, ACER, Table 6, p. 24.

8 Mrs Sue-Ellen Dean-Bull, Head of Department, Home Economics, St Stephen's School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 969.

9 Ms Sally Taber, Student, Wagga Wagga High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 July 2003, Wagga Wagga, p. 801.

for the demonstrated success of VET in Schools programs, coordination is very important.¹⁰

- 5.18 The format of delivery was also presented as a factor affecting a student's workload. The independent schools sector in Queensland provided a comparison to show the variation in delivery methods:

The main difference between VET delivered by schools and that delivered by other RTOs is in the time-frame for delivery and the student workload. The gaining of a VET qualification at Certificate I or II level is only one component in a school student's course of study spread over two years. VET undertaken with other RTOs at Certificate I or II level is concentrated into one course of study and is completed over a matter of weeks.¹¹

- 5.19 Students themselves noted the challenges, but were generally prepared to cope with the workload. In Tasmania, the difficulty of trying to manage combined workloads was identified by a student who told the Committee that he had decided to pursue a vocational rather than university path in Information Technology, as credit of VET studies to tertiary entrance scores was not in place.

You have to make a decision. You cannot go halfway with anything, because they expect a lot in the VET subjects. Pre-tertiary and VET subjects in the same year would be quite a bit of work. At the start of the year you have to make that decision and stick to it.¹²

- 5.20 Those VET subjects with work placements add to the workload when classes are missed:

If you have an exam ... and if you have to go to a work placement on a Thursday and you do not get home until five, and then you have to study and come to school the next day, it can get very difficult at times.¹³

- 5.21 However, in speaking to the Committee the students were always very positive in their attitude to the benefits of the VET courses, with the opportunity to develop hands-on skills and 'test-out' possible careers highly appreciated. Especially in rural or remote areas, the demands of

10 Ms Therese Bryant, National Education and Training Officer, Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees Association, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1221.

11 The Association of Independent Schools in Queensland, *Submission No. 81*, p. 9.

12 Mr Grant Cooper, Student, Don College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 30 September 2003, Devonport, p. 1302.

13 Ms Shara Couchman, Student, Junee High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 July 2003, Junee, NSW, p. 745; see also Ms Sally Taber, Student, Wagga Wagga High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 July 2003, Wagga Wagga, NSW, p. 802.

courses in conjunction with travel and transport requirements were onerous.¹⁴

- 5.22 It appeared to the Committee that these aspects of students' needs were being addressed to some extent but that this was not being pursued as rigorously as possible. The Committee acknowledges that not every study combination can be supported by schools, especially smaller or rural schools. Students in every year have to make subject selections, and facilitating VET options to ensure that other key programs are not disadvantaged and the student is not unfairly overburdened should be a key goal. Greater attention should therefore be given to identifying the workload demands that are being placed on students undertaking VET, and minimising the need for students to catch up on missed sessions.

Work placements

- 5.23 The benefits of work placements have been identified by students and industry as central to the most effective VET programs. The variety and the practical nature of the experience offered by work placements appeals to many students:

I chose to do the hospitality course because I did not want to just sit around and do theory for the whole year. I wanted to actually have a taste of the work force and find out what I really want to get into, to see if it is the right thing for me. It has been really good so far. I am on my third work placement at the moment. All three of them have really given me a different taste of what to expect when I leave school and what I am going to get into.¹⁵

- 5.24 The logistics of organising placements can be challenging for schools and students. In some cases where external coordination, such as in a cluster arrangement, has been possible this has reduced the load on students, teachers and school VET coordinators. Commenting on the need for continued Commonwealth funding for work placements, the Deputy Principal at Wagga Wagga High School said that work placements would not work without the central coordinator, Wagga Wagga Compact.¹⁶

14 See for example Ms Kahli Lutterel, Student, Northland Secondary College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 3 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1269; Ms Megan Caswell, Student, Taminmin High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 April 2003, Humpty Doo, NT, p. 496; and Ms Rebecca Erkelens, Student, Taminmin High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 April 2003, Humpty Doo, NT, p. 495.

15 Mr Joshua Williams, Student, Don College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 30 September 2003, Devonport, p. 1303.

16 Mr Michael Powell, Deputy Principal, Wagga Wagga High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 July 2003, Wagga Wagga, NSW, p. 806.

Schools would otherwise be fighting each other for placements. However, schools in more remote settings suggested that a cluster coordinator may not be the most appropriate in rural situations, and a dedicated VET coordinator could be appointed to the school.¹⁷

- 5.25 The demand for work placements at more senior levels may be having a detrimental effect on career education and generic work experience programs during middle high school years due to the limited number of placements available.

I find that students in schools now have fewer ideas or goals of what they would like to be as they get older. School to Work is in place to address that issue. Previously we did some of our careers training with counselling in Years 9 and 10, and they had work experience. Work experience has run out because we are saturated in work placements for Years 11 and 12 with the VET courses.¹⁸

- 5.26 The Committee notes that strategies to address this issue need to be identified. Some organisations have tried to make more explicit the type of work placement that is being sought, distinguishing between work experience, industry-specific work placements and non industry-specific work skills placements, identifying what is required from the employer.¹⁹ A further issue is that in some cases little challenging work has been, or can be, provided for the students.²⁰ This diminishes the benefits of the work placement.

Timetabling

- 5.27 The restructuring of timetables to accommodate students undertaking workplace learning has been described by some as the most challenging operational issue for most schools.²¹ The successful adoption of VET requires changes to traditional timetabling. Some schools have dramatically changed their school timetable while others are waiting for participation rates to grow to a level that justifies a more fundamental

17 Mr Lee Wright, Principal, Junee High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 July 2003, Junee, NSW, p. 765.

18 Mr Colin Feather, Deputy Principal, Mount Austin High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 July 2003, Wagga Wagga, NSW, p. 837.

19 HEBTP, *Exhibit No. 121*, and Mr Roderic Grosvenor, School to Work Project Officer, The Association of Independent Schools of Tasmania, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 October 2003, Hobart, p. 1399.

20 Mrs Wendy de Souza, Owner-Operator, Cutting Remark (Hairdressing), *Transcript of Evidence*, 30 April 2003, Alice Springs, p. 583; Ms Mary Dennison, Administration Manager, Audio Loc Sound Design Pty Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 25 February 2003, Sydney, p. 49.

21 Northern Territory Chamber of Commerce, *Submission No. 96*, p. 3; see also NCVER *Submission No. 82*, p. 9 in relation to School-based New Apprenticeships; and Dr Ian Cornford, *Submission No. 67*, p. 2.

restructuring of the school's programs. Some schools may allocate special days or afternoons for students to do their placements or work, but others do not. It is easier in schools like many in Queensland, where a greater proportion of students do VET or School-based New Apprenticeships (SBNAs). Where VET students are in the minority it is harder for them to have their timetable appropriately adjusted.²²

We had the old industrial model [timetable] one size fits all. We know we have to move away from that and we are. With those myriad opportunities and pathways, managing the administration becomes a much more complex task. We do have a duty of care for kids. We need to know where they are. Where we might have had 150 senior students all on the same type of timetable six subjects for two years now we have maybe 100 of those 150 doing that and 50 of them doing all sorts of variations on that.²³

5.28 Some schools have adopted a seven day timetable and others a five day timetable. Seven-day timetabling (which follows in a 1-7 day sequence regardless of the day of the week or the interruption of weekends and public holidays) causes problems for industry, as it doesn't allow for the same day being allocated for work release each week. The major challenge is to offer a range of programs that do not normally fit into a 9.00 am to 3.00 pm timetable while assuring the parents that this is required for senior students.

5.29 In some cluster arrangements negotiations have enabled specific days to be allocated to free up the timetable. One example in Victoria demonstrates the flexibility that can be achieved. This one day a week model was also identified in other school site visits during the inquiry.

In the Yarra Valley cluster, we have negotiated that Wednesday would be the day that we would offer VET courses and students go to TAFE. That works very well. For those students who would be doing a whole-day course in our own school with only four 70-minute periods a day, we would timetable it so they had at least one spare. They would have to pick up on two lessons, and the afternoon lesson would be scheduled as their VET provision.

... in the Yarra Valley cluster it has worked very well having VET on a specified day, and most VET courses in our region are on a Wednesday afternoon. They start at about one o'clock and they go

22 Dr Erica Smith, Faculty of Education, Charles Sturt University, *Submission No. 101*, p. 1.

23 Mr Raymond Johnston, Principal, Tannum Sands State High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 April 2003, Gladstone, p. 399.

till four or five. Transport is an issue. We have to get the students there and back, but generally that works well.²⁴

- 5.30 The Committee acknowledges the difficulty of meeting the need for greater flexibility in timetabling associated with individual programs for students. However, there is now a range of examples of how different schools and structures are managing this organisational task. The sharing of approaches should be encouraged by educational authorities. Discussions with local school communities to identify needs and then implement the resultant changes would facilitate the process.

Impact on teachers

- 5.31 The demands on the teaching profession and concerns about the age profile of teachers in general are issues which have been the subject of growing concern in recent years. Similar concerns, particularly in relation to vocational education teachers, especially those in what were traditional vocational areas, were voiced to the Committee:

There have been so many changes to the curriculum, there have been so many changes in terms of expectations of the role of educators, particularly secondary, that people in their early to mid-50s find that pretty overwhelming. When you are overwhelmed, you are less likely to embrace new ideas or engage in different ways of doing things in the schools.²⁵

- 5.32 A similar view was expressed in Queensland:

The ageing teacher population restricts the capacity for energetic innovation in the delivery of vocational programs.²⁶

- 5.33 To implement policy requirements, different training and accountability practices have been introduced to be incorporated with other systems and duties of staff. VET teachers are required to become experienced in a wide range of industry training practices and often to manage, and re-engage in learning, students who have been disillusioned by past school experiences. Teachers need to become experienced in the implementation of:

- an additional and diverse route of engagement for students often disillusioned by traditional academic course offerings;

24 Mr Alan Ross, Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1173.

25 Professor Graham Dellar, Dean, Faculty of Education, Curtin University of Technology, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 935.

26 Queensland Catholic Education Commission, *Submission No. 66*, p. 4.

- rigorous administrative accountability processes involving continuous review and audits in order to comply with national industry standards;
- the interpretation and application of training plans for students (as determined by the particular training package used);
- competency based training and assessment and its application on a case-by-case basis;
- the demands of an integrated flexible training program as students interact in the workplace and receive off-campus industry specific training;
- assessment protocols for students training on and off-the-job;
- the complex senior certification process used to formally acknowledge the performance of VET school students;
- the confusing tertiary application process for VET students;
- personal upskilling to meet industry standards; and
- public relations activities to promote VET in schools to students, parents, employers and the wider community.²⁷

5.34 Clearly this is no small challenge, and the number of changes in what is required has made working in the vocational education field much more demanding. The Committee was repeatedly impressed by the dedication that VET teachers and coordinators displayed to support the implementation of vocational education. In a range of schools the response to the acknowledgement by the Committee of their dedication was that “I/we do it for the students”.

Teaching VET is very different from teaching modern history, which is my background, where you go in and talk to the kids. You love your subject. When you teach VET, you love the kids.²⁸

5.35 This dedication and professional commitment is admirable. However, it is of concern to the Committee that the examples of dedication and goodwill it witnessed were accompanied by descriptions of continual long hours, including those necessary to meet the reporting requirements, and being on-call at weekends and holidays to support students who are on work placements. Unreasonable demands on staff culminate in stress and ‘burn-out’, resulting in high turnover in vocational education teacher and coordination positions.

The burnout factor is interesting because there is anecdotal information to show that a number of people go into teaching VET and really like doing it. However, they find it is such a heavy

27 Klee, C, 2002, ‘A practitioner’s view of vocational education and training in schools’, *Exhibit No. 40*, pp. 51-52.

28 Ms Christine Klee, Director of VET, Redlands College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 6 March 2003, Canberra, p. 181.

workload et cetera that they opt out. I think the previous director in the ACT was of the opinion that there was a sufficiently trained number of people within the system but they were not all teaching VET because many were opting out. The demands become too much, so you opt out. Why wouldn't they?²⁹

Burnout is a real issue. It is about the support necessary in delivering the course. If we keep coming back to the comparison with other mainstream courses, with other curriculum areas, it appears that there is not the extra workload for history, science and whatever. I am not trying to denigrate those subjects, but it is an inordinate amount of extra work. Teachers are aware of that. They see in the staffrooms that their colleagues are stressed.³⁰

- 5.36 In October 1999, the newsletter of the Vocational Education and Training Network, *The VETNETWORKER*, included an article on strategies and tips to assist VET Coordinators to avoid burnout.³¹ An important tip was to develop a good support network. Examples of networks were provided to the Committee in a range of settings across Australia. One example highlighted the need for a coordinated approach, with support for VET and careers education. Often these positions are grouped together in one staffing position, but depending on the size of the school there may be a need for both positions. Staff at Junee High School provided an example to the Committee of their operations and requirements in rural NSW following reduction in funding:

As the person who has been fulfilling the role of coordinator four days a week, three days a week and now two days a week, I can say that with the two-day-a-week model, there is an awful lot that is slipping through the net and not being supported. Four days a week was probably the best we operated at without burnout on behalf of the coordinator. At the moment, the two-day-a-week model is certainly pushing me to the point where, for the two days that I am here, quite often lunch and recess are not an option. I am also not able to chase the students and support the staff in the same way that I have been able to do in that position ... We do not want to see the erosion of a fairly quality product, but that is already occurring ... If you could go to four days a week some people

29 Mr Michael Bradley, ACT President, Australian College of Educators, *Transcript of Evidence*, 14 August 2003, Canberra, p. 1120.

30 Mr Peter Brabin, Chief Education Officer, Wagga Wagga District Office, NSW Department of Education and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 July 2003, Wagga Wagga, NSW, p. 832, *see also* AEU *Submission No. 72*, p. 9.

31 Meredith, A., 1999, *The VETNETWORKER*, VETNETwork, October 1999, Issue 4, pp 4-5, <<http://www.vetnetwork.org.au/publications/newsletter/httpfiles/october99/index.html>>.

would see it as excessive, but the careers adviser, Fred Byrne, and I work very closely together ... In that way there has actually been a coordinated approach from day one.³²

- 5.37 The Committee notes that the growth in participation in VET and the corresponding increase in demands on available resources, and associated burnout of key staff, hinder the achievement of quality outcomes, for the staff or students involved. Recruitment of new staff into positions without adequate support and unrealistic workload expectations are poor human resource practices, but often it is a choice between that and not offering VET to the students. This issue is reconsidered in Chapter 6 as a system factor³³ that needs to be addressed.

Recommendation 5

The Committee recommends that state and territory education authorities recognise in their staffing formulae the additional workload of teachers with significant VET responsibilities, and reduce the classroom teaching load to reflect the extra work, supervision and reporting requirements of teaching VET.

Teacher development

- 5.38 Adequate and appropriate professional development is a key factor that would make a very significant contribution to high quality delivery of VET in Schools.³⁴ Vocational education, and VET in Schools in particular, have required teachers to reconsider the way they teach and the content of their teaching. Pedagogy, pre-service training, industry experience and ongoing professional development on VET issues are all areas requiring attention.

32 Mrs Marie Knight, Vocational Education Coordinator, Junee High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 July 2003, Junee, NSW, p. 766.

33 System factors are centrally driven which include regulation of standards, funding models, national or statewide industry input, availability of experienced staff. School factors include timetabling, management of curriculum and teaching methodology as examples.

34 DEST, *Exhibit No. 89*, p. 141.

Teachers too have felt the impact of the development of VET. Most VET teachers speak enthusiastically for the benefits to students across the whole school. Professional development (PD) for these VET staff should be accessible and appropriate; the PD should be timely and not purely classroom learning but provide opportunities for meaningful interaction with industry.³⁵

Pedagogy

- 5.39 The impact of vocational education on other courses was recognised by some state authorities in evidence to the Committee. In South Australia the impact of embedding competencies in mainstream South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) curriculum courses has required changes in teaching practice:

The introduction of VET in the senior secondary certificate has made an enormous impact on how the senior secondary certificate is constructed and conceived, and how teachers approach their work.

In South Australian schools, VET was introduced in the early 1990s in three industry areas with further systematic integration of VET across the SACE curriculum from 1997. This policy of recognition of VET outcomes towards the SACE has had a positive impact on programs which students undertake to complete their SACE. For some it has meant an introduction into the VET sector, and for others the gaining of dual accreditation and development across the mainstream subjects of the SACE. As all subjects in the SACE are able to embed units of competency, this has meant a considerable change to the pedagogy adopted by teachers in schools.³⁶

- 5.40 The Australian Education Union (AEU) commented on the broader educational expectations on schools, arguing that embedding of VET assists in combining general and vocational education in secondary schools. However, the Australian National Training Authority VET policy works against this goal, preferring the stand-alone model of delivery. This means that students are far more likely to be 'streamed' into either VET or traditional academic routes. Some states and territories have provided assistance to schools in embedding a competency-based curriculum and assessment system in general education subjects. However, the conceptual and practical implications of doing so have generally not been satisfactorily worked through, such as the impact on teaching methods. At

35 Western Australian Council of State School Organisations, *Submission No. 63*, p. 10.

36 South Australian Government, *Submission No. 97*, p. 19.

the school level it has resulted in dual assessments, with some VET teachers and coordinators commenting that their workload had more than doubled. Some teachers believed that there should be a move to stand alone courses to reduce duplication, assist with planning, and better meet specific student's needs. The AEU commented that the 'issue is not clear cut'.³⁷

Recommendation 6

The Committee recommends that educational authorities and industry representatives undertake further analysis of the relative costs and benefits of embedded and stand alone courses; and that authorities move towards a nationally consistent approach bearing in mind the suitability of particular subjects to either type of course.

- 5.41 The embedding of competencies into curriculum courses has also had an impact on traditional areas of the curriculum, and some teachers are more comfortable with this change than others.

I think it is linking back to the holistic approach and ... pedagogy. A lot of teachers come into the system in isolation, looking at their teaching, and they have a certain view of the way students should learn and what is important. For a lot of teachers, vocational education is not important, especially in the traditional areas of maths, social science and English, and that is where there are huge issues ... I feel the emphasis needs to be on the right type of information for the students and also on getting teachers to making a pedagogical mind shift and understand that is not their subject in isolation that is important. They have got to place that student in the real world and that involves work, employment, further training, everything.³⁸

- 5.42 Difficulties operating in different educational environments have, for some teachers, given rise to challenges in the methods of teaching and working with students:

We do have in this state, and I guess it is the same around Australia, a structural problem in that you have two types of VET teachers: the TAFE teacher and the VET in Schools teacher. They

37 AEU, *Submission No. 72*, pp. 36-39.

38 Mr Damien Shuttleworth, Manager, Enterprise and Industry Program, Mandurah Senior College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 August 2003, Mandurah, p. 857.

are quite different, both in pedagogy and skills of teaching and in their industry training. You have to try to bring the two together.³⁹

- 5.43 These differences, in addition to structural factors, create tensions and barriers which do not assist in the delivery of quality services.

Pedagogy and teaching styles in colleges in Tasmania vary widely from the pedagogy and delivery of training in TAFE. However, the two institutions endeavour to work together to provide VET in Schools, often with wide variations in philosophy, funding, commercial accountability and objectives. This has and continues to create unnecessary tensions.⁴⁰

- 5.44 The need for change has been identified and at a national level the National Goals for Schooling recognise that their achievement entails a commitment to collaboration between all jurisdictions for the purposes of enhancing the status and quality of the teaching profession. Teacher training is central to achieving this and includes three components: the need for pre-service teacher education, in-service professional development, and industry experience.

Need for pre-service

- 5.45 Pre-service training (teacher education) refers to the preparation of teachers suitable for employment by education authorities. In its submission to the inquiry the AEU identified a range of issues in relation to teacher qualifications and experience:

Systems and teacher education institutions should ensure that professional development (pre- and in-service) for teachers of VET in secondary schools is based on the following:

- a broad-base in pedagogy, curriculum and assessment theory and practice (including as a minimum all competencies contained in the Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training) linked to recognised general teaching qualifications;
- appropriate industry qualifications and experience meeting AQTF compliance and national training package requirements.⁴¹

- 5.46 The need for additional qualifications under the Australian Quality Training Framework was widely mentioned as a substantial compliance issue. Other details associated with the AQTF requirements will be discussed in the section on requirements for RTO certification.

39 Mr Phillip Purnell, VET in Schools Development Officer, Don College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 30 September 2003, Devonport, Tasmania, p. 1321.

40 Hellyer College, *Submission No. 105*, p. 3.

41 AEU, *Submission No. 72*, p. 36.

- 5.47 The AEU recommends that the criteria for the qualifications of teachers and assessors in terms of industry qualifications and experience and teacher education qualifications should be reviewed. One issue that arose in evidence to the Committee was that the arrangements for the recognition of competence in the requirements for Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training varied across different jurisdictions. This will need to be addressed in the new Training and Assessment Training Package.
- 5.48 A mapping of the competencies in the Training and Assessment Package for teacher education qualifications is required to ensure that teachers new to the education system are appropriately qualified to meet the requirements of the AQTF. The question that will need to be answered is whether all secondary teachers should be required to demonstrate their competence to meet the standards, or only VET specialists. Considering that teachers who had not anticipated doing so often end up teaching VET, the Committee believes that the pre-service training of all secondary teachers should provide some components relevant to teaching VET. It should also provide qualifications consistent with the requirements of the AQTF in Assessment and Workplace Training for those whose specialties are more likely to result in them teaching a VET in Schools course. This could well be the majority of secondary teacher trainees.
- 5.49 It should be acknowledged that many teachers already in service have significant expertise in the area of learning methodologies, curriculum development and assessment. Greater consistency across the jurisdictions and improved recognition arrangements need to be developed to encourage greater numbers of teachers to participate in vocational education in schools and to ensure industry confidence in VET qualifications.

Response in the higher education sector

- 5.50 Teacher education specialists have identified a need for greater flexibility in providing teacher education.⁴² Traditionally, teacher training concerned with vocational preparation occurred in different institutions to teacher training focused on other schooling levels. It was suggested to the Committee that greater interchange is required to maximise the benefits of varying expertise. One of the challenges for the education system is to ensure that the ever increasing expectations of teachers' expertise remain realistic, and that unachievable targets are not set. Preparing young people for post school options is a priority but Professor Lyn Yates of the University of Technology in Sydney made the point that there needs to be

42 Professor Lyn Yates, *Submission No. 12*, p. 2.

differentiation in teaching specialisation. Not all teachers will wish to specialise in vocationally oriented courses.⁴³ However, the Committee considers that exposure to a range of teaching strategies, and an awareness of students preferences for differing learning styles can only improve a teacher's effectiveness, no matter what the specialisation that is being considered.

- 5.51 Across Australia there are 38 institutions providing teacher education faculties and schools.⁴⁴ Some universities offer post graduate programs in Technology Teaching or Vocational Education and Training.⁴⁵ The Commonwealth funds the university sector but believes the content of programs is a state or territory responsibility:

The Commonwealth is the major funding source for teacher education but considers that the responsibility for the content and structure of teacher education courses lies with universities, in consultation with State and Territory government and non-government education authorities. The latter have primary responsibility for the employment of teachers, including their development in relation to their teaching skills and understanding.⁴⁶

- 5.52 The Australian Industry Group suggested that teacher training include some exposure to VET in Schools for all teachers so they are aware that there is an alternative to the mainstream academic courses for school students.⁴⁷ The Committee was told that in Queensland the University of Central Queensland and the University of Southern Queensland include some training in VET for pre-service teachers.⁴⁸ The Committee welcomes this approach and believes that other institutions should consider similar strategies, and that they involve educators with greater industry and vocational education experience.

- 5.53 As an example, strategies to address these issues are currently being developed at Deakin University.

What we are going to do in Geelong is bring together a program that will involve preparation of teachers for post-compulsory years of schooling, the ACE sector and TAFE. We think we need to bring those three together and we need to then look at teaching

43 Professor Lyn Yates, Professor of Teacher Education, University of Technology, Sydney, *Transcript of Evidence*, 26 February 2003, Sydney, p. 158.

44 Australian Council of Deans of Education website: <www.acde.edu.au/aboutus/faculties.htm>.

45 La Trobe University, *Submission No. 52*, p. 1; Curtin University, *Submission No. 18*, pp. 1-2.

46 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, p. 45.

47 Australian Industry Group, *Submission No 76*, p. 9.

48 Queensland Catholic Education Commission, *Submission No. 66*, p. 4.

environments that are not just school classrooms ... [students] want a much more engaging sort of education and, frankly, our secondary schools are struggling to give that to them. We need to think of learning environments that are out of the classroom. They can include the classroom, but in a different form and also augmented by adult learning environments in the ACE sector, the TAFE sector, and work placements. We need to put together a teacher education program that is focused on a pedagogy that would be compatible with that image of teachers' work.⁴⁹

5.54 The importance of enterprise is one component of this need for change in the education and training sectors to address the pedagogy required to facilitate the development of 'enterprise attributes'.⁵⁰ Given the increasing multiplicity of roles that educators are asked to perform the Enterprise and Career Education Foundation (ECEP) commissioned the Australian College of Education to:

- determine current understanding and attitudes of practicing teachers, trainee teachers and teacher educators toward policy and practice of vocational learning;
- identify a range of issues and future strategies to build the capacity of teachers and teacher educators to integrate vocational education across the curriculum; and
- link education to work and community more effectively.⁵¹

5.55 The publication *Learning in a Knowledge Society* to which this report has previously referred is an outcome of that research.⁵² Various education and training departments have worked with universities, industry and TAFE to include relevant VET qualifications in teacher retraining programs and pre-service teacher education programs.⁵³ However, the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) notes that it is difficult to provide a comprehensive national overview of vocational education in teacher education. The South Australian Government states that a national response to initial teacher education is required to ensure that the national standards required by the AQTF are met.⁵⁴

49 Associate Professor John Henry, Director, Research Institute for Professional and Vocational Education, Faculty of Education, Deakin University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1168.

50 Mr Graeme Harvey, *Submission No. 107*, p. 2.

51 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 43.

52 Australian College of Educators, *Exhibit No. 40*, p. 2.

53 NSW DET, *Submission No. 94*, p. 20.

54 South Australian Government, *Submission No. 97*, p. 4.

- 5.56 The Committee believes that there is a strong need to revise teacher education courses to encompass the vocational education agenda.

Need for professional development

- 5.57 In-service training (or professional development) involves the development and improvement of those currently employed as teachers in relation to teacher skills (such as pedagogy and classroom management) and understanding (such as in relation to subject matter).
- 5.58 The Committee heard evidence from the Queensland Catholic Education Commission that schools have to bear all the professional development costs associated with upskilling teachers to deliver vocational programs. A concern was expressed that schools which have dedicated significant funds to do so often find that these personnel then move to other schools leaving them without the expertise and not fully benefiting from funds expended. In its submission the Commission highlighted the urgent need for the professional development of teachers in adult learning pedagogy to better cater for the increasing numbers of students choosing to study vocational programs.⁵⁵
- 5.59 Funding from the Commonwealth under Quality Teacher Programmes has supported professional development for a significant number of teachers, including 8400 specifically for VET in Schools.⁵⁶ In South Australia and Western Australia, independent school VET teachers have been funded under the Quality Teacher Programme to complete the Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training so that they comply with the AQTF requirements. Teachers have obtained recent industry experience through industry placements for teachers, also funded through the Quality Teacher Programme.⁵⁷
- 5.60 In particular, the extent to which teacher qualifications meet the criteria of Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training should be examined and a nationally consistent approach adopted. In one jurisdiction, appropriate recognition of prior learning (RPL) occurred; in others the teachers were required to attend three days plus an RPL process with the cost met by the school for backfilling and the course cost of \$5000 for six teachers.⁵⁸ This issue may be more pressing with the replacement of this

55 Queensland Catholic Education Commission, *Submission No. 66*, p. 4.

56 Mr Tony Greer, Group Manager, Schools Group, DEST, *Transcript of Evidence*, 26 June 2003, Canberra, p. 707.

57 National Council of Independent Schools' Associations, *Submission No. 79*, p. 14.

58 Ms Julianne Spring, Careers Coordinator and Mr Martin Coogan, Teacher, Northland Secondary College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 3 September 2003, East Preston, Victoria, pp. 1286-1287.

Certificate with the new Training and Assessment Package that is wider in scope scheduled for 2004.⁵⁹

Recommendation 7

The Committee recommends that the MCEETYA Taskforce on Teacher Quality and Educational Leadership (TQELT) pursue changes to teacher education programs to achieve a nationally consistent approach. This should include greater consideration of vocational education issues, including the need for:

- **potential VET teachers to meet the competencies required to Certificate IV in the new Training and Assessment Package and more specialised training in VET-related subject areas.**

Recommendation 8

The Committee recommends that a consistent application of Recognition of Prior Learning be pursued nationally to ensure that current schools and teachers are not financially disadvantaged in meeting compliance requirements of the AQTF.

Need for industry placement

- 5.61 The need to access industry experience was raised in submissions and public hearings by industry, education authorities and teachers.⁶⁰ The Australian Industry Group indicated in its submission that industry would expect that those teachers who deliver VET in Schools are given the appropriate professional development and relevant industry experience before and during the time they are required to teach VET courses.
- 5.62 As with broader professional development, the cost and time for industry knowledge and experience are a demand on schools, teachers and budgets. In the Queensland Catholic system teachers of vocational programs are required to gain industry experience and to ensure this experience is

59 CCH Australia Ltd, 18 November 2003, *New Training and Assessment Package*, Human Resource Headlines, <www.cch.com.au>.

60 Australian Industry Group, *Submission No. 76*, p. 9; Ms Susan Hyde, District Superintendent, Central South West, SA Department of Education and Children's Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, p. 1029. See also Mr Jason Sessarago, Marymount College, *Transcript of Evidence*, Burleigh Waters, 8 April 2003, p. 240.

updated annually. Schools must bear this additional cost as such experience is undertaken in school time.⁶¹ The National Council of Independent Schools' Associations (NCISA) noted that there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that this requirement has led to an increase in schools outsourcing the VET delivery of their programs. NCISA argues that in the longer term, this will result in increased costs of VET delivery and limit the long-term sustainability of school-based programs.

5.63 As an example of the way one school manages its industry experience program for teachers, Marymount College uses Quality Teacher Programme funding, which part-funds the experience. During the school's vocational commitment week many teachers are freed from classes and these do not have to be covered. During that week site visits and contact with industry give exposure to structured workplace learning. The right industry placement is also important. However, there have been cases where teachers have felt that the placement has not been very productive.⁶²

5.64 Other witnesses spoke of teachers undertaking industry placements during the end of year break or vacation times.⁶³ In Victoria, the Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network endorsed this approach and outlined its concerns with teacher training and industry placements:

It is difficult to recruit teachers with the appropriate range of Industry experience to deliver courses that meet specific Industry requirements. The group identified that there are many teachers who need ongoing training and Industry updating to be credible to deliver VET. The current level of Professional Development and Training budget allocations to schools is minimal in the light of the need in this area. The TRIP program was identified as useful in this regard but many teachers undertaking a TRIP placement do not return to the schools sector. The group strongly endorsed the need for funding for short Industry specific training courses of 4-6 weeks duration that could be undertaken at the end of the school year.⁶⁴

5.65 The Teacher Return to Industry Program (TRIP) which operated in Victoria funded teachers in schools to return to industry. The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) also supports the scheme but

61 Queensland Catholic Education Commission, *Submission No. 66*, p. 3.

62 Ms Anne Rebgetz, Assistant Principal Administration, Marymount College, *Transcript of Evidence*, Burleigh Waters, 8 April 2003, p. 240.

63 Mr Joe McCorley, Executive Director, Queensland Catholic Education Commission *Transcript of Evidence*, 9 April 2003, Brisbane, p. 318.

64 Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network, *Submission No. 47*, p. 2.

suggests that an increased allocation would be worthwhile across all jurisdictions.⁶⁵ ACCI and members endorse schemes where there is limited teacher release to industry programs and where those programs put an emphasis on participating teachers returning to the classroom.⁶⁶ ACCI and members also favour schemes where there is an intensive and regular teacher professional development program operating within industry settings, and where stronger links between industry and education are developed.

- 5.66 The Victorian scheme (TRIP) was coordinated by the Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VECCI) and the Victorian Department of Education and Training. The scheme enabled fifty teachers per year to spend up to forty weeks in an industry working on specific and agreed projects between the employer and the school. Salaries were paid by the Department and then the payments made by employers were used to fund coordination through VECCI and partially backfill the teachers' positions. After operating for eleven years up to 2003, a revised program is proposed that will try to cater for a larger group of teachers for shorter time periods, up to ten weeks as part of a teacher professional development strategy announced in November 2003.⁶⁷
- 5.67 The view from practitioners is that teachers value the opportunity to be brought up to date on industry approaches to entry-level training, on current practices and on what industry values in terms of new employees. Simultaneously the programs confirm the extensive array of teachers' skills valued by industry. In particular these include communication, problem solving, instructional and group management skills.⁶⁸

65 Mr Stephen Balzary, Director, Employment and Training, ACCI, Senate Hansard, Inquiry into current and future skills needs, Employment, Workplace Relations and Education References Committee, 20 June 2003, Canberra, *see also* ACCI, *Submission No. 95*, p. 15.

66 ACCI, *Submission No. 95*, pp. 15-16.

67 Lynne Kosky, MP, Victorian Minister for Education and Training, 2003, *Minister's Statement: Blueprint for Education. Building the skills of the education workforce*. Flagship strategy 5: Teacher Professional Development, p. 20, <http://www.det.vic.gov.au/det/resources/pdfs/blueprint/pp17-21_Blueprint.pdf>.

68 Frost, M. 1997, Teacher Education for Vocational Education and Training in Schools, in the *Australian Teacher Education Conference Diversity, Difference, Discontinuity: Remapping Teacher Education for the Next Decade, 5th-8th July 1997*, p. 2, <<http://www.vetnetwork.org.au/resources/papers/teachered.html>>.

- 5.68 Other programs include the Teacher Industry Experience Program (TIEP), which could be included with initial teaching rounds.⁶⁹ The NSW Department of Education and Training indicated that greater resourcing is required to increase professional development and industry experience for teachers of VET in Schools.⁷⁰
- 5.69 The availability of suitable placements was a particular issue at rural schools and also in some metropolitan schools visited for the AEU project.⁷¹ The importance of teacher experience in industry is identified as crucial for the credibility of VET programs. This issue is discussed further in relation to industry acceptance of school programs in Chapter 6.
- 5.70 A survey of Australian teachers conducted in 1999 for *PD 2000: A National Mapping of School Teacher Professional Development* found that 23.8 per cent of teachers – more than those teaching VET subjects – had industry experience, retail and hospitality being highest.⁷² However there is a caution as to how recent that experience may be, with some industries undergoing significant technological change in recent years.
- 5.71 The Committee supports the further development of a national scheme to encourage increased teacher exposure to industry developments. The Committee also notes that as industry requires improved teacher knowledge and experience to assist in the development of the future workforce, it also has a responsibility to continue supporting teacher placements as there are benefits for industry, teachers, school systems and students.

Recommendation 9

The Committee recommends that a national industry placement program be developed to support teachers accessing industry experience. The involvement of industry in part should be pursued to sponsor such a program in conjunction with state and federal government funding.

69 Vocational Pathways, *Submission No. 8*, p. 1.

70 NSW Department of Education and Training, *Submission No. 94*, p. 5.

71 AEU, *Submission No. 72*, p. 35.

72 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, pp. 46-47.

Recommendation 10

The Committee recommends that education authorities implement initiatives to attract suitable industry qualified personnel into VET teaching, including supported and accelerated education training, with assistance for HECS provided by the Commonwealth.

Change in systems

- 5.72 The former ECEF, in conjunction with the MCEETYA Taskforce on Transition from School, also identified the need for change in teaching practices in schools to support generic workplace or employability skills. They identified a range of strategies including providing support for states and territories to:
- promote active teaching and learning approaches that ensure young people in schools have access to learning in a broad range of settings which assist them to develop employability skills, and develop strategies that reinforce the role of school as community resources;
 - incorporate opportunities for the development of employability skills in the design of learning experiences;
 - incorporate work-based and community-based programs;
 - outline professional development and pre-service programs for teachers;
 - identify different models of schools as learning organisations which capitalize on employability skills to assist student transitions; and
 - incorporate opportunities for working with external partners.⁷³
- 5.73 The AEU supports this broader approach, with systems and teacher education institutions ensuring that professional development (pre- and in-service) for teachers of VET in secondary schools is based on a broad-base in pedagogy, curriculum and assessment theory and practice. This should include as a minimum all competencies contained in the Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training, linked to recognised general teaching qualifications. The need for appropriate industry qualifications and experience is also highly desirable to meet AQTF compliance and national training package requirements.⁷⁴

⁷³ ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 27.

⁷⁴ AEU, *Submission No. 72*, p. 35.

- 5.74 The Committee considers addressing teacher development issues a priority to improve the effectiveness of vocational education and assist with culture change. Adoption of such practices will require changes to pre-service education courses and the provision of additional funding to schools to facilitate industry placement and training for teachers.

Accreditation of schools as RTOs

- 5.75 The time and paperwork for meeting the AQTF requirements were seen in many schools as very onerous. The reasons for the requirements are understood but given that the schools already have substantial reporting requirements, the duplication was described as unnecessary:

just making sure we meet the AQTF requirements. That is an enormous task ... We are audited. We do all those things, being in the nature of a state school. If there were that subset and some delineation it would really help to offset some of the workload. I went recently to a forum organised by the Inner Northern LLEN. There were teachers from a number of other schools and people from other LLENs, and this incredible frustration with the enormous amount of paperwork came through loud and clear.⁷⁵

- 5.76 It has been noted that teachers in VET are required to be doubly qualified to meet the teaching qualifications and industry qualifications/competencies. Additionally, meeting the AQTF requirements which are different from other school requirements often means two sets of reporting. This tends to reduce efficiencies and threaten sustainability.⁷⁶

- 5.77 The workload for any organisation wishing to gain RTO status is substantial, and non-school organisations question whether it is appropriate for schools to expend their resources on achieving that status. For example, in the Northern Territory the Chamber of Commerce, which is also an RTO, stated that:

schools do not have carte blanche to automatically become RTOs. They have to go through the same process that we did, and that includes policies and procedures, and quality manuals. It is horrendous, and rightly so; it is a high benchmark to achieve.

75 Ms Raffaella Galati-Brown, Principal, Northland Secondary College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 3 September 2003, p. 1289.

76 Hobart Education Business Training Partnership, *Submission No. 22*, p. 3.

Whether it is appropriate that schools be RTOs, or whether that is the perfect opportunity for them to partner, should be debated.⁷⁷

- 5.78 An example was provided to the Committee in Burnie of the workload on an experienced teacher who was allocated the task of gaining the school RTO status.⁷⁸ A research project conducted by the AEU found that at almost all schools visited, teacher and school administrators commented negatively about the processes associated with demonstrating AQTF compliance. They were seen as excessively detailed, time-consuming and unnecessarily bureaucratic. In terms of quality assurance, far too much effort and expense is devoted to accountability mechanisms in comparison to the effort and expense devoted to professional development, industry release, support and advice. A better balance is needed.
- 5.79 The AEU recommended in its submission that this issue be reviewed. Commonwealth, state and territory governments need to refine the interpretation and implementation of VET in Schools compliance with the AQTF standards. Additionally, adequate resourcing should be provided to alleviate the workload of teachers.⁷⁹
- 5.80 Assisting schools and teachers to meet the requirements of industry standards and AQTF requirements is considered to be a more productive way of achieving quality rather than the introduction of a reduced set of standards which may reduce the confidence that industry has in VET in Schools.
- Even though the AQTF requirements are horrendously onerous, at least they mean that, under this current system, people will walk out with an equivalent qualification to what they would get from a private provider or a TAFE. That, in itself, is significant. I know there are proposals to perhaps water that down, but if that is going to be the case it needs to be done very carefully. I would much rather see support in schools for AQTF compliance than the watering down of the programs that we offer.⁸⁰
- 5.81 The Committee supports this approach of providing assistance to achieve AQTF compliance, while also streamlining joint administrative requirements. Improved resourcing needs to assist VET coordinators,

77 Mrs Carole Frost, Chief Executive Officer, Northern Territory Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Transcript of evidence*, 28 April 2003, Darwin, p. 476.

78 Ms Judith Watson, VET Coordinator and TCE Coordinator, Marist Regional College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 30 September 2003, Burnie, TAS, p. 364.

79 AEU, *Submission No. 72*, p. 32.

80 Ms Maureen Romanet, Senior Schooling, Head of Department, Elanora State High School; and Committee Member, South Coast Industry Schools Coordinating Organisation, *Transcript of Evidence*, Brisbane, 9 April 2003, p. 383.

especially in the set-up phase of programs and establishing RTO status. An additional concern of the Committee is that much of the focus has been on meeting quality assurance requirements rather than on quality improvement in teaching and learning. The Committee hopes that this will now become the main focus in the next phase of development of vocational education in schools. It is important that the burden of compliance is reduced in order to allow teachers and administrators to focus on pedagogy and outcomes, but this needs to be done without compromising confidence in compliance with AQTF standards.

Recommendation 11

The Committee recommends that the reporting requirements of RTOs, school VET coordinators and teachers be streamlined in order to reduce the administrative burden, but without compromising the integrity of such arrangements.

Sustainability

5.82 As noted earlier in this report the sustainability of VET programs has been described as tenuous. In response to a Committee question on how to maintain 70 per cent of students participating in VET programs, an employer in NSW said:

I find it a very difficult question. I love the program but I have the feeling, although I am fairly new to town, that, if Marie Knight gets service burnout which is possible, or a few teachers move, the whole program could crash, despite what any business person would do. I am not saying this in a disparaging way; I just feel that it is almost hanging on a thread. I feel it is the exceptional and extraordinary efforts of teachers and personnel that are holding it together, and maybe the support of the business.⁸¹

5.83 Similar views were expressed in other schools, culminating in the question of whether the program in its current form is sustainable. The Don College in Tasmania provided an overview of the key issues that it felt need to be addressed to continue to deliver the best possible education and training:

81 Mr Neil Druce, Green Grove Organics, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 July 2003, Junee, NSW, p. 787.

1. Role and status of schools in provision of entry level training
2. Cost of VET delivery including Work Placement and general administration
3. Access to suitable work placements
4. Support of Teachers in Industry Program
5. Training of industry people in delivery and assessment of VET
6. Prescriptive nature of training packages
7. Recognition of VET in Schools as a legitimate pathway to employment, further training and non-VET options, including University
8. Overall sustainability of VET in Schools ⁸²

5.84 A number of these issues have been briefly discussed in this and previous chapters. The sustainability of VET in Schools largely relies on its efficient delivery. Some defining features of efficient delivery developed so far include:

- mechanisms for schools to achieve critical mass such as:
 - ⇒ clustering arrangements;
 - ⇒ streamlined use of TAFE and other RTOs; and
 - ⇒ planned use of workplace learning;
- school operations and culture that include features such as:
 - ⇒ timetabling;
 - ⇒ delivery strategies;
 - ⇒ length of the school day;
 - ⇒ purchasing and providing VET provision; and
 - ⇒ transport to facilitate the mobility of students.

5.85 The report *The Cost of VET in Schools* provides national information on cost efficiency and benchmarks on delivery mechanisms and jurisdictional differences. Although this work does not examine the quality of the programs delivered, it does provide comparisons.⁸³ Further work is being undertaken by DEST to explore the changes required to achieve organisational efficiencies in the implementation of VET in Schools programs. Organisational changes may involve:

- curriculum;
- class size;
- timetabling;

82 Don College, *Submission No. 104*, p. 5.

83 DEST, *Exhibit No. 89*.

- teacher workload;
 - finance;
 - staffing arrangements of schools;
 - economies of scale;
 - coordinating work placements for students;
 - managing VET coordination activities;
 - identifying the potential for wider implementation of good practice; and
 - school clustering and other areas where innovative and efficiency measures may be developed and applied.⁸⁴
- 5.86 The need for greater sustainability was identified as a key issue for ECEF to develop processes to investigate and establish sustainable options for business and industry involvement with enterprise education. This may include in-kind arrangements and an industry owned trust fund to develop viable ongoing alternatives and sustainability rather than reliance on Commonwealth funding.⁸⁵ With the transfer of ECEF to DEST this priority may be under review.

Summary

- 5.87 The impact of vocational education and more specifically VET in Schools has been considerable. Many students are highly appreciative of the opportunities that VET provides, although the workload requirements in some cases need addressing. The degree to which schools have incorporated the organisational and structural requirements for conducting VET in Schools has been raised as a key point in sustaining high quality VET in senior secondary school. Greater sustainability is associated with greater mainstreaming and parity of esteem of VET. This is reflected in the day to day operations of schools and the 'messages' that schools send to their teachers, students and community about the status and relevance of VET courses. Without this, and without adequate resourcing VET sustainability is questionable. Aspects of school operations and culture which require addressing to sustain VET include:
- operational features such as timetabling and the length of the school day, purchasing and providing VET provision, and transport to facilitate mobility of students;
 - perceptions of the parity between general and vocational education;

84 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, pp. 48-49.

85 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 35.

- equal treatment in career education and student counselling with advocacy of a wide range of training and employment options, beyond the traditional tertiary courses and related jobs;⁸⁶ and
 - professional development for teachers, and addressing workload issues.
- 5.88 The ECEF submission suggested that the transition in school operations will take a further two years of concentrated effort (although changing entrenched cultural attitudes may take somewhat longer).⁸⁷ Given the views expressed to the Committee by a number of teachers, it is likely that without significant commitment and action by authorities to assist with resourcing, the turnover of more VET teachers and coordinators can be expected. Improvements in quality will therefore be more difficult to achieve.
- 5.89 Innovative models for structural solutions have been generated more through leadership and innovation at the school and local level rather through system leadership. States and territories that have senior secondary colleges seem to have a number of well-established models for incorporating VET into school structures and culture. The Committee noted that some high schools operating in clusters across school sectors and with TAFE are also effectively managing the complexities of structural and cultural change.
- 5.90 The variety of approaches to managing and delivering VET would seem to indicate that there is no single successful model for schools.
- 5.91 The next chapter focuses on system factors that need to be addressed to ensure that sustainability is achieved with improved quality outcomes.

86 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 47.

87 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 47.

6

Factors influencing vocational education

- 6.1 The Committee encountered common themes in talking to staff and students at schools implementing vocational education and training. These can be categorised into system, school or individual factors. Witnesses frequently referred to system factors such as funding, the need for cooperation between sectors, work placement requirements, teacher availability and human resource issues, the operation of clusters and sustainability. Other issues such as industry demand and regional factors arose less frequently and were more often mentioned at a state or industry level.
- 6.2 System factors are major drivers of or barriers to change in vocational education in schools. This chapter examines system factors in some detail, as many school factors, such as timetabling, were discussed in Chapter 5. Again, much of the information provided to the Committee focussed on VET in Schools rather than on the broader scope of vocational education.

Factors influencing the quality of vocational education

- 6.3 School staff generally believe that the two most significant factors are the quality of teacher training and the commitment to VET in Schools by teachers and the school. Teacher training and commitment can be viewed as individual factors guided by the system. These two factors were also discussed in the previous chapter. Industry placements and participation were also seen as major influences on the quality of VET in Schools, so it is important for the community and business to participate actively to ensure the quality of VET in Schools. Research commissioned by the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) also sought community views,

and Table 6.1 outlines the perception by schools, unions and industry of major factors influencing the quality of VET in Schools.¹

Table 6.1 Factors making the greatest contribution to delivery of high quality VET in Schools, school, union and industry perceptions: top five factors

School Responses	Education Union Responses	Industry Responses, including ITABs
Quality of teacher training	Appropriate training, professional development and industry experience for teachers	Properly accredited training; RTOs that adhere to quality standards of delivery
Commitment to VET in Schools by teachers and the school	Physical resources that are of industry standard	Teachers with industry experience
Industry placement/participation	Quality supervision of student work placements	Professional development so teachers can understand training packages
Physical infrastructure	Improved collaboration with other VET providers	Partnerships with industry
Support from District Office	Partnerships between schools	Use of Mayer Key Competencies

Source Drawn from *The Allen Consulting Group, 2003, The Cost of VET in Schools. An analysis of the costs of delivering VET in Schools including an analysis of cost efficiencies, DEST, pp. 141 and 143.*

6.4 The three factors most frequently reported from this research as having the potential to impact adversely on the delivery of quality VET in Schools were:

- lack of equipment, poor budgetary management;
- school management factors such as timetabling; and
- teacher time required for administration, paperwork and training.²

6.5 The Committee's findings were similar to the information presented above, indicating that training and professional development for teachers, infrastructure development, work placements and partnerships with other agencies are keys to quality VET programs. Lack of equipment and insufficient support for teachers to enable access to professional development are often a result of inadequate resourcing, a system factor affecting the quality of vocational education.

1 DEST, *Exhibit No. 89*, p. 141.

2 DEST, *Exhibit No. 89*, p. 143.

System factors

Funding models

- 6.6 The majority of witnesses to the inquiry spoke of the need for additional resourcing to ensure the viability of vocational education.³ Vocational education, and particularly VET in Schools, is more expensive to deliver than general education programs, and schools are stretched to accommodate the expenses.
- 6.7 There is significant variation in the way that schools are resourced and incorporate vocational education costs. The Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) funding referred to in Chapter 3 was allocated as a catalyst to initiate and implement VET in Schools programs throughout Australia. ANTA has indicated that this seed funding is not solely for delivery costs; however, the school education sectors have clearly stated that as a result of the high growth of VET in Schools there are insufficient funds to maintain vocational programs. ANTA's national funding for VET in Schools is conditional on the development of a funding framework that promotes the incorporation of VET into schools and the transfer of resources to VET from other activities.⁴ In 2001 the *National Report on Schooling* identified the challenges of incorporating the VET costs:
- As the integration of VET into schools will depend on the ability of schools to re-shape their approach to planning, leadership, resourcing and curriculum management, critical factors are being identified which address organisational and cultural change. One such factor is the resourcing of VET in Schools programs. Jurisdictions have reported that the unit cost of VET in Schools implementation to AQTF standards exceeds the cost of general education delivery to senior school students and that national funding provided for improving the outcomes of VET in Schools programs meets only part of these additional costs.⁵
- 6.8 The debate about funding has been hampered by insufficient data to compare methods of delivery and jurisdictional differences. The report commissioned by DEST to address this issue, *The Cost of VET in Schools*, should assist in costing analysis but also needs to be supported with information on the quality of delivery. The Australian Quality Training

3 For example: South Australian Government, *Submission No. 97*, p. 7; NSW Department of Education and Training, *Submission No. 94*, p. 30; ACCI, *Submission No. 95*, p. 9.

4 ANTA MINCO, 2001, *Principles and Guidelines for Improving Outcomes for VET in Schools 2002-2004*, <<http://www.anta.gov.au/publication.asp?qsID=294>>.

5 MCEETYA, 2001, *National Report on Schooling, Chapter 7: Vocational Education. An overview of Trends*, <http://online.curriculum.edu.au/anr2001/ch7_trends.htm>.

Framework (AQTF) focuses specifically on the inputs into the training and education system, but there has been little focus on assessing the outcomes.

- 6.9 The view was offered to the Committee that VET in Schools needs to be given resources equal to the outcomes produced. It was stated that VET in Schools is responsible for 9.1 per cent of all VET delivered throughout Australia but only 0.06 per cent of the funding for VET is allocated to VET in Schools.⁶ A more accurate measure of the costs of vocational education is necessary before commitments by jurisdictions are made to altering funding formulae. However, the delay in accessing appropriate quality data is placing considerable stress on the secondary schooling sector and TAFE.

Costings – Who pays?

- 6.10 TAFE Directors Australia (TDA) pointed to research which found that VET in Schools programs need more resources than the average Year 11 and 12 program. Who carries the burden of the additional cost varied; it may be the school, supporting agencies, TAFE and other non-school VET providers, students and employers.⁷ The magnitude and impact of the cost burden will influence the take-up of vocational education by stakeholders. In some schools, students accessing VET in Schools programs were being charged double the fee of students separately enrolled in the same courses in TAFE.⁸ This is a key issue when part of the rationale for VET in Schools is to retain young people at school and to appeal to students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Significant cost burdens reduce the chances of successfully achieving equity goals. Similarly, higher costs for other stakeholders will reduce their willingness to participate.
- 6.11 In the South Australian Government submission to the inquiry an estimate of costs indicated that:

VET courses are more expensive to operate than non-VET SACE courses. Initial costing analysis conducted by the South Australian Government has identified that schools are funded for about \$8.50 per hour for a SACE unit for an average class size of 22. VET

6 Mr Graeme Harvey, *Submission No. 107*, p. 2; Figures from NCVER/MCEETYA indicate that in 2002 the number of students participating in VET in Schools accounts for 9.8% of total VET students, or 9.4% based on number of hours, NCVER, 2003, *Australian Vocational Education and Training Statistics, Students and Courses 2002*, At a glance, p. 5.

7 TDA, *Submission No. 83*, p. 4.

8 Burke, G, Beavis, A & Underwood, C, 2002, *Costing Issues for VET in Schools: Secondary Colleges and TAFE. Report by CEET to Chisolm Institute of TAFE*, Centre for the Economics of Education and Training, Monash University – ACER, p. 2.

courses however, need to be delivered in class sizes of 12-20 and can cost from approximately \$8.60 to \$ 15.60 per hour.⁹

- 6.12 Comparative costs across Australia indicate that South Australian costs were at the higher end. *The Cost of VET in Schools* provides a comprehensive analysis of costing factors in VET in Schools across Australia. Using the model developed for the report, the cost of VET in Schools averaged between \$6.91 and \$7.72 per student contact hour across all jurisdictions. Using these figures, state and territory authorities would be funding \$227 million to \$247 million of general recurrent funding into VET in Schools. The costs varied with the jurisdiction and the method of delivery. In five jurisdictions, over 40 per cent of the cost per student hour is used in administration and at the system level.¹⁰
- 6.13 The findings of *The Cost of VET in Schools* indicate that when schools or jurisdictions select a delivery mode for VET in Schools, there are complex decisions to be made and balances to be struck between administrative efficiency, student and industry needs, costs and responsiveness. Indicative costings and outcomes show that the following cost drivers are of most significance to the cost of VET in Schools:
- For the Set-up of VET in Schools Costs, the key driver of total cost is infrastructure requirements supported by the number of courses/programmes administered;
 - For School VET Administration Costs, the key drivers are teacher hours and number of courses/programmes administered; and
 - For School VET Delivery and Assessment Costs, the key drivers are student hours and the proportion of these student hours delivered within a school classroom.¹¹
- 6.14 *The Cost of VET in Schools* reported that set-up costs to commence delivery of VET in Schools varied significantly. Nine schools invested on average \$1.1 million each in setup costs, while 34 schools invested on average \$47,200. This variation reflects the range of school preferences for investment in infrastructure and how best to access that infrastructure, by improvements on school premises or by accessing infrastructure outside the school. It also reflects differences in the costs associated with different courses. Decisions on these matters are also influenced by the diversity of courses being offered by schools.
- 6.15 In comparing different delivery models and the choices provided for students, *The Cost of VET in Schools* made the following findings:

9 South Australian Government, *Submission No. 97*, p. 7.

10 DEST, *Exhibit No. 89*, p. xx.

11 DEST, *Exhibit No. 89*, p. xv.

- School as RTO model provides the lowest cost of direct delivery per student hour, and offers students a relatively broad selection of courses;
 - Regional RTO model has high administrative costs, which might be expected with a centralised model. However, the centralised approach shifts the burden of administration from schools. The Regional RTO model has the narrowest course selection for students, although courses offered under this mode are selected considering labour market needs and capacity to deliver; and
 - Auspice/Partnership model has the highest direct delivery cost and provides some benefit to schools in terms of reducing AQTF compliance. Overall, the transaction costs incurred to co-ordinate the multiple parties involved in this model are high. Auspice/Partnership model provides the broadest course selection for students.¹²
- 6.16 The Committee received insufficient evidence to confirm the findings of *The Costs of VET in Schools*. An example of auspicing arrangements was provided to the Committee from Western Australia. A recent increase in TAFE College profile funding for VET in Schools delivery in Western Australia is hoped to better enable the VET in Schools program to access the expertise available in TAFE colleges.¹³
- 6.17 Decisions made on the preferred model of delivery need to reflect state and territory and local arrangements. A key factor in determining the model for adoption was determining what the greatest benefit to the students would be. This is the paramount concern of teachers and schools.¹⁴

Comparable costings

- 6.18 One issue that the Committee raised with representatives of the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training was the availability of a comparative figure for general education and vocational education per student contact hour. DEST indicated that no comparable figure for general education to estimate costs per student contact hour was available.¹⁵ The Committee finds this unacceptable. Earlier preliminary data identified the additional costs of around \$2.64 per student hour for

12 DEST, *Exhibit No. 89*, pp. xx-xxi.

13 WA Department of Training, *Submission No. 70*, p. 10.

14 DEST, *Exhibit No. 89*, p. 137.

15 Mr Tony Greer, Group Manager, Schools Group, DEST, *Transcript of Evidence*, 26 June 2003, Canberra, pp. 694-695; Correspondence from the Minister for Education, Science and Training, 18 February 2004.

- delivery of VET in Schools, compared to general education,¹⁶ but this was not investigated in the Allen Consulting report *The Cost of VET in Schools*.
- 6.19 Nor are comparable figures available from the TAFE sector, although a figure of public expenditure of \$13.13 per hour for 2002 is available.¹⁷ However, many qualifications were provided by representatives of DEST for the higher costs of TAFE relating to the varying expenses of different programs for different industry areas.
- 6.20 The MCEETYA Schools Resourcing Taskforce is undertaking a project, *Resourcing the National Goals*, designed to assess resourcing levels required to ensure the achievement of the agreed National Goals for Schooling. The project will undertake an analysis of the base costs of schooling as well as marginal costs impacts, such as size and location of school, student socio-economic status, language background, Indigenous background, information communication technology, and VET in Schools.¹⁸ It is due to report in the first half of 2004. The Committee welcomes the analysis and urges prompt action to investigate the additional costs of VET in Schools.
- 6.21 Strategies to deal with meeting the demands of vocational education costs have resulted in some authorities making additional allocations to fund schools. An example was given in Western Australia of an additional funding ratio of 1.1 provided for each VET student.¹⁹ However, this was considered to be inadequate and the Committee agrees with this view. In evidence to the Committee it was suggested that the cost of running a VET course is 1.25 to 1.5 times the cost of teaching a general education course.²⁰
- 6.22 It is clear to the Committee that VET is more expensive to set up, deliver and administer than the majority of general education programs, and that this should be recognised. Expectations that all costs can be absorbed into current budgets are unrealistic given the smaller class sizes and greater administration and work placement requirements. The Committee believes that efforts are required at all levels to streamline the administration of VET in Schools, and that a figure of 40 per cent of per student costs being absorbed by administration is excessive.

16 National Council of Independent Schools' Associations, *Submission No. 79*, p. 16.

17 \$13.13 is per Final Adjusted Annual Hour Curriculum, ANTA, 2003, *Annual National Report to the Australian Vocational Education and Training System 2003, Volume 3 Report on the Key Performance Measures for the Australian Vocational Education and Training System*: Table A18.4, p. 166.

18 Correspondence from the Minister of Education, Science and Training, 18 February 2004.

19 Mr Gary Yates, Deputy Principal, Mandurah Senior College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 August 2003, Mandurah, p. 853.

20 Mr Harry Dobson, Member, Victorian Independent Education Union of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1193.

Recommendation 12

The Committee recommends that as a priority more complete assessments be made of the costs of vocational education and specifically VET in Schools (using *The Cost of VET in Schools, 2003* as a methodology) in comparison with:

- **general education programs in schools; and**
- **the delivery of comparable certificate programs in TAFE;**

and that if such calculations demonstrate higher costs of VET in Schools programs than general education programs, Commonwealth, state and territory governments share the responsibility for funding, with the states raising the recurrent per capita funding and the Commonwealth increasing the capital and support funding.

Cross-sector arrangements

Cross-sector difficulties

6.23 In a number of states and territories the administration of the school sector and the VET sector are in different departments. This separation has been suggested as a reason for poor implementation of VET in Schools,²¹ although not all would agree. Inadequate communication is cited as a reason for the delays in reaching agreement on core issues. Principals in Queensland stated that there are fundamental difficulties in schools accessing TAFE facilities for cooperative programs, which is at least partly due to the fact that secondary education and TAFE are administered by different departments in Queensland.²² During the course of the inquiry the Western Australian Department of Training and Department of Education merged into one department, indicating a recognition of the need for a more holistic approach to the needs of the 15-19 years cohort, and for improved communication in the administration of support services for that group.

Differences in school-based and other programs

6.24 Historically, the purposes of the different education sectors have led to different emphases, although the TAFE sector has also offered the senior secondary certificate program. The major differences between schools and

21 Housing Industry Association, *Submission No. 7*, pp. 1-2.

22 Queensland Secondary Principals' Association, *Submission No. 88*, p. 5.

the broader VET sector in the programs offered flow from differences in the mandate and orientation of the two sectors. The main emphasis in schools is a well balanced general education that prepares students to enter further education, training or employment. TAFE is primarily focused on providing industry based vocational education within an adult learning environment. TAFE courses are designed to lead to an industry recognised qualification under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), based on assessment of competency.²³ The differences in qualification levels were discussed in Chapter 4.

- 6.25 While schools are increasingly offering AQF Certificate courses at the I, II and, in a number of cases, III level, the majority of enrolments in VET courses in schools are still in traditional school curriculum areas such as hospitality, business and IT and general studies.
- 6.26 As noted by TAFE Directors Australia, the school and VET sectors have different strengths. Teachers from the two sectors hold different qualifications, have different industrial experience and different underpinning pedagogical philosophies. Schools typically do not have many teachers with VET skills and do not have staff experienced in industry while TAFE institutes do. There are also significant differences in the facilities available. TAFE institutes generally have industry standard facilities and equipment, whereas few schools do.
- 6.27 Recognition of the different strengths of each sector leads the Committee to the view that TAFE and private providers' facilities should be more frequently used. However, different funding models are cited as a barrier to greater use of TAFE by schools, as well as other matters such as duty of care and industrial relations issues.²⁴

Different funding models

- 6.28 Each education sector is funded on a different basis and from a different range of sources, and this funding may have different accountability requirements. These differences influence behaviour. Performance measures and funding based on performance act as incentives. For example, TAFE uses student contact hours as the basic counting and funding unit, while higher education uses equivalent full-time students. Schools receive recurrent funding plus ANTA funds based on a proportion of enrolments. However, as these performance measures are not aligned between the sectors barriers to seamless pathways and cooperation can

23 TDA, *Submission No. 83*, p. 2.

24 TDA, *Submission No. 83*, pp. 2-3; Mr William Daniels, Executive Director, National Council of Independent Schools Association, *Transcript of Evidence*, 6 March 2003, Canberra, p. 184.

occur.²⁵ Evidence to the Committee confirms that barriers do exist, with schools and TAFE becoming frustrated with the lack of resolution of funding matters. In some jurisdictions identifying that TAFE is funded on a different model from schools, a fee structure has been set up specifically for young people in schools accessing TAFE courses.²⁶ However, the costs of TAFE are still seen as high:

When TAFE institutes charge for the delivery of VET in schools on a cost recovery (or for profit basis), often their charges are at the higher end of the market due to their higher overheads than private RTOs. This causes resentment in schools and discourages the use of TAFE as a partner. In Western Australia, a school principal said “too much of our VET funding goes to auspicing (i.e. to purchasing courses from TAFE).” Some TAFE institutes are genuinely interested in partnerships with schools and charge “reduced” rates.²⁷

- 6.29 TAFE’s different funding model affects school planning. This does make it easier for schools to continue to offer more mainstream subjects such as maths, science and English courses as they are cheaper than purchasing VET programs from TAFE and other registered training organisations (RTOs), rather than identifying and meeting specific students’ needs. The South Australian Government’s response indicated that the impact is apparent. However they are not directly addressing the funding concerns:

Let’s say it is a challenge that has not been resolved. Schools in particular are looking at sustainability. In the end, with some of these courses it will be consolidated. For instance, with automotive engineering, it is really difficult for schools to have the resources to do that. Tourism and hospitality may be something different. There is the challenge of sharing resources. Maybe schools can deliver at the TAFE level using the resources of the TAFE colleges. There are a few examples of that sort of thing going on. In the end, young people might do a training course in tourism and hospitality and find out that that is what they do not want to do. They do not want to have to pay for something like that. That is the advantage of having certificates I and II in the schools.²⁸

25 Selby Smith, C et al, 2001, *The economics of vocational education and training in Australia*, CEET’s *Stocktake*, ANTA and NCVER, pp. 77-79.

26 Mrs Marlene Boundy, State Program Manager, Futures Connect Strategy, SA Department of Education and Children’s Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, p. 1033.

27 AEU, *Submission No. 72*, p. 61.

28 Ms Susan Hyde, District Superintendent, Central South West, SA Department of Education and Children’s Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide p. 1033.

Different charges

6.30 In Victoria there are also funding problems, with the need to subsidise or pass costs on to parents. Equity concerns were raised by careers educators, indicating that some students could not afford to select VET subjects.²⁹ However, where a course is delivered by TAFE, part of the costing to parents is already subsidised by TAFE. Using a system-wide response in Victoria, part of the cost of delivering VET in the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) programs in schools is also absorbed by TAFE:

A cooperative arrangement has been secured whereby TAFE Institutes have agreed to charge within a range of 60%- 80% of the TAFE recovery price. TAFEs have also been advised that no further fees (such as enrolment fees) should be charged to VCE students undertaking VET programs. These measures are estimated to cost approximately \$4 million based on 2002 training delivery patterns. Costs are likely to increase in line with enrolment growth.³⁰

6.31 Submissions received by the Committee indicated that the TAFE institutes were questioning their ability to continue subsidising the school sector as their funding was overstretched.³¹ The funding mismatch between schools and TAFE is an issue that needs to be addressed at both the national and state and territory level. Similarly in NSW, the funding arrangements between TAFE and schools dissuades schools from sending students to TAFE as for every student attending a course at TAFE the school loses staff and global budget on a proportional basis. The TAFE thus gains money through its funding mechanism and the school loses it, yet they still have reporting requirements and pastoral responsibilities.³² For other non-school targeted programs NSW and Victorian TAFEs have recently announced increased fee charges in attempts to cover their costs.³³

6.32 Mr Malcolm Goff, Acting Deputy Director General, Training, of the Western Australian Department of Education and Training, indicated the importance of equity in funding of VET to ensure comparable outcomes:

I think it is important that we take a principled stance that where we are delivering VET, whether it be in a school or in a TAFE, from

29 Ms Julie Ryan, President, Career Education Association of Victoria, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1155.

30 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 86*, p. 4.

31 TDA, *Submission No. 83*, p. 4, Independent Education Union, *Submission No. 73*, p. 11.

32 Mr Bruce Norton, District Vocational Education and Training Consultant, NSW DET, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 July 2003, Junee, NSW, p. 735.

33 *The Australian*, 2 July 2003, 'Fee Hike for TAFE students'; *The Age*, 4 January 2004, 'Anger as TAFE fees soar \$125'.

a public funding point of view the commitment to deliver the same quality has to be assured. Therefore, you should not have differential funding. The delivery unit, whether it is VET in schools or TAFE, should be funded at the same level.³⁴

- 6.33 Local industry partnerships and national VET associations recognise this need for funding formulae that do not disadvantage schools for using TAFE training, and for funding to be made available for the involvement of TAFE or other RTOs for targeted skills areas where schools do not have appropriate resources.³⁵
- 6.34 The mix of Commonwealth and state and territory moneys through the national training system and through state and territory systems has resulted in different levels of funding going to the school and the TAFE sectors. The state governments have been critical of the Commonwealth's contribution. However, the Commonwealth's view is that its contribution should be absorbed as part of recurrent school funding to schools. From a national perspective, the degree to which recurrent school funding is providing the balance, additional to the ANTA funding as was the intention, is certainly not clear. Some VET in Schools is delivered by the TAFE system using VET recurrent funding.³⁶ Until there is a resolution on funding at the state/territory-Commonwealth level it will be very difficult to resolve the issue at the delivery level. There is a definite need for examination and resolution of the current funding distinction between the schooling, VET and the university education sectors and between the roles of Commonwealth, states and territories. The Committee urges that MCEETYA address this issue as a high priority.
- 6.35 Additionally, strong comments were presented to the Committee on the need for Commonwealth, state and territory governments to make an enhanced and ongoing commitment to appropriately funding VET in Schools. It was recommended that this not be at the expense of funding to TAFE colleges or other programs in schools, given the considerable funding demands they face.³⁷

34 Mr Malcolm Goff, Acting Deputy Director General, Training, WA Department of Education and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 920.

35 SCISCO, *Submission No. 59*, p. 5; VETnetwork, *Submission No. 27*, p. 5; and Victorian Electrotechnology, Printing, Information Technology and Communications (EPIC) Industry Training Board, *Submission No. 13*, p. 9.

36 ANTA, *Submission No. 90*, p. 27.

37 AEU, *Submission No. 72*, p. 8.

Recommendation 13

The Committee recommends that MCEETYA pursue the resolution of funding responsibilities for vocational education between the Commonwealth, states and territories across the different sectors.

Charges for government and non-government schools

6.36 Representatives from non-government schools were highly critical of the different charging arrangements applying to government and non-government schools accessing equivalent TAFE programs. This was deterring students from participating in programs.³⁸

Funding is a fundamental issue. I think independent school heads would agree that if the funding levels were equal across independent schools, Catholic schools and government schools, if the cost of courses at TAFE was less, we would have more students taking on those TAFE options.³⁹

6.37 An option to try to deal with the different funding was discussed with independent schools' representatives. The model suggested is an extension of the recurrent funding formula for independent schools: a pro rata payment according to the SES indicator, i.e. a percentage of the Average Government School Recurrent Costs (AGSRC).⁴⁰ For example, if a school is funded at 50 per cent of AGSRC the subsidy that the school would receive for accessing VET in TAFE would also be at that 50 per cent level.⁴¹ The option presented was acknowledged as a possible compromise model.

6.38 DEST's perspective on different charging systems between government and non-government schools is that it is only one aspect of a complex financial relationship. Fees are one area probably symptomatic of a requirement for greater national consistency.⁴²

38 Ms Gabrielle Power-West, Executive Officer - Post Compulsory/Curriculum, Queensland Catholic Education Commission, *Transcript of Evidence*, 9 April 2003, Brisbane, pp. 331-332.

39 Mr Alan Ross, Member, Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1172.

40 The Commonwealth provides General Recurrent Grants at different rates for primary and secondary and non-government school students. These are expressed as percentages of estimated Average Government School Recurrent Costs (AGSRC).

41 Mr Alan Ross, Member, Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1173.

42 Mr Colin Walters, Group Manager, Vocational Education and Training Group, and Mr Tony Greer, Group Manager, Schools Group, DEST, *Transcript of Evidence*, 26 June 2003, Canberra, p. 697.

- 6.39 The Committee noted that that the view from TDA to the inquiry confirmed the comments of witnesses from the government and non-government school sectors.

If we are to get quality results, however, adequate resourcing is essential. Funding of both government schools and TAFE remains tight, making it difficult to cope with the cost of providing VET in schools. VET in schools programs typically need more resources than the average Year 11 and 12 program in a traditional schooling environment. The funding issue is complicated by different arrangements and guidelines that apply to the two sectors.

The funding models currently employed can create barriers to cooperation and in at least some jurisdictions there are disincentives for schools who might otherwise seek to outsource their VET delivery to TAFE providers.⁴³

Recommendation 14

The Committee recommends that efforts be made to improve cooperation between school and TAFE sectors where geography and course offerings make that viable, in areas such as in co-location, human resources and administrative practices.

This should include a national review of charging practices by TAFE for government and non-government schools in order to:

- **determine more equitable practices to better reflect their relative costs and resourcing; and**
- **ensure that funding restrictions and differential charging practices do not act as a barrier to government and non-government school students accessing otherwise appropriate VET courses through TAFE.**

It should also include a consideration of ways of addressing other potential barriers to the greater take-up of suitable courses offered by TAFE or other RTOs, including factors such as transport, timetabling, certainty of course continuity and duty of care issues.

⁴³ Mr Phillip Clarke, National Board Member, TAFE Directors Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 20 March 2003, Canberra, p. 190.

Pathways

- 6.40 The Commonwealth and state and territory governments have embraced the notion of seamless pathways for students between senior secondary schooling, vocational education and training, and universities. Cross-sectoral delivery has been a key component of this with credit transfer as another bridge to enable smooth pathways across traditional academic boundaries. The drivers of this seamlessness were discussed in Chapter 2 and include the promotion of lifelong learning, improving efficiencies and equity considerations. Funding has already been presented as one barrier to improving pathways, a second is credit recognition and transfer, and administrative issues present a third barrier.
- 6.41 The second barrier to seamless pathways is inadequate recognition arrangements. Often this is associated with the perception of VET studies. Recognition arrangements vary across institutions. This leads to high costs and complexity in negotiating arrangements for recognition and credit to improve articulation.⁴⁴ The perception of the value of VET in education must be improved to a point where it is seen as a viable and valuable alternative to what has been traditionally called 'academic' study. One strategy is to ensure that qualifications attained during a VET program are recognised as a substantial achievement post-VET and provide a qualification or recognised credit for achievement should the participant progress to TAFE or university in the future. VET is one of a range of qualifications and experiences which students may carry with them at the completion of their secondary education.⁴⁵
- 6.42 The Queensland Government commissioned two reports in 2002 to emphasise the need to strengthen pathways for young people from school to further education, training and employment and to provide broad-based education. *The Senior Certificate: A New Deal* (the Pitman report) recommends a single Senior Certificate that prevents students from being locked into a single pathway, allows a mix of VET and general education studies and enables students to change pathways without losing credit for their achievements to date. *The Review of Pathways Articulation* by Professor Margaret Gardner focuses on the connections between school, TAFE and university to improve the pathways available to young people.⁴⁶ This report found that:

44 Selby Smith, C et al., 2001, *The economics of vocational education and training in Australia, CEETs Stocktake*, ANTA and NCVER, pp. 76-77.

45 Queensland Council of Parents and Citizens' Associations, *Submission No. 80*, p. 7.

46 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 93*, p. 6.

There are barriers to effective transition from school based vocational education and training to vocational education with full recognition of the work undertaken in schools. There is a lack of transparency and clarity in arrangements for articulation and credit transfer from vocational education and training to higher education; and no clear understandings of how incomplete university qualifications will be recognised in vocational education and training. Differences in the approaches of the three education sectors make transition between them — with effective recognition of the prior knowledge and skills gained — complex, opaque and inconsistent. All these barriers make transitions for young people more difficult and time consuming.⁴⁷

- 6.43 Similarly in this inquiry, concern was expressed to the Committee that a seamless transition was not available for VET students in schools to either the TAFE or university sectors. The Committee sees this as a major issue. One career adviser asked why, if government and schools are serious about VET certificates adding value and improving employability skills for young people, they are not put on a par with the academic studies. The example was given that in Victoria, when choosing possible students for tertiary programs and looking to distinguish students beyond the tertiary entrance score, there was no consideration of the completion of VET certificates, only VCE courses. Middle band bonuses for VET certificates were not being applied, and given that there are 32 of them this appeared as a substantial loss of information and credit when selecting students.⁴⁸
- 6.44 The submission from the Victorian Government outlining the arrangements for recognition of VET when determining the tertiary entrance score, does not make mention of the middle banding issue.

VET in the VCE combines both general and vocational studies and frequently involves a number of components, as described below: VCE VET units comprising VET modules/units of competence approved by the VCAA. Individual modules/units of competence are grouped together by the VCAA, recognised as VCE units and given a designated level of recognition in the VCE (1-2, 3-4). These VCE VET units contribute towards the completion of the VCE certificate and the VET qualification. VET in the VCE programs are now an integral part of the VCE and can contribute up to 8 of the

47 Gardener, M, 2002, *The Review of Pathways Articulation through the post-compulsory years of school to further education, training and labour market participation*, Queensland Department of Employment and Training, and Department of Education, 2002, p. 12.

48 Ms Bernadette Gigliotti, Treasurer, Career Education Association of Victoria, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 2 September 2003, p. 1156.

16 units required for satisfactory completion of the VCE. All VCE VET programs with a unit 3-4 sequence make a contribution to the Equivalent National Tertiary Entrance Rank (ENTER). Ten VET in the VCE programs have the option for a study score which can count fully in the calculation of the ENTER.⁴⁹

- 6.45 In the Victorian Government's future plans an increased use of scored assessment for VET in VCE programs is proposed, as well as a broader range of post-compulsory offerings, including piloting and then wider implementation of the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL).⁵⁰ Credit arrangements to higher education providers also need to be investigated. An overview of VCAL is provided in the following box.

Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning

The VCAL is designed to provide a more vocationally-orientated post-compulsory program. It has been trialled in twenty schools and two TAFE institutes in 2002. The development and piloting of VCAL was supported by initial Government funding of \$5.6m (2001-05). As announced in the 2002-03 Budget, the further implementation of VCAL has been supported by additional Victorian Government funding of \$47.7M over four years.

One important feature of VCAL is its use of local partnerships between the enrolling provider and other agencies such as community organisations, TAFEs, adult education providers, employers and the Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN). These partnerships ensure that relevant vocational and personal development experiences form part of the VCAL learning program. It has received strong support from students who wish to develop vocational rather than academic pathways.

The VCAL framework qualification enables accredited curriculum from a range of sources to be grouped into coherent Learning Programs at three award levels: foundation, intermediate and senior. Each level represents a learning program of 1000 hours and can be undertaken over Years 11 and 12. The components of the VCAL learning programs are accredited units and modules drawn, for example, from the VCE, VET in the VCE, and VET certificates. Providers have to meet the usual accountability and quality assurance measures appropriate to each component. Arrangements have been put in place to provide block credit transfer between the VCE and VCAL, thus ensuring that students are able to transfer with credit from one to the other in the event that they decide to change pathways.

Successful implementation of the VCAL in 2003 was expected to see an estimated 5,000 students undertaking the certificate and the development of strong local partnerships to support delivery of the certificate.

Up to twenty new VCAL trials were to take place in 2003. The trials were to look at courses providing access to the foundation VCAL level and progression from the senior VCAL level. A further intention of the trial is to look at possible "themed" VCALs, each giving students experience of a broad occupational sector such as land-based industry or manufacturing. The final new trial will investigate ways in which the learning program for VCAL can be contextualised, to meet, for example, the needs of indigenous learners for whom a traditional learning context may not be appropriate.⁵¹

49 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 86*, p. 16.

50 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 86*, pp. 14-15.

51 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 86*, p. 18.

Schools and TAFE

- 6.46 As noted in the previous sections, inadequate credit arrangements were cited as obstacles in pathways between schools and TAFE. TAFE Directors Australia cited concerns regarding assessment, accreditation, certification and articulation.⁵²
- 6.47 Many schools have encountered difficulties with pathways and partnerships between schools and TAFE.⁵³ There needs to be greater recognition of VET in Schools as a legitimate pathway to employment, further training and non-VET options, including university. Qualifications achieved at school are not always given full credit when presented to another RTO. For instance, in Gympie in Queensland the State High School has had requests from TAFE for assessment pieces as evidence of students' competency, which suggests that the awarding of the qualification in itself is insufficient evidence of competency. Additionally, it is reported that private RTOs are making students repeat modules in which they are already competent.⁵⁴
- 6.48 Incidents such as this make it clear that some in the broader VET sector do not recognise the qualifications awarded by schools, or do not apply recognition of prior learning (RPL) procedures, which calls into question the portability benefits of the National Qualifications Framework. Part of the response by the TAFE sector concerns quality assurance. The TAFE directors submission indicates that if VET in school programs are to have credibility with industry, and sound pathways are to be developed to higher level vocational courses, it is very important that appropriate quality systems and processes are in place and that the overall integrity of VET, as contained within the principles of the AQTF and requirements for RTOs, are maintained:
- It is TAFE Institutes' view that this is not always the case and it makes the process of auspicing schools' programs increasingly difficult, both in the amount of resources required and the lack of control over how schools conduct their assessment and delivery.⁵⁵
- 6.49 The need for TAFE institutes to ensure that the competency standards are fully met to ensure that industry has confidence in the system is of primary concern. Schools argue that these standards are being met. However, the industry exposure and work placement requirements of Training Packages differ, which may give rise to perceptions of varying

52 TAFE Directors Australia, *Submission No. 83*, p. 7.

53 See for example, Don College, *Submission No. 104*, p. 4.

54 Fraser Cooloola District Schools, *Submission No. 21*, pp. 1-2.

55 TAFE Directors Australia, *Submission No. 83*, p. 4.

quality. TDA suggested that the adoption of similar curriculum and administrative arrangements for National Training Framework (NTF) qualifications, the third barrier to seamless pathways, would assist in cross-sector cooperation and clearer pathways.⁵⁶

Schools and universities

- 6.50 As stated previously, there is variation across states and territories in the way that VET qualifications at the senior certificate level are regarded by TAFE institutions or universities. It was reported to the Committee that there are significant barriers for recognition of those qualifications:
- VET courses which are Training Package based, competency based, very few of those qualifications will be recognised by universities for their full value, because universities regard learning outcomes rather than competencies as the requirement to satisfy their entry examinations. That is a major issue, not just for schools by the way, but for people who are articulating from post-school VET courses – TAFE courses – to universities. Normally you would only ever receive 50 per cent of that qualification as credit towards a university qualification, whereas the VET sector argues that there should be full credit.⁵⁷
- 6.51 In the Australian Education Union (AEU) submission the conflict between the requirements of School-based New Apprenticeships and the need for a tertiary entrance score is highlighted. The effect of the conflict is compounded by the time an SBNA takes students away from other subjects. The extent to which this is an issue depends very much on individual students' aims and expectations for the future.⁵⁸
- 6.52 Project work, funded by ANTA and managed by the NSW Department of Education and Training on behalf of a National Working Group, is progressing an approach which could enable VET in Schools competency assessments (with distinguishing levels of performance) to produce scores for inclusion in tertiary entrance information. Another component of the project has resulted in twenty universities agreeing to move towards implementing recognition arrangements of the achievement of VET in Schools students. It is hoped that this work will provide models and outcomes that will persuade other universities to adopt similar recognition approaches.⁵⁹ Further information on the status of and proposals for

56 TAFE Directors Australia, *Submission No. 83*, p. 7.

57 Mr Rex Hewett, Federal TAFE Secretary, Australian Education Union, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1215.

58 AEU, *Submission No. 72*, p. 69.

59 DEST, *Exhibit No. 129*, Facts Sheets.

university and industry recognition of achievement in VET in Schools is provided in the publication *Expanding Opportunities for Youth*.⁶⁰

- 6.53 The Queensland *Review of Pathways* recommended that in order to recognise the changes in the school curriculum, including the greater diversity of subjects undertaken in the senior years, and in particular university subjects and completed vocational education and training certificates, the tertiary entrance system be the subject of a future investigation.⁶¹ An alternative strategy that may be considered is the use of three or four courses to determine the tertiary entrance score rather than the current five in Queensland.⁶² This would allow more flexibility and be less likely to require the alteration of content of VET programs to focus on a greater knowledge component.⁶³ Portfolios of work and interviews have also been suggested as additional strategies to determine entrance.

VET and universities

- 6.54 A review of the use of Training Packages and the articulation between VET and the university sector concluded that the success of articulation so far has been mixed. Some improvements are acknowledged but in general it is patchy. There are more students moving from the university sector to VET rather than the reverse. Articulation usually involves local bilateral negotiation between individual RTOs and universities rather than centrally agreed and recognised processes.⁶⁴
- 6.55 Prior to 1998 the Australian Vice-Chancellor's Committee (AVCC) developed national credit transfer arrangements for holders of VET qualifications with participating universities. This provided 33 per cent credit for a diploma in a related three-year undergraduate course, or 25 per cent credit for a diploma in a related four-year undergraduate course. However, this may not be a block credit because of differences in course structures between universities and TAFE. Since then universities have extended these arrangements but they have to be contacted individually to identify local credit transfer arrangements. The AVCC and the

60 ANTA, *Exhibit No. 125*.

61 Gardener, M., 2002, *The Review of Pathways Articulation through the post-compulsory years of school to further education, training and labour market participation*. Queensland Department of Employment and Training, and Department of Education, 2002, p. 14.

62 Queensland Studies Authority Tertiary Entrance, Questions about overall position, <<http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/TertiaryEntrance/faqs/ops.html>>.

63 Mr Bernie Fitzimons, Senior Education Adviser, Catholic Education Office, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, p. 1056.

64 ANTA, 2003, *High Level Review of Training Packages. Current Realities of Training Packages: Summary of key themes emerging from Phase Two*. ANTA, p. 19.

Commonwealth Government are sponsoring initiatives to encourage wider recognition.⁶⁵

- 6.56 However, there is a perception that recognition and credit arrangements are poor.⁶⁶ Articulation is more evident in newer universities and dual sector institutions. Other research from the Training Package review concluded that successful relationships:

can be found in senior college, where TAFE and senior high schools work together; in dual sector provision, as in combined university and TAFE institutions; in other emerging structures; and in local articulation arrangements of VET qualification into university degrees. Many of these successes are based not so much on national policy development but on local partnerships and collaborations that have emerged in contextual settings.⁶⁷

- 6.57 This success through partnership and collaboration can be seen as a reflection of the importance of local and regional decision making. However, the Committee believes that the local arrangements should be facilitated more at a central policy level. If government and education authorities are advocating seamless pathways then improving the VET to university route is essential to provide another option for students in school so decision points are not so crucial in senior secondary years.

Summary

- 6.58 Suggestions to the Committee included the need to develop nationally consistent protocols for the formal recognition of student learning, qualifications and articulation pathways, by schools, the VET sector, universities and industry.⁶⁸ Other witnesses made similar comments that national uniform recognition of VET qualifications towards post-school entry would be of significant benefit.⁶⁹ However, this should not be at the cost of altering VET programs, resulting in alienating students (such as Jobs Pathway Programme participants) who would be unlikely to pursue a higher education pathway.⁷⁰

65 Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee, 2003, AVCC National TAFE-University Credit Transfer Schemes, <www.avcc.edu.au/students/credit_transfer/acts.htm>.

66 Ms Bernadette Gigliotti, Treasurer, Career Education Association of Victoria, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1155; Mr Rex Hewett, Federal TAFE Secretary, Australian Education Union, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1214.

67 ANTA, 2003, *High Level Review of Training Packages. – Phase 1 Report. Changing Complexity and Interrelationships of Education and Training Sectors*, ANTA, p. 34.

68 Vocational Pathways Pty Ltd, *Submission No. 8*, p. 3.

69 Mr Rex Hewett, Federal TAFE Secretary, Australian Education Union, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 2 September 2003, p. 1215.

70 Mr David Hawkey and Ms Lorna Hawkey, *Submission No. 40*, pp. 1-2.

- 6.59 The Committee notes that the major difficulties would be gaining agreement from the universities and from state and territory education authorities to a uniform approach. The National Working Group's identification of critical areas to address in recognition in 2001 are still appropriate in 2004. That is:
- Remove the barriers that assessment procedures for VET in Schools courses can set up for students wanting to keep their post-school options open, including the option for going to university
 - Seek consistent quality and application of the NTF across Australian secondary schools
 - Expand university admissions processes to recognise VET in schools achievement
 - Promote the benefits and value of recognised VET in schools for all senior secondary students.⁷¹
- 6.60 The lack of uniform arrangements for the crediting of students' school VET studies towards tertiary entrance is a serious problem, which will continue to act as a disincentive to many students who might otherwise consider VET courses at school. The Committee welcomes the initiatives referred to above. Given that there has recently been some agreement in terms of uniform curriculum outcomes, the Committee encourages efforts to achieve greater consistency in pursuing the removal of barriers of assessment and the expansion of university admission processes for VET in Schools. The Committee urges state and territory, Commonwealth and university participation in such developments.

Recommendation 15

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Education Minister coordinate educational authorities and universities to accelerate work on nationally consistent approaches to developing tertiary recognition arrangements for VET in Schools courses.

71 ANTA, *Exhibit No. 125*, Introduction.

Recommendation 16

The Committee recommends that the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee and ANTA take action to provide greater recognition of TAFE qualifications for university entrance, so that this becomes a viable pathway to higher education for those pursuing VET options at and after school.

Successful examples

- 6.61 The news is not all bad, and there are many examples of staff and organisations managing the growth in programs and responding innovatively to the challenges of developing pathways to assist young people through education to post-school options. Examples of successful cross-sector arrangements were provided to the Committee in an established campus at Centralian College in Alice Springs, at Tooloola State High School in Gladstone, Queensland, and a recently purpose built campus at Mandurah Secondary College in Western Australia.
- 6.62 Centralian College is a multi-sector institution formed by an amalgamation in 1993. It offers senior secondary, vocational education and training and higher education courses. These courses are delivered either on the main campus in Alice Springs, in formal settings in other Northern Territory regional population centres (including Darwin) or in remote communities.⁷²
- 6.63 The Gladstone schools have made significant progress with a regional initiative, Links for Excellence in Engineering. The program consists of partnerships between schools, business, TAFE and the university sector. As part of that relationship transport and Information Communication and Technology (ICT) resources have been developed to enable cross-campus access and cross-sector student enrolment and staff sharing.⁷³
- 6.64 Other features of this arrangement also include alternative pathways to gain university entrance by the completion of School-based New Apprenticeships (SBNAs). The Committee heard that there are very strong relationships in the education sector within Gladstone. A key element of this is the strength of partnerships with industry. Central Queensland University has signed a memorandum of understanding with Tooloola State High for a pilot to develop engineering excellence. This is to aid the transition of school leavers into university. The university is also

72 Centralian College, *Submission No. 30*, p. 1.

73 Gladstone Schools and Industry Network, *Submission No. 28*, pp. 11-12, see also *Exhibit No. 9*.

examining ways in which there might be guaranteed entry if a school leaver manages to satisfy certain predefined requirements.⁷⁴

- 6.65 In Western Australia the Committee visited Mandurah Senior College in the city of Mandurah in August 2003, and was impressed by the cooperative commitment to *Pathways for Learning*, which is summarised over.

Peel Education and TAFE Campus, Western Australia

Mandurah Senior College commenced operations in February 2001 as the sole provider of government schooling for Years 11 and 12 students. The student population at Mandurah Senior College in February 2002 was 986 students, which has enabled the College to offer a wide range of educational programs. Four years ago, 8.6 per cent of the student population participated in VET programs, growing to 73 per cent in August 2003.

The College shares the Peel Education and TAFE Campus with Challenger TAFE and Murdoch University and is Australia's first co-located school. More involvement with the university came when the College opened, with a number of combined courses being offered between the three sectors, allowing for seamless learning through its *Pathways for Learning* concept. The three partners have negotiated arrangements to share facilities on site, such as ICT infrastructure, workshops, library, Food Technology Centre, Arts Centre and cafeteria.

The strength of the three institutions is described as being in the development of fields of study and pathways of learning. The organisations have concentrated on assisting young people from the secondary through to the university sector and accessing a number of opportunities through TAFE as an alternative entry into university.

An example that demonstrates the process is in Information Communication Technology. Students can come into the secondary system either university bound or non- university bound. They can complete Certificate I or Certificate II as part of their normal educational program and, that opens up the opportunity to do Certificate III with Challenger TAFE as an extension to their educational program while they are at Mandurah Senior College. As a result of the package, a student would complete secondary graduation; possibly have a tertiary entrance score if they are university bound; have a Certificate III qualification through Challenger TAFE, and also have access to complete two vendor courses, one in ARIES and one in CISCO.

Students can then go on and do the Certificate IV Diploma with Challenger TAFE on this site, which then opens up the opportunity to apply to Murdoch University and get credit for that program or pursue a business degree in IT in about half the normal time. The role with Murdoch University on site has been to build a UniTrack program, where students who are completing economics Year 12 tertiary entrance also have the opportunity to complete the first year economics university unit as part of that program.

The relationship with Challenger TAFE being on site is described as very beneficial and the opportunity to both auspice and profile hours with a whole range of VET subjects opens up opportunities and gives students experience in working with TAFE lecturers and building TAFE qualifications prior to completing Year 12.⁷⁵

74 Associate Professor Robert Prater, Head of Campus, Central Queensland University, Gladstone Campus, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 April 2003, Gladstone, QLD, p. 425.

75 Mr Keith King, Principal, Mandurah Senior College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 4 August 2003, Mandurah, WA, pp. 864-866.

- 6.66 Other examples of proposed improved cross-sector arrangements include the proposed relocation of the Tropical North Queensland TAFE - Atherton Campus to the high school site. The partnership between Atherton State High School and the TAFE will strengthen secondary-TAFE links and build cooperation between Education Queensland and training providers. It is proposed that, among other aims, the co-location will:
- provide a better coordinated education and training precinct for school students and community members;
 - support school students to ‘mix and match’ pathways, including vocational education, to encourage them to remain at school or in training; and
 - increase the exchange of teaching ideas and strategies between the staff of both educational sectors, which will provide a richer educational experience for TAFE and high school students.⁷⁶
- 6.67 The Committee notes these very positive developments to maximise the use of physical infrastructure resources and encourage interchange and improved pathways. However, unless the funding differences are resolved tensions will persist to the detriment of cooperative arrangements and cultural change.
- 6.68 The development of multi-purpose campuses is not suitable for every environment, and Gladstone provides an example of successful regional development without co-location, but that initiative does involve the development of an industry specific skill centre to support engineering. In rural and remote areas such co-location is not possible and strategies that are successful in urban and large regional settings are not viable in more geographically dispersed communities with lower student numbers. The use of clusters is an example of one strategy that has been successful in some regions but less so in other rural and remote communities.
- 6.69 The Committee was impressed by the innovative approaches to addressing cross-sectoral issues that it saw, and by the obvious commitment by staff to providing students with pathway options best suited to their particular circumstances. The Committee believes that such approaches should be considered wherever possible, both in the realignment of existing educational services and in the development of new facilities.

76 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 93*, p. 30.

Work placements and clusters

- 6.70 Another critical system factor affecting the quality of vocational education, and specifically VET in Schools, is the funding and arrangements to support work placements. Cluster arrangements allow the central coordination of structured workplace learning which enables students to access a comprehensive database of industry learning experiences, increasing their potential for securing appropriate work placements.
- 6.71 A significant benefit of clusters is the reduction in the time spent by teachers on the logistics of organising students to be in different schools. An example was given to the Committee in South Australia of the Southern Vocational College, a group of secondary schools in a cluster arrangement, where the clustering and coordination is managed through a central office based in one of the schools, to deliver or generate a range of programs.⁷⁷ Some clusters, such as Careerlink in Western Australia, are only involved in work placements; others combine work placements with coordinating program delivery.⁷⁸
- 6.72 The management, requirements and support of structured work placements differ across states and territories, as discussed in Chapter 5. The most significant areas of concern identified by the VETnetwork were the travel and insurance costs of work placements and the competition for work placements, resulting in difficulty obtaining placements.⁷⁹ The organisation of the placements is dependent on a range of factors such as business and industry requirements, time availability of students and requirements for hours identified in training packages.
- 6.73 Industry, as represented by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI), sees business participation in work placements as a significant component of vocational education and training, and is keen to continue representation on matters related to the Vocational Education and Training in Schools Framework.⁸⁰ As highlighted from *The Cost of VET in Schools* survey discussed earlier in this chapter, industry views its partnership as integral to quality vocational education.

77 Mr Ross Treadwell, Assistant Director, School and Preschool Technologies, SA Department of Education and Children's Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 6 August 2003, Hindmarsh, SA, p. 1020.

78 *For example*: Careerlink, WA, focuses on industry placements: Mrs Kathleen Davey, Executive Officer, CareerLink, Catholic and Independent Schools Cluster, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 971; Hobart Education Business Training Partnership, provides a range of services from coordination of delivery to work placement services. HEBTP, *Submission No. 22*, pp. 1-2.

79 VETnetwork, *Submission No. 27*, p. 3.

80 Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Submission No. 95*, p. 24.

- 6.74 The submission of the South Australian Government noted the growth of systems in schools to manage work placements and the individual programs of students who need to achieve VET course outcomes.⁸¹ Work placements are managed in a variety of ways including school management, school cluster management or external organisation of placements. Similar to a range of other issues involving VET provision, the best strategy depends on the local situation. Although cluster arrangements may work well in urban school settings, regional and rural settings may require different approaches. The Construction Industry Training Board in South Australia described well structured and monitored work placements as a key component of a quality VET program.⁸²
- 6.75 Considerable debate has occurred on whether work placements should be mandated. NSW and Tasmania require VET students to participate. Hellyer College in Devonport, Tasmania, for example, manages this process by using college staff to seek work placements and workplace contacts:

VET students at Hellyer College have the opportunity to participate in up to 240 hours or 30 days of workplace training. The nature of the workplacement program is determined in consultation with the needs of each specific industry, eg: Retail and Hospitality are one day a week in the workplace; Engineering prefers block of time; other programs run a combination of block and one day a week workplacements. The Hellyer College timetable is tailored to enable students to be in a workplace with minimal disruption to other studies.⁸³

Regional factors

- 6.76 Students participate in vocational education in rural and remote areas in a higher proportion than in urban areas, and this has assisted with increasing retention rates.⁸⁴ VET plays a key role in sustaining a local workforce and viable employment outcomes, often through small business opportunities.⁸⁵ How VET is managed and supported in these areas is crucial to ensuring future pathways for young people.

81 South Australian Government, *Submission No. 97*, p. 20.

82 Construction Industry Training Board, *Submission No. 37*, p. 9.

83 Hellyer College, *Submission No. 105*, p. 1.

84 NCVER, *Submission No. 82*, p. 4; Mrs Cheryl McDivitt, VET in Schools Development Officer, Hellyer College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 30 September 2003, Burnie, Tasmania, p. 1352.

85 Mr Geoff Bloom, Executive Director, Rural Skills Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 21 August 2003, Canberra, p. 1139.

- 6.77 Tasmania, in particular, has explored ways in which VET in Schools might be used to encourage rural students to stay on at school. VET in Schools programs for Year 11 students now involve eighteen rural high schools and district high schools, in addition to the senior colleges.⁸⁶ There has been an increase in specialised programs, particularly in rural and remote areas where schools feel a need to adapt a program to the particular industry needs in their area and their own timetable and resourcing constraints. The Rural Retention Program supports three officers with the role of supervising and coordinating VET in Schools in rural districts.
- 6.78 Funding by the Enterprise and Career Education Foundation (ECEF) reflected the intent to promote the development of locally shaped plans and priorities. In the 2000-01 Budget an additional \$9.285 million was provided to ECEF for a four year program to extend its Work-placement Coordinator arrangements into regional and remote areas of central and northern Australia, including the Northern Territory, Queensland and Western Australia.⁸⁷ With the transfer of ECEF functions to DEST plans for funding appear set to continue in this vein with future expansion into remote areas.⁸⁸
- 6.79 The cluster arrangement is not seen to be as successful in rural and remote areas. Rural communities have difficulties in developing clusters and these clusters require the support of elaborate and costly transport arrangements. There are extra costs incurred in delivering vocational programs to regional and rural communities.⁸⁹ The Principal of Junee High School gave an example of the impact of requiring clusters in a rural area of NSW:

It is very much an urban model. You do not want workplace coordinators competing with each other for employers in the major centres. But it is a purely artificial link between our three towns. There is not that competition neither because of distance nor because of any social or economic ties. Junee is basically a satellite of Wagga, and our transport and our work placement is all in that direction. We believe that the work placement [coordinators] ought to be within the school. VET is a mainstream part of the curriculum, and the staffing of it ought to be a mainstream activity. We should have workplace coordinators.⁹⁰

86 Tasmanian Government, *Submission No. 92*, pp. 2, 11.

87 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, p. 38.

88 Mr Tony Greer, Group Manager, Indigenous and Transitions Group, Department of Education, Science and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 November 2003, Canberra, p. 1424.

89 Victorian Farmers' Federation, *Submission No. 43*, p. 3.

90 Mr Lee Wright, Principal, Junee High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 July 2003, Junee, NSW, p. 726.

- 6.80 Rural and remote locations have additional challenges in providing vocational education to their communities. Queensland, the Northern Territory and Western Australia have a geographically dispersed population. For example, 56 per cent of Queenslanders live outside the capital city. VET programs are described as playing a pivotal role in aiding young people to progress from school to further education, training or employment. Due to relative isolation schools can be hundreds of kilometres from the nearest TAFE institute or private training provider. Many of these schools have difficulty accessing a broad range of employers to be involved in VET in Schools programs.⁹¹
- 6.81 In many rural areas, schools may be the only accessible VET providers, and may have a limited range of curriculum offerings. While this places considerable pressures on the school, it also enables the school to enhance community partnerships and establish networks with the community, employers and other education and training sectors. However, the opportunity to undertake the employment component of the school-based apprenticeship or traineeship is virtually non-existent in many rural and remote areas. The AEU recommends that special programs need to be established, with the employment component provided by government.⁹²
- 6.82 Suggestions to the Committee on how to manage workplace components in rural areas and industries included the use of seasonal work and block work placements. Such placements may include holiday periods, which would then require alternative assessment arrangements to be made rather than by teachers. Block placements could reduce the amount of other work missed by the student and reduce the impact on other programs. This would also enable students to travel to or from rural areas to obtain work in their area of interest. Other strategies suggested include providing accommodation incentives for the employer.⁹³
- 6.83 Research by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research has indicated that:
- The school VET purpose pathway to local employment appeared to be largely successful in terms of retaining students who otherwise may have left school early and improving their perceptions of their literacy and numeracy skills. It also provided for work placement students a pathway to local apprenticeships and a greater incidence of still living in the community two to three years later.⁹⁴

91 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 93*, pp. 29-30.

92 AEU, *Submission No. 72*, pp. 58-59.

93 South Australian Farmers' Federation, *Submission No. 64*, p. 4.

94 NCVET, *Submission No. 82*, Attachment 3, *Exhibit No. 22*, p. 26.

- 6.84 Despite the barriers, there are many examples of small communities successfully delivering VET to young people. In Queensland, for example, a high school in the Darling Downs with 131 senior students offers ten different VET qualifications, and another school in the Cape and Gulf district with only 61 senior students offered nine qualifications in 2002.
- 6.85 The Committee was told that it is essential that rural and remote areas have access to support services and that they are not just available in the cities. It is acknowledged that it is more expensive to have some vocational education programs outside urban centres, but rural communities and young people should not be disadvantaged.⁹⁵ Given the favourable outcomes achieved so far support must continue and be enhanced.
- 6.86 A further alternative of relevance to rural and remote areas is the possibility of expanding the programs offered through distance education. The work of TAFE's Open Learning Institute in Queensland is suggested as a successful model, especially if supplemented by work placement in regional centres.⁹⁶
- 6.87 In summary, the Committee notes that additional support is required to assist rural and remote communities:
- It is essential that students are not disadvantaged in the VET in Schools options available to them simply because of where they live.⁹⁷

Funding arrangements for work placements

- 6.88 Other funding issues arose in Queensland, which were described as beyond local schools' control. The involvement of Local Area Cluster Programs such as ECEF clusters combined with Jobs Pathway Programmes (JPP) led to different costing arrangements that would disadvantage those schools in clusters that did not have a JPP. This affected forty out of fifty clusters.⁹⁸ Further consideration of additional support for schools such as the Jobs Pathway Programmes is discussed in Chapter 9.
- 6.89 The issue of the longevity of funding arrangements arose through the Committee's consultation with schools and organisations managing work placements. The lack of certainty of funding from one year to the next was described as problematic for many organisations:

95 Mr Geoff Bloom, Executive Director, Rural Skills Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 21 August 2003, Canberra, p. 1139.

96 SCISCO, *Submission No. 59*, p. 3.

97 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 93*, p. 30.

98 Queensland Catholic Education Commission, *Submission No. 66*, pp. 3-4.

From year to year, it is always a struggle in terms of ECEF funding for our structured work placement. You are chewing your fingernails as to whether you are going to get that so that you can continue your structured work placement for next year or whether you are going to have to dig deeper into the budget somewhere to be able to fund those things. So some certainty around the delivery of that would be great.⁹⁹

- 6.90 Additionally, there was considerable criticism of the reporting requirements of the ECEF work placement funding. In Tasmania, Mr Michael Brakey, Principal of Hellyer College, commented that of the \$20,000 received from ECEF, the college expended one third in meeting the requirements for receiving those funds. Acquittal of ANTA funding, on the other hand, was done more efficiently on a state-wide basis. The administrative requirements were a disincentive to participate in the ECEF program.¹⁰⁰

Recommendation 17

The Committee recommends that the period of funding for providers of work placement coordination be extended to a triennium basis in order to provide greater certainty and continuity of programs.

Employer involvement

- 6.91 The accessibility and availability of work placements has been discussed in Chapter 5. Suggestions were made that incentives should be given to employers to encourage them to take students on structured work placements. There is an additional cost to employers who participate in structured workplace learning programs but they receive no monetary incentives or tax concessions for the costs involved. However, employers who take on a School-based New Apprenticeship do receive financial incentives.¹⁰¹ Access to structured work placements improves the quality

99 Mr Jeffrey Major, Delegate for Geebung and Stafford District Principals, Queensland Secondary Principals Association, *Transcript of Evidence*, Brisbane, 9 April 2003, p. 372.

100 Mr Michael Brakey, Principal, Hellyer College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 30 September 2003, Burnie, Tasmania, p. 1345.

101 Where employers take on School-based New Apprentices' monetary incentives encourage participation and cover a component of the employer's costs. Evidence to the inquiry prior to late 2002 highlighted problems with the incentives provided. From 1 July 2003 these were resolved following changes announced in September 2002. Dr Brendan Nelson, Minister for

of VET outcomes and encourages employers to employ school students as employees or as apprentices or trainees.¹⁰²

- 6.92 The Committee recognises the costs involved but is also mindful of the contribution that students make, and the significant proportion of employers who have commented that they have recruited staff following work placements, thereby reducing the employer's recruitment costs. The Committee is also hesitant to introduce another level of bureaucracy but suggests that it is a possible area of further research.
- 6.93 Criticism was also made of the lack of government agency participation in providing work placement opportunities. In regional centres this would provide substantial assistance to schools and cluster coordinators, as many work placements occur in small business, and with the push to increase the number and quality of work placement experiences this is a potential target.¹⁰³ More discussion of employer involvement in vocational education is discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

Recommendation 18

The Committee recommends that agencies at all levels of government be encouraged to participate in supporting work experience and structured work placements.

Location and transport

- 6.94 The Committee heard throughout the course of the inquiry that the cost of transport to work or training sites can act as a barrier to participation, for both teacher supervisors and for students. Within regional or urban centres the age of students and the access to businesses create challenges for students and schools to ensure attendance and participation in programs and work placements. ECEF identified this as a key factor affecting the impact of vocational education in schools.¹⁰⁴ As an example, in Wagga Wagga, the largest regional centre in NSW, transport is an issue more so for particular industries.

Education, Science and Training, *Cutting Red Tape – New Apprenticeships business incentive simplified*, media release, 26 September 2002, MIN 184/02.

102 Association of Independent Schools of Queensland, *Submission No. 81*, p. 11.

103 Mrs Helen Renshaw, Workplace Coordinator, Wagga Wagga Compact, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 July 2003, Wagga Wagga, NSW, p. 824.

104 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 48; see also Greater Green Triangle Area Consultative Committee, *Submission No. 4*, p. 1.

In the hospitality industry you have to work split shifts. That is a problem when they do not have access to transport and most of them are not old enough to have a car and a licence, because they have to get to and from work at all sorts of different hours.¹⁰⁵

6.95 Where there are sufficient student numbers more coordination is possible for the delivery of programs. In South Australia, for example, some students travel by organised bus or public transport to other schools in the broader region who offer different VET programs. This has been facilitated by organising cluster arrangements.¹⁰⁶

6.96 A school's location can severely restrict its students' access to training and to workplace learning.¹⁰⁷ Transport issues are amplified in more rural or remote areas:

Another concern for Temora is that it is wonderful to have skill centres in Wagga and skill centres in Young, but our students cannot access those because of the transport and the time it takes to get to those centres, so we have to provide our own facilities.¹⁰⁸

6.97 The alternative strategy of using TAFE facilities has problems when the programs offered by the local TAFE campus are also limited. If students wish to access programs in centres at some distance then schools may pay for that transport. Transport was described as an issue for a NSW regional district looking at paying students to access, on the basis of equity, courses which are a long way away. Temora High School described the use of buses and taxis for taking students to courses at TAFE, 85 kilometres away at Wagga Wagga.¹⁰⁹ Even in Alice Springs, organising transport to the local TAFE provider costs Alice Springs High School in the vicinity of \$10,000 per year.¹¹⁰ Similarly in Western Australia, ANTA funding sustains the transport of students.¹¹¹

105 Mrs Janice Nulty, Hospitality Teacher, Wagga Wagga High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 July 2003, Wagga Wagga, NSW, p. 812.

106 Mr Ross Treadwell, Assistant Director, School and Preschool Technologies, SA Department of Education and Children's Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, Hindmarsh, SA, 6 August 2003, p. 1020.

107 The Hamilton and Alexandra College, *Submission No. 1*, p. 4.

108 Mr Christopher Grant, Principal, Temora High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 July 2003, Junee, NSW p. 722.

109 Mr Christopher Grant, Principal, Temora High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 July 2003, Junee, NSW, p. 737.

110 Mr Justin Emerson, Teacher, Future Directions, Alice Springs High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 May 2003, Alice Springs, NT, p. 655.

111 Mr John Nelson, Post-Compulsory Education Consultant, Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 950; see also SWISlink *Submission No. 77*, p. 2.

- 6.98 Strategies adopted to address distance issues in work placements involve using local businesses first and delaying the student's work placement until the student is old enough in Year 12 to gain their license to drive.¹¹² Again, the transport and costs associated are exacerbated in remote regions. The Committee visited Nyangatjatjara College in Central Australia, a school specifically for Indigenous students, and the Principal, Mr Ian White, commented on the enormous expense in communications and transport, moving people around in vehicles to visit satellite campuses in outlying communities and accessing Centralian College facilities in Alice Springs. A strong argument has been made for Nyangatjatjara College to gain its own RTO status to ensure that more programs can be delivered on-site to reduce expenses and ensure that students have sufficient support to complete the programs.¹¹³
- 6.99 Transport to and accommodation in a regional centre adds major costs for a block of training. In Queensland, for example, it costs \$1500 per student for students at Thursday Island State High School to fly to Cairns for one week of structured workplace experience in industries that are not available locally.¹¹⁴
- 6.100 In some industries, business has assisted with transport and accommodation requirements to place students in remote areas. The Western Australian Chamber of Minerals and Energy, in its Adopt a School/Adopt a Mine program has four partnerships in place to assist with structured work placements. This is partly supported through the Western Australian Education and Training Department, the Chamber of Minerals and Energy and participating mines. Issues being faced within these partnerships are practicalities associated with the distance, the expense, the site locations themselves and the limited number of participants who are actually able to engage in the program because of those issues. Duty of care, responsibility and insurance issues need to be resolved with the Department of Education and Training. The Committee supports the extension of similar schemes.

112 Mrs Marie Knight, Vocational Education Coordinator, Junee High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 July 2003, Junee, NSW p. 746.

113 Mr Ian White, Principal, Nyangatjatjara College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 May 2003, Yulara, NT, p. 671.

114 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 93*, p. 29.

Adopt a School/Adopt a Mine, Western Australia

The Adopt a School/Adopt a Mine program began in 1999 with a partnership between Kanowna Belle Gold Mines and Churchland Senior High School, a northern suburbs high school in Perth. It started with a vocational mining module based around a structured workplace learning. It involves 120 hours of work, which students undertake in a block placement, where they are out of school for two weeks and working on site. They participate in a twelve-hour shift and the shift patterns that exist on site. There are restrictions according to safety and age.

Partnerships have developed between Lesmurdie Senior High School and Goldfields Australia, between the Swan Education District Office and Black Swan Nickel, which is also in the goldfields, and most recently between Perth Education District Office and Sons of Gwalia. Four partnerships are working at the moment, with up to ten students participating per year. Teachers can also participate in a two-week block placement.

There is a contributory fund for the facilitation of partnerships. The Chamber of Minerals and Energy contributes up to \$5000, the companies themselves cover the balance of costs in accommodation and travel to and from the site. As the partnerships are Perth based it is an expensive proposition to get students to sites. They also cover the costs of meals and transport to and from the base where they are accommodated to the actual mine site. Some of the schools have asked students to contribute financially as well, perhaps \$100 or \$120 per student.¹¹⁵

- 6.101 An alternative strategy in less remote regions has been the purchase of a small bus to transport students (Years 8 to 12) between industrial sites and further training and education facilities. In Queensland Comalco has been involved in a partnership between education authorities and Tooloola High School to fund a bus.¹¹⁶ However, another school twenty kilometres away still has similar transport issues. Other suggestions include increased access to online resources.
- 6.102 More broadly, the inability of young people to access safe, appropriate, reliable and cost-effective transport has been regularly highlighted in projects across the country as a barrier to young people accessing training and employment opportunities. The Dusseldorp Skills Forum (DSF) initiated a Transport for Young People project 2002/2003. One project in Victoria that was included was the Wimmera VET bus that assists students from eight Wimmera secondary colleges to travel to and from their training. Previously they had to rely solely on parents to transport them to the VET venues, thus excluding many students from accessing this opportunity. The young people are required to arrive at Horsham and Longerenong each Wednesday morning to meet their VET course requirements. Some students travel distances of up to 260 kilometres per day return journey. Yarriambiack Shire Council has appointed a Transport

115 Mr Eamon Moore, Executive Officer, Education, Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 958.

116 Miss Robyn Sermon, Community Relations Superintendent, Comalco, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 April 2003, Gladstone, QLD, p. 427; and Gladstone Schools and Industry Network, *Exhibit No. 9*, p. 12.

Coordinator to oversee the administration of the scheme. Funding has also been sought from state bodies to support the program, which has been enthusiastically supported by students.¹¹⁷

- 6.103 Other submissions to the inquiry support extending bus pass usage to work placements and other educational providers to assist students in regional areas such as the Macleay Valley in NSW.¹¹⁸ Barriers to funding to assist with transport in regional, rural and remote areas need to be addressed.

Recommendation 19

The Committee recommends that Commonwealth, state and territory education authorities investigate and develop strategies to support rural and remote communities' transport needs and, where necessary, provide increased travel and accommodation assistance to allow more isolated students to access VET courses.

Recommendation 20

The Committee recommends that an evaluation of the role of cluster workplace coordinators be undertaken for the purpose of:

- **increasing their effectiveness in forming the critical links between schools and industry;**
- **establishing structures to improve cooperative approaches between education and employment services in the community;**
- **assisting them to meet the increasing demand for work placements while also addressing the areas of local skill shortages;**
- **ensuring that rural and remote area needs are being met; and**
- **determining what extra resources and training are needed to effectively carry out this role, with the Commonwealth providing those extra resources.**

117 Dusseldorp Skills Forum, 2003, *Forum on transport and young people in rural and regional Australia*, pp. 12-15, <<http://www.dsf.org.au/transport/forum.htm>>.

118 Macleay Valley Workplace Learning Centre, *Submission No. 69*, p. 12; South Australian Farmers' Federation, *Submission No. 64*, p. 5; Victorian Farmers' Federation, *Submission No. 43*, p. 3; Nyangatjatjara College, *Submission No. 24*, p. 2.

Recommendation 21

The Committee recommends that relevant authorities address issues regarding work placements such as occupational health and safety, workers compensation, and clarifying the responsibilities of supervisors, which may be acting as barriers to more employers offering work placements.

Human resources

- 6.104 As noted in Chapter 5, the skill of the teachers and the quality of the programs are critical to the credibility of vocational education in schools.¹¹⁹ The lack of industry experience of teachers has been cited as a major concern by industry.
- 6.105 The provision of vocational education and training does not appear to be determined by employment demand, which will be discussed later in this chapter. Rather, enrolments seem to reflect student interest and the capacity of schools to deliver, based on infrastructure, resourcing and teacher availability.
- 6.106 As outlined in submissions and oral evidence to the Committee, teachers involved in vocational education have heavy workloads that limit the time available for, and access to, professional development. This lack of access may have the effect of delaying the incorporation of vocational education and general education into a holistic framework. Associated with workload concerns is insufficient resourcing for the employment of suitably qualified teaching staff and coordinators. The availability of such staff was frequently reported as limited, affecting the provision of programs.
- 6.107 It was suggested that the reduced availability of teachers is associated with:
- the increasing age of the teaching profession and a reluctance to take on additional demanding tasks;

119 See also Professor Graham Dellar, Dean, Faculty of Education, Language Studies and Social Work, Curtin University of Technology, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 934; Shop Distributive and Allied Employees Association, *Submission No. 45*, p. 3, and South Australian Farmers' Federation, *Submission No. 64*, p. 3.

- the reduced number of technical teachers that have been trained, for example in woodwork and construction;¹²⁰
 - lack of critical competence in VET teachers – especially in IT and specialist professional areas;¹²¹
 - the criticism by business of a perceived lack of industry-relevant expertise;¹²²
 - the AQTF requirements;
 - the heavy workload acting as a disincentive to take on vocational requirements; and
 - lack of support and status in schools for vocational education.¹²³
- 6.108 To gain a better understanding of teacher training and skills needs, in 2002 DEST completed a project to identify teacher education programs and qualifications across Australia and to provide information on the number of initial teacher education graduates by specialisation. In 2001 14,000 new teachers were expected to complete programs from the 410 teacher education courses, with 80 per cent of graduates from NSW, Victoria and Queensland. Forty percent of the 14,000 teachers were qualified to teach in secondary schools, with small percentages of teachers undertaking specialisations that would directly assist with vocational education and training.¹²⁴
- 6.109 In some fields industry professionals are undertaking teacher training to become teachers. Strategies to support greater numbers of such a workforce need to be encouraged. Disincentives are often cited,¹²⁵ such as the time taken to complete qualifications, the cost of study and the salary on completion. A national review of teaching released in 2003, *Review of Teaching and Teacher Education Final Report, Australia's Teachers: Australia's Future – Advancing Innovation, Science, Technology and Mathematics*, addresses many of these issues. The report concluded that:
- immediate, vigorous and coordinated action by a range of stakeholders is required in the following broad areas:
 - energising the sciences and technology and prioritising innovation in schools;
 - planning and collaboration to attract and retain quality teachers;

120 Construction Industry Training Board, *Submission No. 37*, p. 8.

121 WorkingFutures, *Submission No. 35*, p. 5.

122 South Australian Government, *Submission No. 97*, pp. 4-5; see also National Meat Industry Training Advisory Council, *Submission No. 16*, pp. 1-3.

123 Construction Industry Training Board, *Submission No. 37*, p. 8.

124 Ballantyne, R and Bain, J, 2002, *Teacher education courses and completions*, DEST, Executive Summary.

125 Light Manufacturing Training Australia, *Submission No. 49*, p. 4.

- revitalising the teaching profession;
- strengthening teacher education and professional learning; and
- supporting future schools through leadership, teams and partnerships.¹²⁶

Readers are referred to the review for a more complete discussion of action areas.

- 6.110 Clearly, the issues identified to the Committee are national and relate to a range of teaching areas, including vocational education. However, the issue of qualified and experienced industry practitioners taking up teaching does require urgent attention to review existing barriers and disincentives, while not compromising essential requirements for teaching.
- 6.111 The DEST report on teacher education programs indicated that since 1999 completions of teacher education courses have increased by more than 10 per cent per year.¹²⁷ States such as Victoria have supported initiatives to attract teachers to schools, such as websites, advertising and Teaching Scholarships and Graduate Recruitment schemes. This has resulted in some success in specific difficult-to-fill subject areas and geographic locations.¹²⁸
- 6.112 However, high turnover rates and requirements for VET- specific skills are still causing concerns for schools. As a response to the insufficient supply of secondary teachers who can fulfil the AQTF requirements, TAFE teachers are involved with delivery in many schools in cooperative arrangements. Challenges for TAFE teachers include the different learning and support requirements of some students. The Victorian Government has identified the need for:
- The training, resourcing and upgrading of vocational education teachers within the secondary system, including increasing their knowledge of the Australian vocational education system and policy
 - The need to ensure the currency of skills of vocational education teachers in the secondary system, including knowledge of the latest industry trends
 - TAFE teachers may also lack current skills in sectors where technological development is rapid
 - The need for some TAFE teachers to acquire the necessary pedagogical skills for dealing with school students.¹²⁹

126 DEST, 2003, *Review of Teaching and Teacher Education Final Report, Australia's Teachers: Australia's Future – Advancing Innovation, Science, Technology and Mathematics, Agenda for Action*, p. 51.

127 Ballantyne, R. and Bain, J., 2002, *Teacher education courses and completions*, DEST, Executive Summary, p. 6; <http://www.dest.gov.au/highered/eippubs/eip02_3/default.htm>.

128 Education times, *Teacher recruitment program pays dividends*, Victoria. www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/edtimes/news3.htm

129 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 86*, p. 25.

- 6.113 Commenting on the lack of support for VET teachers the VETnetwork also identified a lack of recognition & appreciation by industry of what teachers do and the qualifications and training they have. The VETnetwork acknowledged that this lack of understanding also exists in the reverse, with teachers not aware of or unable to gain the experience (through return to industry) of current changes in their vocational teaching areas.¹³⁰
- 6.114 The Committee is encouraged by the production of the *National Statement from the Teaching Profession on Teacher Standards, Quality and Professionalism*¹³¹ and the establishment in 2004 of a National Institute of Quality Teaching and School Leadership. The Institute aims to complement arrangements to support and strengthen teaching and school leadership already in place in various state and territory school systems and in the non-government sector. The aims of the Institute are likely to address professional teaching standards, professional learning for teachers and school leaders, quality assurance, research into teaching and learning, induction, mentoring and succession planning for school leaders, and other ways to improve quality and recognise achievement.¹³²

Teaching and award conditions

- 6.115 In some jurisdictions teaching and award conditions of the secondary teaching service and the TAFE sector have been aligned. One South Australian TAFE supports cross-service between TAFE and schools to ensure that there are no industrial relations barriers.¹³³
- 6.116 Centralian College in the Northern Territory provides another example where cross-sectoral boundaries have been eliminated. The College has its own industrial award for lecturers and educational administrators:

This award allows the Centralian College to operate 50 weeks a year. Educational Administrator positions (equivalent to principal and assistant principal levels) have five or six weeks recreation leave per year while lecturers maintain the more traditional twelve weeks leave. Hours of work can be anytime between the hours of 0730 and 2200 weekdays without penalty payments up to a

130 VETnetwork, *Submission No. 27*, p. 3.

131 The National Reference Group on Teacher Standards, Quality and Professionalism, 2003, *National Statement from the Teaching Profession on Teacher Standards, Quality and Professionalism*, <http://www.austcolled.com.au/projects/teacherstandqualprof/natstmtfromteachingprofmay2003.html>

132 DEST, 2003, *Review of Teaching and Teacher Education Final Report, Australia's Teachers: Australia's Future – Advancing Innovation, Science, Technology and Mathematics*, Executive Summary, <http://www.dest.gov.au/schools/teachingreview/exec_summary.htm>.

133 Mr Steve Kelton, Director, Regency Institute of TAFE, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, p. 1087.

maximum of thirty hours per week. This flexibility allows for students to undertake classes at more suitable times to recognise their lifestyle and can also allow lecturers to do more on the job assessment and training as they can be working during hours that are often available to students for paid employment.

Centralian College lecturers can be employed through the minimum entry provisions in the award. This provides for a series of qualification bars beyond acceptable industry experience. All lecturers at Centralian College are required to obtain a Certificate Four in Workplace Assessment to meet the new Australian Quality Training Framework. Lecturers delivering NTCE [Northern Territory Certificate of Education] Courses are required to have a formal teaching qualification. Considerable flexibility is gained by having access to a wider pool of potential staff, particularly in addressing the issue of teacher shortage that is prevalent in regional and rural areas.¹³⁴

- 6.117 It was reported to the Committee that many VET staff, particularly regional coordinators, are on short-term contracts that are 'rolled over' and that there is a lack security of tenure or finances for the continuation of their positions. These arrangements do not encourage people to take on VET in Schools or to remain in it.¹³⁵
- 6.118 In a survey conducted by the VETnetwork, only 3 per cent of respondents identified industrial conditions for VET teachers as a concern. It was hypothesised that this low proportion probably reflects the fact that most practitioners are within a school and awards system. Yet ECEF has quoted six months as the average time for cluster coordinators before burn-out. The meeting of basic needs is crucial to sustainability and long-term performance. The lack of an award specifically for VET teachers and coordinators is reported as a problem, particularly for those cluster coordinators employed by a regional body outside the school.¹³⁶
- I would like to see some acknowledgement of the need for relief or remuneration for people who are taking on VET.¹³⁷
- 6.119 The issues discussed above focus on teaching and VET support arrangements at a system level for vocational education. Staffing arrangements are also determined within a school, subject to resourcing limits. Teachers' availability and willingness to participate in VET has been

134 Centralian College, *Submission No. 30*, p. 3.

135 Construction Industry Training Board, *Submission No. 37*, p. 8.

136 VETnetwork, *Submission No. 27*, p. 3.

137 Mr Brian Buckley, Principal, Lockhart Central School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 July 2003, Wagga Wagga, NSW, p. 833.

described as strongly influenced by the level of support and status of VET within the school, particularly by the school leadership.

School factors

School and teacher commitment

- 6.120 The importance of leadership in a school community cannot be overstated. The attitudes and actions of school leaders are powerful in sending messages of support for school activities, particularly in vocational education.¹³⁸ Solutions to challenges have been described as generated more through leadership and innovation at the school and local level rather than through system leadership. An example in Wagga Wagga, NSW, provides a summary of the school support that is required for successful programs:

Within this RTO, if I make suggestions to others across the state you can see that there is leadership in the schools, and we have tried to increase the density of that leadership in relation to VET. In RTO meetings that I have been going to for years now I have increased the numbers who attend. I now bring a deputy and my VET coordinator and I notice that the others are starting to do that as well ... more people in the school have a handle on what is going on and they are a conduit for the issues that are coming up. That is where some of the strength lies. They are also able to offer support, and the support for VET teachers in the schools in Wagga is quite strong.¹³⁹

- 6.121 Adequate resourcing of positions is one clear way of providing support and status for vocational education. The staff member's time may not always be spent in the classroom, as there are also significant contact requirements with the community and business. It is more than an administrative role:

there has to be a complete redefinition of the work of at least one person in each school. They may be non-teaching. One thing that keeps haunting me is principals talking about non-contact time. I say this is not non-contact time. This person is doing other work. If

138 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, pp. 46-47, and Mr Peter Brabin, Chief Education Officer, Wagga Wagga District Office, NSW Department of Education and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 July 2003, Wagga Wagga, NSW, p. 835.

139 Mr Glyn Leyshon, Principal, Koorungal High School, Member, District Management Committee, Wagga Wagga District RTO, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 July 2003, Wagga Wagga, NSW, p. 834.

we are talking about changing learning, that learning does not just come from the classroom but from the community, peers, work and so on; you need someone to get out and harness all those learning opportunities. So I think we are looking at having at least a full-time person in each school doing quite different work.¹⁴⁰

- 6.122 In Queensland it was reported that some individual schools are doing vocational education work a lot better than other schools. Some have fully embraced the challenges that come with the adoption of VET and have dramatically changed the organisation of how they deliver their services to the student cohort and their work with the community.¹⁴¹ The Committee visited Robina State High School on the Gold Coast and was impressed by the commitment shown in this large school. The Principal's background in VET, and the support of senior staff, indicates the type of expertise and background that assists in bringing culture change.
- 6.123 The Australian Education Union suggested that appropriate leadership, coordination and support personnel should be deployed at the central, regional/district, and school levels with staff with specific full-time responsibility for VET in Schools.¹⁴² The balance and flexibility for all positions needs to be prioritised but given the significant expansion of VET programs more support is clearly needed. Similarly, resourcing of other aspects of vocational education also requires direction from the principal. In Western Australia, for example, the level and emphasis of career education in schools is determined by the principal.¹⁴³ Career education is discussed more fully in Chapter 8.
- 6.124 Strategies such as the Principals and Vocational Education in Schools (PAVES) program, which was supported through the MCEETYA Transition from School Taskforce and ECEF, were seen as good initiatives. Ensuring that principals are supported in the process of introducing and entrenching VET as a worthwhile and viable pathway is one key way to effect attitudinal change. This would probably have more influence in schools than VET coordinators and career or guidance officers.¹⁴⁴

140 Mr Bernie Fitzsimons, Senior Education Adviser, Catholic Education Office, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, p. 1060.

141 Mr Ken Smith, Director-General, Queensland Department of Education, *Transcript of Evidence*, 9 April 2003, Brisbane, p. 309.

142 AEU, *Submission No. 72*, p. 32.

143 Mr David Carney, President, Career Education Association of Western Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 941.

144 Ms Gabrielle Power-West, Executive Officer - Post Compulsory/Curriculum, Queensland Catholic Education Commission, *Transcript of Evidence*, 9 April 2003, Brisbane, p. 329; Mr John Neville, Executive Member, Queensland Secondary Principals Association, *Transcript of Evidence*, 9 April 2003 Brisbane, p. 366.

- 6.125 The Committee notes that efforts to engage principals in further discussion regarding best practice and the advantages of vocational education need to be supported by appropriate funding and reporting regimes. Without such support professional development activities and forums will only lead to frustration.

Recommendation 22

The Committee recommends that appropriate national, state and territory associations be identified to support professional development and forums to encourage principals and school leadership teams to advance the VET agenda and more fully incorporate VET into the mainstream school curriculum.

Community and business factors

- 6.126 Another key component in determining the effectiveness of VET in Schools is community and business involvement in providing students with opportunities for experience in a workplace.
- 6.127 A large part of the success of vocational education programs depends on industry and community involvement. How this is encouraged and managed is a considerable challenge to education authorities. Most industries have been developing links with schools and other education providers, such as Rural Skills Australia.¹⁴⁵ Many industries highlighted to the Committee the need for greater association and support for industry links, identifying the need for more vocationally oriented teachers who understood and were sympathetic to industry.¹⁴⁶ Other industries have particular safety concerns that need to be addressed.¹⁴⁷
- 6.128 The credibility of VET in Schools programs with business is often associated with how much industry contact the program has, the quantity of teachers' vocational exposure,¹⁴⁸ school facilities and student industry

145 National Farmers' Federation, *Submission No. 91*, p. 5.

146 Victorian Electrotechnology, Printing, Information Technology and Communications (EPIC) Industry Training Board, *Submission No. 13*, p. 6.

147 National Meat Industry Council, *Submission No. 16*, p. 1.

148 Australian Industry Group, *Submission No. 76*, pp. 7, 9.

participation.¹⁴⁹ Concerns were expressed to the Committee on the quality of the programs offered, owing to:

- teacher qualifications and experience in industry;
- infrastructure in terms of facilities and resources;
- RTO status;
- the type of work placements; and
- the length of work placements.¹⁵⁰

6.129 Another concern of industry is the format of the delivery of the VET in Schools. Industry generally prefers the more transparent stand alone delivery, which more closely mirrors post-school sector methods. The perception is that non-VET elements of subjects can overwhelm the embedded VET and assessment may not be appropriately competency based. Assessment authorities believe this perception to be unfounded given the AQTF requirements.¹⁵¹

Addressing the concerns of industry

6.130 In addressing the concerns of industry a major factor on a systemic level has been the range of perspectives that industry provides. For example, the Australian Industry Group (Ai Group) comments that it is difficult to provide one view of what industry needs or expects from VET in Schools. However, it is generally accepted that young people leaving school should have a mix of job specific, generic and underpinning employment related skills.¹⁵² The Committee notes that determining the balance of that mix is a key challenge.

6.131 One response by education authorities to the concerns expressed on the quality of programs has been to ensure that the AQTF requirements as originally applied in the broader VET sector are being met in each jurisdiction. Additional auditing training has been provided to encourage greater standardisation in audit requirements across the states and territories, and to ensure that schools as RTOs are meeting registration requirements.

149 Australian Seafood Industry Council, *Submission No. 33*, pp. 1-2.

150 See for example: ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, pp. 55-60; Construction Training Queensland, *Submission No. 14*, p. 2; PPTC Skills, *Submission No. 17*, p. 1; EE-Oz Training Standards, *Submission No. 41*, p. 5.

151 Mr Malcolm Salier, Chair, Australasian Curriculum Assessment and Certification Authorities, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 October 2004, Hobart, p. 1387; ANTA, *Submission No. 90*, p. 30; ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 56.

152 Australian Industry Group, *Submission No. 76*, p. 2.

6.132 Much of the focus has been at the input stage, to provide appropriately qualified and experienced staff, and industry standard facilities, as this has been a major concern of industry. Group Training Australia's view is that:

employers are often dubious about the quality of the training being provided in schools by school teachers who are generally seen to lack any real industry experience and often train using facilities and equipment inferior to that which would be available in TAFE.¹⁵³

6.133 Industry has been generally satisfied with schools involved in Certificate I qualifications, with increasing concerns about the capability of schools delivering Certificate II and III.¹⁵⁴ In addition, industry is concerned about the content and delivery of competencies. The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry endorses the use of industry developed Training Packages for the delivery of VET in Schools and does not support the customisation of the Training Packages.¹⁵⁵ Ai Group's primary concern is the capacity of schools to deliver Training Package outcomes where School-based New Apprenticeships (requiring contracts of training) are not involved. As stated in the Ai Group submission, for the manufacturing sector the understanding of workplace competence is a central concern.¹⁵⁶

6.134 Therefore, a key aspect of embracing VET in Schools as a credible source of employees is the quality of the work placement. Given the difficulties already discussed in this chapter in ensuring a safe and appropriate work placement, and the increasing demands on employers, the use of simulated on-the-job assessments is widespread and has been used in the TAFE environment. However, most employers are not supportive of this approach:

Employers highly value on-the-job learning because of the learning styles available, the direct relevance of the skills acquired and the assurance of standards of the skills imparted. From an employer perspective, the quality delivery of VET in Schools is not possible without an on-the-job learning component. There has been a trend towards simulated learning in recent years, however, it is ACCI and member's view that while simulated learning provides a good grounding in pre-employment preparation, it should not be considered as a quality substitute for on-the job learning.¹⁵⁷

153 Group Training Australia, *Submission No. 42*, p. 7.

154 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 57.

155 ACCI, *Submission No. 95*, p. 1.

156 Australian Industry Group, *Submission No. 76*, p. 3.

157 ACCI, *Submission No. 95*, p. 11.

- 6.135 The state and territory boards of studies represented by the Australasian Curriculum, Assessment and Certification Authorities (ACACA) indicated in response to this criticism that education authorities are following requirements in the Training Packages, and that if alternative assessment and on-the-job work placements are required this should be specified:

If industry believes workplace training/assessment is integral to the demonstration of competency, then it is ACACA's view that the relevant National Training Package should specify:

- the amount of workplace training/assessment that should occur; and
- those units of competency which should be delivered and/or assessed in the workplace.

For those units of competency which can be delivered in a simulated environment, advice should be included in Training Packages as to the nature of that simulated environment.¹⁵⁸

- 6.136 From the Tasmanian experience, the Hobart Education Business Training Partnership comments that the most successful thing about VET in Schools in their region is the significant work placement component, which is between 120 hours and 240 hours in a year. The programs that were most successful in the Hobart area have had dedicated, involved and interested industry partners.¹⁵⁹
- 6.137 Part of the differing expectations of what is required of work placements relates to the expectations of the objectives of VET in Schools and vocational education. If generic workplace or employability skills are the main focus then the work placement requirements would be quite different from the development of job-specific skills. Recent efforts by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Business Council of Australia to develop *Employability Skills for the Future*, should assist in presenting a preferred view of industry of vocational education in schools.
- 6.138 The Committee notes that in order to assure industry that VET in Schools is a legitimate vocational pathway resulting in credible qualifications with the necessary skills, considerable action is required on a range of fronts, including teacher education and industry exposure, resources, facilities and work placements.
- 6.139 It appears to the Committee that such a fundamental question as: What are the expectations of VET in Schools? needs to be more rigorously debated and resolved to enable a more coherent approach to vocational education.

158 ACACA, *Submission No. 99*, p. 7.

159 Ms Penny Driessen, Executive Officer, Hobart Education Business Training Partnership, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 October 2003, Hobart, p. 1408.

The Committee acknowledges that flexibility is required to meet student needs and industry requirements, but that to sufficiently and effectively support this important schooling development requires clearer direction.

Recommendation 23

The Committee recommends that MCEETYA and ANTA develop a consistent national approach to structured workplace learning, with an agreed mandated minimum which meets the needs of industry and the requirements of the National Training Framework and Training Packages.

State and industry demand

- 6.140 Another industry issue requiring a more systemic response is the challenge of identifying areas of demand to match young people leaving school with current and potential employment markets.
- 6.141 The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry advocates that VET in Schools needs to be targeted to real local job opportunities, skill shortages and future demand.¹⁶⁰ This is related to industry's belief that VET choices offered to students are determined by the staff expertise available in a school rather than by the local industry demand for labour.¹⁶¹
- 6.142 The NSW Government indicated that courses are based on industry demand and student interest. Courses are developed in close consultation with industry.¹⁶² ECEF indicated that a number of schools believed they were 'overtraining' in relation to regional employment but that there was no easy way to seek guidance.¹⁶³
- 6.143 Overtraining in specific areas and having skill shortages in other employment fields returns to the need for articulating more clearly the purpose of vocational education and VET in Schools. It also raises the question as to whether industry requirements are better served by the development of sound generic workplace skills or by particular industry-specific training. These issues will be discussed further in the next chapter.

160 ACCI, *Submission No. 95*, p. 1.

161 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 56.

162 Mr Bert Evans, Chairman, New South Wales Board of Vocational Education and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 25 February 2003, Sydney, p. 60.

163 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 56.

- 6.144 The challenge of providing accurate industry guidance on prospective employment markets will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, as there is some debate on the effectiveness of such advice and predictions. However, the demise of the state Industry Training Advisory Boards (ITABs) through the withdrawal of Commonwealth funding was raised as an issue with the Committee. It was noted that the state ITABs were a good contact point to provide information on training issues and industry change,¹⁶⁴ and their closure has the potential to seriously inhibit industry engagement with schools.

Summary

- 6.145 This chapter has provided an overview of system factors that are affecting the successful implementation of vocational education, and more specifically VET in Schools. Inadequate funding models and the lack of comparable costings are hampering the ability of governments to come to agreement on appropriate funding. This has implications for different government and non-government schools and cross-sector arrangements with TAFE.
- 6.146 Articulation arrangements highlight the need for increased and more flexible recognition practices. The crucial issue of work placements was considered, identifying the need for greater flexibility in cluster arrangements to support and coordinate, especially in regional areas. The need for better transport in non-urban areas was a key issue for young people to access programs and work placements.
- 6.147 The Committee believes that the provision of adequate and appropriate staffing is a key quality issue for the success of vocational education. Considerable effort needs to be directed to this area to support committed staff. Leadership is also a key factor in schools, and can only be fully effective if the aforementioned issues are addressed. Finally, industry factors, concerns and needs were considered.
- 6.148 Not all those involved in education are convinced that industry demand should be the main driver of vocational education:

The temptation exists for the government education system in the current economic and political climate to base its programs and curriculum on industry demand, just as the university sector

164 NSW Department of Education and Training, *Submission No. 94*, p. 11; Ms Penny Driessen, Executive Officer, Hobart Education Business Training Partnership, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 October 2003, Hobart, p. 1412; Dr Erica Smith, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 July 2003, Junee, NSW, p. 757; Don College, *Submission No. 104*, p. 3.

determination of entry requirements has influenced the direction and delivery of high level intellectual streaming in traditional schooling endeavour. However, WACSSO reiterates that the object of public education is to ensure that all children and young people develop the skills and understandings necessary to shape their own lives and to be able to contribute constructively to the social, political and economic future of Australia.¹⁶⁵

- 6.149 This statement demonstrates the competing demands that are being made of vocational education in schools: meeting industry and societal expectations which are sometimes seen as incompatible. The Committee considers that articulating differing expectations will assist in providing guidance to schools to then discuss the objectives of vocational education in schools with their respective communities.
- 6.150 The next chapter elaborates on the competing needs and how some of these issues can be resolved locally and Chapter 10 considers how a national approach will further assist.

165 Western Australian Council of State School Organisations, *Submission No. 63*, p. 10.

Competing needs – dilemmas

The role of vocational education in schools

- 7.1 The recent growth in VET in Schools has had several objectives. It is part of a drive to prepare students in secondary schooling more effectively for employment. As previously discussed, vocational education in schools also forms part of a number of other reform agendas; for example, addressing broader concerns about the relevance and effectiveness of the senior secondary school curriculum, improving the transition from school to further education and training, and the promotion of lifelong learning.
- 7.2 The enthusiasm of students in embracing vocational education indicates in the early stages that the programs are successful. However, a definitive view is not yet possible on whether the goals of the reforms are being met. The multiple agendas have created considerable challenges for schools to respond to within their curriculum. This chapter provides a review of the dilemmas faced by schools in trying to address the multiple and not always compatible purposes of vocational education in schools and meeting various stakeholders' needs. The chapter revisits the purpose of vocational education in schools, and then considers the issue of generic workplace and industry-specific skills. Employability skills are discussed in relation to skill shortages and meeting the needs of new and emerging industries. Finally the outcomes of vocational education for future pathways are briefly discussed.

The purpose of vocational education in schools

- 7.3 During the course of the inquiry the Committee received differing views on a range of issues such as work placements, tertiary entrance, industry specific or generic curriculum, management of funding and employability

skills. As one would expect, the different views clearly reflect the varied stakeholder perspectives on the purpose of vocational education in schools, which was discussed in Chapter 2. The Committee believes, however, that the significance of these perspectives did not appear to be widely acknowledged in the school sector.

- 7.4 Dr Tom Karmel from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) highlighted one debate following a comment from the Committee on the clarity of purpose of vocational education in schools:

In terms of the purpose, you are quite right about the complexity of it. There clearly is tension between the technical part of vocational education and what one might describe as the generic part. In recent years, the generic part has received a lot of attention. We have done quite a bit on generic skills, such as employability skills or whatever you want to call it. There are debates about whether they should be embedded within subjects or taught as separate subjects. You talk about the difficulties with clarity of purpose. This is a debate that is developing. People are now realising that there is more to employability than just the technical skills. Given the way the world is changing, perhaps some of these basic foundational skills are really very important.¹

- 7.5 In evidence to the Committee the Enterprise and Career Education Foundation (ECEF) identified this need to clarify and prioritise the objectives and expectations for the various levels of activity that occur within the broader vocational education agenda.² Policy implications flow from this prioritisation. The resolution of this issue cannot be achieved until the primary purposes of vocational education at different levels of schooling are identified. The first debate to address is the distinction between generic workplace and employability skills, and industry focussed technical skills. This has never been fully resolved.

Generic and/or job-specific skills

- 7.6 The work environment of the 21st century is characterised as competitive and changing, with implications for preparing today's students for post-school options. Surveys of employers indicate that to gain and maintain employability, broader generic workplace skills are needed, in conjunction

1 Dr Tom Karmel, Managing Director, NCVER, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, p. 1066.

2 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 3.

with occupation or job-specific skills.³ To the extent that the vocational education and training system's aim is to be responsive to employer needs, providers need to support generic workplace skills development.

- 7.7 Generic skills apply across a variety of jobs and are not specific to a particular industry or vocation. There is no consensus on what these are specifically, but they generally include skills such as interpersonal communication, problem solving and teamwork skills. The terms generic skills and employability skills are often used interchangeably; however, for the purposes of this report, when the term employability skills is used it will be for the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) and the Business Council of Australia's interpretation of employability skills. These skills will be discussed in more detail later in this section.
- 7.8 Some students in the broader VET system have indicated that they want broad skills that would allow them to change jobs, but others want to learn only skills that are relevant to the industry in which they want to work. This suggests that some students are often narrowly focussed upon the more technical skills and do not appreciate how generic workplace skills can support the development of technical job-specific skills.⁴ The implication for schools is that a greater focus on generic skills is warranted, to provide the building blocks for later specialisation.
- 7.9 The development of generic skills within the National Training Framework (NTF) is not explicit, and it has been recommended that generic skills need to be made more explicit in Training Packages.⁵ Within the range of Certificate I and II qualifications there is considerable overlap in some of the competencies which would be considered generic, and efforts are currently being made to introduce a flexible Certificate I within the NTF.⁶

Generic skills

- 7.10 In evidence to the Committee it appeared that activity that sits outside the National Training Framework, such as generic work-related learning experiences, both within the school and through work placements and other experience-based opportunities, is less well developed and implemented than VET programs within the NTF. These non-NTF activities enable students to develop, for example, enterprise skills and

3 Kearns, P., 2001, *Review of research: generic skills for the new economy*, NCVER, p. 2.

4 Callan, V, 2003, *Generic skills: Understanding vocational education and training teacher and student attitudes*, NCVER, p. 5.

5 Callan, V, 2003, *Generic skills: Understanding vocational education and training teacher and student attitudes*, NCVER, pp. 6-7.

6 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 23.

employability skills. In principle this should apply throughout all the years of schooling. There is much development work under way in this area, as discussed in Chapter 3, and the links between components are less formally defined. In addition, vocational preparation programs are available to assist disadvantaged and 'at risk' groups to access pathways for further study and work readiness for employment.⁷ (See Figure 2.3 to review components of a framework for vocational education.)

7.11 All these groupings of programs to some extent provide generic skills (such as employability skills and life skills). Therefore, part of the debate is based on the extent to which the schooling sector should be focussed on the provision of explicitly industry focussed technical skills, compared to such generic skills.

7.12 The Western Australian Department of Education and Training provided a view on the primary purpose of vocational education in schools: a focus on giving students generic workplace skills as opposed to getting jobs as a result of VET in Schools.⁸ Generic skills equip students to make a successful transition from education to the world of work. Conversely, the other stated purpose of vocational education is to meet industry skill requirements for employment. This is an acceptance of industry as a client group that was not acknowledged so readily twenty years ago. That acceptance of an industry focus relates to:

the blurring of the boundaries between the old traditional liberal view of education and the emergence of a more sophisticated technical education.⁹

7.13 The Committee notes that ideally, if there were sufficient resources and time to allow greater flexibility multiple objectives could be met. However, even with improved funding and administrative arrangements, a degree of prioritisation will still be required. Up to 2003 the major focus was on the adoption of post-secondary schooling vocational education and training models into the secondary school system. As an educational and integrated process many school systems embedded the competencies to improve the integration of the work into available curricula. However, criticism of this approach by industry and the lack of adherence to a competency based training and assessment approach has resulted in industry advocating 'stand-alone' delivery.

7 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 20, Southside Education Centre, *Submission No. 23*, pp. 1-7.

8 Mr Malcolm Goff, Acting Deputy-Director General, Training, WA Department of Education and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 909.

9 Mr Gregory Robson, Executive Director, Teaching and Learning (Curriculum Policy and Support), WA Department of Education and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 915.

- 7.14 Some education sectors feel more comfortable with the focus on generic workplace skills rather than the provision of specific industry training. For instance, the Catholic Education Office in Western Australia indicated that specific VET needs to be juxtaposed against a broad general education. It cited examples of the encouragement of trainees into programs which were quite inappropriate for their age. The Catholic Education Office has the belief that a wider general education, employability skills and work readiness are just as important as quality VET.¹⁰
- 7.15 It has been suggested that generic programs should be recommended up to Year 10 and specialisations with industry-specific programs be supported in Years 11 and 12. Where greater specialisation, for example to Certificate III level, is sought, community and industry demand needs to be considered. The content of the certificates has also evolved and the higher standards required are creating concerns for some staff.

Level of qualification

- 7.16 Associated with the discussion of generic and industry-specific curriculum there has also been debate about the suitability of offering Certificate III programs as part of school-based VET:

Despite fears from some employers and RTOs (including TAFE institutes) that there is an agenda for schools to assume responsibility for a wide range of VET at above Certificate level II, the evidence is that the overwhelming majority of VET offered in schools is at Certificate I and Certificate II levels...

In the ACT some teachers interviewed for the AEU project reported that with each revision some National Training Packages are becoming increasingly complex and demanding at Certificate I and II levels. As they do so, their purpose within the school curriculum changes and the opportunity for students to gain a certificate level qualification at school recedes. A co-ordinator interviewed in Tasmania commented that Certificates I and II were once entry-level courses but that the bar had been raised by the National Training Packages and that this was a problem for schools and some students.¹¹

- 7.17 This suggests that Certificates I and II are considered appropriate level qualifications for schools, and that the certificates meet the needs of students without becoming increasingly complex. For higher certificate

10 Mr John Nelson, Post-Compulsory Education Consultant, Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 945.

11 AEU, *Submission No. 72*, p. 20.

levels, the teaching and resource expertise required is more specialised and carries associated costs. Successful programs are run at Certificate III levels but this is usually in partnership with other providers.¹² The Committee suggests this occur in conjunction with local industry to demonstrate that they can support the work placement requirements and contribute to infrastructure costs.

- 7.18 The Committee considers that there needs to be further discussion to resolve 'vocational equivalence' in the senior secondary certificate. The stated aim of educational authorities is for students to complete Year 12 or its vocational equivalent. The Year 12 Certificate is considered to be equivalent in its demands to a Certificate III level qualification.¹³ Most VET qualifications undertaken at schools are at Certificate II level. VET programs undertaken by school students thus do not necessarily provide an equivalent alternative to mainstream upper secondary studies if they do not receive their senior secondary certificate. However, comments to the Committee suggested that some Certificate II courses are as challenging as senior secondary certificate courses.

Employability skills

- 7.19 In addition to the generic skills, considerable discussion in this report has focussed on the set of skills described as employability skills. Employability skills are defined as 'skills required not only to gain employment but also to progress within an enterprise so as to achieve one's potential and contribute successfully to enterprise strategic directions'. Employability skills have been given recent prominence with the publication in 2002 of *The Employability Skills for the Future*, produced by the Business Council of Australia in collaboration with the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other peak industry associations, and jointly funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) and the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA).¹⁴
- 7.20 The employability skills build on the Mayer Key Competencies¹⁵ and have been influenced by the latest international research from the United

12 Western Australian Curriculum Council Secretariat, *Submission No. 65*, p. 7.

13 NCVER, *Submission No. 82*, p. 4.

14 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 26, ACCI, *Exhibit No. 63*, p. 1.

15 Mayer, E, 1992, *Putting Education to Work: The Key Competencies Report*, Melbourne, Australian Education Council and Ministers of Vocational Education, Employment and Training. The Mayer Key Competencies are: collecting, analysing and organising information; communicating ideas and information; planning and organising activities; working with others and in teams; using mathematical ideas and techniques; solving problems; and using technology.

Kingdom, Canada and the United States. The report presents an employer view of the employability skills necessary for Australian business, industry and employees to succeed. It proposes a framework of employability skills with the potential to link the range of activity in generic skills across the education, training, business and industry sectors. These skills are:

- communication skills that contribute to productive and harmonious relations between employees and customers;
- team work skills that contribute to productive working relationships and outcomes;
- problem solving skills that contribute to productive outcomes;
- initiative and enterprise skills that contribute to innovative outcomes;
- planning and organising skills that contribute to long-term and short-term strategic planning;
- self-management skills that contribute to employee satisfaction and growth; and
- learning skills that contribute to ongoing improvement and expansion in employee and company operations and outcomes; and technology skills that contribute to the execution of tasks.¹⁶

7.21 In addition to the skills outlined above, the report included a set of thirteen personal attributes that were specified as contributing to overall employability. These personal attributes include items such as loyalty, reliability, commonsense and a sense of humour. The response to the inclusion of personal attributes has been cited as problematical,¹⁷ with divergent views on whether they have a place in education and training programs.

7.22 ACCI indicated that further work is to be undertaken to investigate how employability skills might be developed, assessed, reported and universally recognised. This will take into account the associated policy work in the schools, VET and youth sectors.¹⁸

7.23 The response by employers to the identification of employability skills has been reported to the Committee as positive, as it aids in the identification of industry needs. The vocational context provides a framework for the focus of teaching and learning programs in schools to improve the foundational communication skills of students, the capacity of young

16 ACCI, *Exhibit No. 63*, p. 7.

17 NSW Department of Education and Training, *Submission No. 94*, p. 32.

18 ACCI, *Submission No. 95*, p. 20, see also DEST, *Submission No. 75*, p. 36.

people to work in teams, and improving their capacity to solve problems in a range of contexts.¹⁹

- 7.24 The Committee notes that the value of these skills has been recognised by teachers for a long time in contributing not only to students' progress in academic subjects but also to their personal development generally. Teachers have been incorporating them into a range of general education courses for many years. The Committee does note, however, the further dimension to the value of these attributes in vocational education and as employability skills.

Incorporation of employability skills into school curriculum

- 7.25 Overwhelmingly, in the evidence to the Committee, stakeholder groups indicated that the greater specification of employability skills greatly benefits students in their post-school options.
- 7.26 For example, in Tasmania the articulation of the employability skills has assisted in developing a holistic approach to education and training.

The integration of VET within the College program allows us to include the education of the whole person with the specific training associated with the VET program. The key competencies, which are part of every TCE (*Tasmanian Certificate of Education*) program can be directly mapped onto the employability skills identified by the Business Council of Australia, while the development of the personal attributes identified as being important for employment is central to the educational goals of the College.²⁰

- 7.27 Similarly, in Western Australia employability skills is an area that has been built specifically into the curriculum framework.²¹ From an industry view, the Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce (VACC) is supportive of the mix of the general and vocational curricula as it assists with the development of competency that allows the transition from school to work. Whilst students are undergoing workplace training they are learning some employability skills, which the VACC describes as essential for any vocation that students choose to enter in the future.²²

19 Mr Gregory Robson, Executive Director, Teaching and Learning (Curriculum Policy and Support), WA Department of Education and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 915.

20 Don College, *Submission No. 104*, p. 3.

21 Mrs Norma Jefferey, Chief Executive Officer, Curriculum Council of Western Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, Perth, 5 August 2003, p. 922.

22 Mrs Leyla Yilmaz, Industrial Relations Manager, VACC, *Transcript of Evidence*, 3 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1228.

- 7.28 The Construction Industry Training Board in South Australia suggested that a context for employability skills is required, with work placements giving students the opportunity to experience and understand the culture and working conditions of an industry. The South Australian system delivers a Certificate I in Employability Skills which includes a work placement component in construction, that provides the context for these skills.²³ The Australian Industry Group (Ai Group) agrees with the need for a context for learning through carefully designed vocational programs. A broader employability skills approach would also minimise the requirement for access to specific occupations.²⁴
- 7.29 The Smart Geelong Local Learning and Employment Network also identified that employers are seeking employees who can demonstrate a range of employability skills, only one of which is technical competence.²⁵

Generic competencies and employability skills in Training Packages²⁶

- 7.30 Research reported in a review of Training Packages strongly supports the strengthening and recognition of generic workplace skills, as well as employability skills that can be formally and informally developed in training and education, in the workplace and in a range of broader life activities. In terms of Training Package structure, employability skills are increasingly being embedded within units of competency.²⁷
- 7.31 These generic workplace and employability skills may provide a foundational link as a pathway through education and into employment. The generic skills are a common focus across the sectors, and may facilitate negotiation of the processes and outcomes of courses and programs. An ANTA review recently suggested that Training Packages should place equal emphasis on generic skills and performance outcomes.²⁸
- 7.32 For schools, meeting the diversity of student needs is vitally important. A broader stream of programs within the National Training Framework could be provided to improve the linkages with other training, including VET in Schools and School-based New Apprenticeships, and provide

23 Ms Catherine Carn, Entry Level Training Manager, Construction Industry Training Board, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, p. 1081.

24 Ai Group, *Submission No. 76*, p. 5.

25 Smart Geelong LLEN, *Submission No. 47*, p. 5.

26 The term 'skills' rather than 'competencies' was generally used in the inquiry, however the Committee acknowledges that skills, knowledge and attitudes are required for competence.

27 ANTA, 2003, *High Level Review of Training Packages: Current Realities of Training Packages, Summary of key themes emerging from Phase Two*, p. 15.

28 ANTA, 2003, *High Level Review of Training Packages: Phase 1 Report, An analysis of the current and future context in which Training Packages will need to operate*, p. 37.

pathways into other Training Package qualifications. ECEF indicates that this is a priority for ANTA:

Developing entry-level qualifications and pathways into Training Packages, including links to prevocational learning and vocational learning in schools is a priority for ANTA. The new approach is being based on developing a new class of flexible Certificate Ones incorporating competencies that may operate across a range of related industries that will focus on benchmark skills for employment. This approach will ensure all skills necessary for employment outcomes are explicit and available in the pool of units for Certificate 1, with the packaging guidelines providing a balance between the flexibility and the rigour necessary for achieving employment outcomes that enables training programs to cater for a wide diversity of young people.²⁹

- 7.33 The target group for generic workplace skills might more appropriately be students younger than the current VET industry Training Package focus. DEST reports that activities are being broadened to support the goal of providing students in the compulsory years of schooling, especially in Years 9-10, with programs of vocational learning that develop generic workplace skills and a knowledge and understanding of the world of work.³⁰
- 7.34 Other client groups that may benefit from the development of generic workplace skills certificates are at-risk school students. However, some teachers interviewed for the AEU VET in Schools project expressed concerns about the over-representation of 'low achieving/at-risk/special needs/behaviour problem' students in these subjects, fearing that they reinforced a view of VET as a low status option.³¹ While this view is understandable, the Committee believes that these courses do provide valuable, achievable options for students who might not be successful in more academic streams. The challenge is to ensure that the standard of VET courses is maintained in order to ensure industry and employer confidence in VET qualifications.
- 7.35 The Smart Geelong Local Learning and Employment Network group believes that there is a need for a policy that mandates vocational learning for all secondary school students from Year 7, and that the generic competencies or employability skills developed by Year 10 be acknowledged in Year 10 reports. It also recommended that all intending

29 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 23.

30 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, p. 37.

31 AEU, *Submission No. 72*, p. 40.

school leavers have job seeking skills, including resume writing and interview skills and ready-for-work ethics (attitude and discipline).³²

- 7.36 Dr Erica Smith, a national researcher on vocational education and training, indicated that there is a need for both generic skills development and industry-specific VET programs. She suggested that there needs to be support for students who are not doing VET programs, to help them develop employability skills. Within the VET programs it is expected that those key competencies are developed. The high increase in demand for specific VET programs shows that some students are clear about their career interests and want to get started on that path.³³
- 7.37 The Committee agrees there is a strong case for the development of a Certificate I in generic workplace or employability skills to be taken by all students. For those interested in particular industry skills the pathway would then lead to specific vocational education and training through Training Packages. This needs to be supported by non-National Training Framework activity.
- 7.38 This approach then provides support for training in specific industry areas at higher levels of qualification.

Recommendation 24

The Committee recommends that enterprise and employability skills be made a higher priority and developed through a range of strategies across the curriculum in addition to the VET in Schools pathway, to maximise the effectiveness of vocational education in preparing students for post-school options.

Skill needs and shortages in established, new and emerging industries

- 7.39 Discussion of generic and technical skills and the emphasis schools should give to them leads to a consideration of the preparation of students for new and emerging industries, and addressing skill shortages. By way of introduction, ACCI suggested that rather than schools attempting to focus their limited resources on new and emerging industries, more is to be

32 Smart Geelong LLEN, *Submission No. 47*, p. 5.

33 Dr Erica Smith, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 July 2003, Junee, NSW, p. 760.

gained by schools concentrating on delivering quality general education offerings, career support and targeted vocational learning opportunities.³⁴ The Committee has some sympathy with this view.

- 7.40 A range of views was presented to the Committee on the provision of VET programs to address specific skill shortages. These views also relate to the discussion of generic workplace skills and specialist technical skills. The Committee supports the view that industry-specific skills are appropriate for development in senior secondary school courses. Therefore, the targeting of future programs should respond more to identified skill shortages in addition to student interest and teacher availability as it does now. This then raises issues discussed elsewhere in this report, such as resourcing and teacher training.
- 7.41 A key point was made by the Ai Group to emphasise the changing nature of work:
- Educators need to recognise the constantly changing skill requirements of industry. What may be relevant to an enterprise's skill needs today may have no bearing on that same enterprises skill needs in five years time. There is no point in providing learning opportunities to young people if the outcomes of these learning opportunities are not relevant to the workplace by the time the young person makes the transition from school to work.³⁵
- 7.42 This contrasts with the view by others, that vocational education programs should be targeted to skill shortages. Part of the answer rests in the identification of skills that will be required broadly across industry and in industry areas in the 21st century.
- 7.43 The Committee is conscious that consideration of these issues goes to the heart of what many have seen as the fundamental purpose of education, and that allowing curriculum to be significantly influenced by trade and industry considerations can have an increasingly constrictive effect on general education. However, the Committee is also conscious that with the increasingly diverse nature of the school population and the increasingly complex demands of the economy, a balance between traditional notions of liberal education and practical preparation for post-school pathways has to be struck.
- 7.44 The Northern Territory Chamber of Commerce and Industry expressed the view that VET in Schools needs to be targeted to real local job opportunities, skill shortages and future demand. New industries in the Territory are being developed in the defence, oil and gas, and

34 ACCI, *Submission No. 95*, p. 33.

35 Ai Group, *Submission No. 76*, p. 4.

manufacturing sectors. Technology is regarded as a major component of these developments.³⁶

- 7.45 Representatives from the Textile Clothing and Footwear Union indicated that one of the most important changes needed is to link vocational programs to actual skill shortages and industry needs. The Union questions the large number of participants in retail traineeships when it is questionable whether retail will be a future career for many. The mapping of students' later outcomes following VET in Schools programs would assist in identifying mismatches, and better addressing industry needs.³⁷
- 7.46 Following consultations with witnesses the Committee is concerned about high unemployment in regions where there are significant skill shortages. Examples were provided to the Committee in the automotive area,³⁸ the rural sector,³⁹ and meat processing industries.⁴⁰ Better ways to respond to this dual employment problem are urgently required. Skill shortages were also identified in tourism and hospitality in Alice Springs,⁴¹ engineering in Gladstone, Queensland,⁴² and in the electrical, electronics and energy industries nationwide.⁴³

Identifying and meeting skill shortages

- 7.47 Part of the challenge with advocating greater coordination of the delivery of VET programs with existing skill shortages is the identification of shortages. Training and preparing students to fill such positions is only part of the jigsaw. DEST indicates that the supply of qualified people does not always address skill shortages. It is a complex problem with little evidence to suggest that skills imbalances are the result of an inadequate training system.⁴⁴ ACCI reports that the continuing pressure of skill shortages is due to a complex range of labour market, education and training, employment practice and employee expectation issues. Mr Steve

36 NTCCI, *Submission No. 96*, p. 3.

37 Ms Andrea Maksimovic, Project Officer, TC & F Union of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 3 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1258.

38 VACC, *Submission No. 5*, p. 4.

39 Mr Geoff Bloom, Executive Director, Rural Skills Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 21 August 2003, Canberra, p. 1145.

40 National Meat Industry Training Advisory Council, *Submission No. 16*, p. 1.

41 Mrs Kathryn James-Walsham, Field Officer School Based Apprenticeships, Group Training Northern Territory, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 May 2003, Alice Springs, p. 623.

42 Mr Cameron Hoare, Manager, Technical Services and Engineering, NRG Gladstone Operating Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 April 2003, Gladstone, Qld, p. 428.

43 Mr Tony Palladino, Chief Executive Officer, EE-Oz Training Standard, *Transcript of Evidence*, 26 February 2003, Sydney, p. 133.

44 Mr Colin Walters, Group Manager, Vocational Education and Training Group, DEST, *Transcript of Evidence*, 26 June 2003, Canberra, p. 704.

Balzary, Director of Employment and Training at ACCI, commented that the labour market is more difficult to predict than skill shortages. The major shortages in this country have been largely unchanged, certainly for twelve years. Most of them are in the traditional trades, with teaching, doctors and nursing going in and out of the top ten.⁴⁵

National Industry Skills Initiative

- 7.48 The National Industry Skills Initiative (NISI) is trying to address the need to get young people into industries with skill shortages. The major thrust of NISI involves industry developing clear messages to young people about where possible employment opportunities lie.
- 7.49 Commencing in late 1999 a range of industry areas have been involved in identifying and implementing steps that industry and government can take to redress industry skill shortages. These have included: engineering (marine and aerospace), electrotechnology, retail motor, rural, food (commercial cookery), building and construction, retail, road freight transport, and emerging technologies.
- 7.50 The four main areas where NISI has made a significant contribution to addressing the current and future skill needs of industries participating in NISI are:
- research identifying the nature and extent of skill shortages;
 - the development of resources promoting careers in industries to potential new entrants;
 - improving employer awareness of the value of vocational education and training in their respective industries; and
 - improving relationships between government and industry in addressing current and future skill needs.⁴⁶
- 7.51 The industries currently participating in NISI have collectively received over \$10m in funding through various DEST programs to help address current and future skills needs in their sectors. This has included the Business Education Partnerships Advocates Programme (BEPA) and Industry Project Officer Programme (IPO). The focus of the BEPA Programme from 2000 to 2001 was to build partnerships between business and education authorities, particularly at the state and territory level. From 2001 the objective was to assist in the implementation of the New Framework for Vocational Education in Schools through enhancing

45 Mr Steve Balzary: Director, Employment and Training, ACCI, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 March 2003, Canberra, p. 217.

46 ACCI, *Submission No. 95*, pp. 21-22.

business input to education planning and encouraging businesses and education authorities to develop agreed principles and integrated activities for young people participating in enterprise and career activities.⁴⁷

- 7.52 Industry investment in programs to assist with addressing skill shortages is reported to be increasing with some industries taking greater responsibility.⁴⁸ The combined investment of industry and government as a partnership is essential. The Committee notes the substantial commitment that many employers make through supporting work placements. However, government and schools need greater support from industry, possibly through sponsorship arrangements, to improve the provision of vocational education.
- 7.53 The IPO program provided ACCI with funding to employ seven officers based with relevant industry associations. This encouraged implementing effective links between schools and industry at the national, state, territory and local levels, particularly in industry sectors experiencing skill shortages.⁴⁹ From July 2002, the Business and Industry School to Work Alliance (BISWA) has been building on previous programs. ACCI with the Ai Group, Rural Skills Australia and Group Training Australia are involved facilitating effective school to work transitions as part of the MCEETYA Framework for Vocational Education in Schools.⁵⁰
- 7.54 In response to a risk identification by ANTA, in determining priority areas for the development of VET in Schools and School-based New Apprenticeship programs, account will now be taken of national, regional and local skill shortages, industry needs and student demand.⁵¹ The Committee supports greater attention to industry skill shortages and is encouraged by these business education programs.
- 7.55 ECEF highlighted the need to ensure that a coordinated and strategic approach to VET in Schools is developed, that contributes to meeting skill shortages. This should include processes to ensure:
- planning for VET in Schools targets local, regional, state/territory and national skill shortages;

47 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, Appendix A, p. 70.

48 Ms Aurora Andruska, Group Manager, Vocational Education and Training Group, DEST, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 November 2003, Canberra, p. 1431.

49 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, Appendix A, p. 70.

50 ACCI, 2003, *Business and Industry School to Work Alliance*, <<http://www.asn.au/education.htm>>; DEST, *Exhibit 129*, Fact Sheet.

51 ANTA, 2003, *Attachment A-Action plan for Quality and VET in schools*, Key Issue No. 4, November 2003, p. 4.

- regional structures facilitate the linking of skills development with regional development and the promotion of a culture of enterprise;
- strategies for skill development builds upon networks between business, industry, schools, community and training providers;
- greater alignment between regional needs and the provision of VET in Schools at the local levels; and
- better understanding by schools of the training needs and industry trends at a local, regional, state/territory and national basis.⁵²

Recommendation 25

The Committee recommends that the National Industry Skills Initiative be evaluated for the purpose of increasing its effectiveness and breadth in attracting young people into industries experiencing skill shortages, and that any funding necessary for an expanded role be jointly met by government and the relevant industry bodies.

Regional models

- 7.56 The Committee was able to visit examples of this coordinated approach. Two models will be considered. One example of a regional partnership, provided to the Committee in Hobart, was an electrotechnology program with specialisations in renewable energy and engineering. In response to a skill shortage, the Hobart Education Business Training Partnership assisted the development of a partnership of schools and TAFE Tasmania with Hydro Tasmania. Students in all the schools and colleges can enrol through one college (Hobart College) to ensure that there is no duplication of resources, and to coordinate industry placements with Hydro Tasmania.⁵³
- 7.57 Examples of other good practice of responding to industry needs and meeting employment potential were demonstrated in North Melbourne. The need to identify skill shortages has been identified in areas of higher youth unemployment. Northland Secondary College in Melbourne identified that there were skill shortages in furnishing, automotive and engineering – all traditional trades. The school has sought funding to develop a skills centre that requires cross-sectoral support. A partnership

⁵² ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, pp. 63-64.

⁵³ Ms Elaine Brown, Committee Member, Hobart Education Business Training Partnership, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 October 2003, Hobart, p. 1410; and *Exhibit No. 122*.

between schools, TAFE, industry training boards, unions, chambers of commerce and industry has been brought together to form *Ntech*. About \$1 million from State, Commonwealth and private sources has been raised to build a new facility that is dedicated to furnishing, automotive, engineering and, in the future, food technology and electronics. *Ntech* is responding to the needs of northern Melbourne in the area of skill shortage.⁵⁴

- 7.58 In identifying appropriate models for coordination the Committee raised the question of whether the matching of needs between schools and employers should be industry or location based. If it were industry based then manufacturing, for example, would have similar programs across a state, and other programs would focus on the needs of the automotive industry or farming. On the other hand, the links could be location based, and industries could work together with schools in a region to focus the minds of students on potential local career options. The role of state Industry Training Advisory Boards would appear to be central in promoting greater school and state association links.
- 7.59 Representatives of *Ntech* reported that regional strategies have been found to be successful in country areas. In addition, there is also a need in urban areas for local solutions where small and medium sized companies are not so well represented by state and territory or national bodies. It was suggested that overall planning needs to be taken up by the manufacturing industry associations, which can model satellite components of their organisation with a similar structure to the local model developed in North Melbourne.⁵⁵ The model being developed in this example is one of schools linking with local educational and community partners and an interested industry sector to facilitate the schools' VET programs to address the whole issue of skill shortages affecting the region.
- 7.60 The Committee was impressed by the industry commitment in the example above and is aware of similar models in other states and territories. The Committee encourages industry associations to investigate the range of models, whether location or industry based, that would assist in addressing skill shortages through improved links with schools.

54 Ms Raffaella Galati-Brown, Principal, Northland Secondary College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 3 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1291.

55 Mr Noel Benton, Chairman, Northern Stainless Steel Skills Development Group, and Mr Daniel Knott, Community Industry Partnerships Facilitator, Northland Secondary College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 3 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1296.

Recommendation 26

The Committee recommends that DEST work with industry bodies to identify and project skill shortages, and that closer links be forged between business and industry and schools to address those shortages at a local, regional and national level.

At the national level this needs to be addressed by industry representatives and training bodies in conjunction with educational authorities.

**At the local and regional levels, the links between industry and schools should be strengthened by enhanced cluster coordinator positions.
(See Rec. 20)**

Skill shortages in traditional industries

- 7.61 The Committee was informed of the long standing issue of the perceptions of old and new industries, and their projected needs for skilled workers. New and emerging industries are often thought to be more exciting and innovative, with higher technology demands. More established industries have to try to counter this view. One example is the automotive industry, which is now a high technology field, but is still considered by many to be a dirty and noisy industry. Changing entrenched views to recruit more young people into the manufacturing and engineering trades is not easy.⁵⁶ School careers advisors, in conjunction with industry representatives, have an important role to play here.
- 7.62 A report released in 2002 by NCVET, *Evidence of Skill Shortages in the Engineering Trades*, confirmed that a shortage of skilled labour exists in the engineering sector. One suggestion from the report is that the number of apprentices and trainees who commence their training while still attending school should be increased. Additionally, retaining apprentices is also important to ensure that they complete their training.⁵⁷ The Engineering Employers' Association in South Australia (EEASA) believes that in the future, VET in Schools programs will be an important source of skilled workers, who will commence their interest and training in metals and engineering manufacturing skills in those programs, consistent with the NCVET recommendation. An Engineering Pathways program has

56 Mr Bert Evans, Chairman, NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, 25 February 2003, Sydney, p. 66.

57 Smith, A, 2002, *Evidence of Skill Shortages in the Engineering Trades*, NCVET, p. 33.

been operating since 1992 in partnership with the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Industry Training Advisory Board and the South Australian Government, as a way of increasing alternative pathways for students to gain knowledge of, and exposure to, career paths in engineering.

- 7.63 To meet the skill shortages, EEASA reports that there is a need for an increase in the number and training of technology teachers, greater flexibility in the timetabling of curriculum to allow for school-based apprenticeships, and stronger partnerships between schools and technology training providers with appropriate equipment and teaching resources.⁵⁸ The Committee has real concerns about the availability and adequacy of training for technology teachers and access to industry standard facilities to meet the demand for students to fill skill shortages.

Recommendation 27

The Committee recommends that the MCEETYA Taskforce on Teacher Quality and Educational Leadership (TQELT) pursue changes to teacher education programs to achieve a nationally consistent approach. This should include greater consideration of vocational education issues, including the need for:

- **technology based courses to have appropriate industry-standard facilities to train teachers.**

- 7.64 In the automotive industry Toyota Motor Corporation Australia recognised that they had a significant skill shortage: their sales were increasing; they were producing more vehicles; but they could not attract people into the work force to be automotive technicians. A similar situation was encountered by General Motors, Ford and Mitsubishi.⁵⁹ The Toyota T3 project was then developed as a solution providing a school based traineeship, a two-year program in automotive vehicle servicing resulting in a Certificate II. The target group is students going from Year 10 into Years 11 and 12. The students complete Year 12 and receive their Higher School Certificate. Part of the Certificate II is in vehicle

58 Engineering Employers Association, South Australia, *Submission No. 98*, pp. 2-3; see also DEST, 2003, *Review of Teaching and Teacher Education Final Report, Australia's Teachers: Australia's Future – Advancing Innovation, Science, Technology and Mathematics- Main Report*, p. 80.

59 Mr Kimble Fillingham, Member, TAFE Directors Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 20 March 2003, Canberra, pp. 197-198.

servicing, so they have a qualification which is licensed in New South Wales.

- 7.65 The program is now also available interstate involving Holden. It has proven very successful, with commitments by the automotive industry to employ the graduates of the program:

Now the national training for vehicle apprenticeships will change so that they will do a certificate II in vehicle servicing, then they will move on to a repair program and then they will move on to a diagnostic program. We have modernised the entire approach. It has brought the schools together. It could not have worked if we did not have a partnership between industry, TAFE and the schools sector, because the schools had to be prepared to have a structure which supported and released these young people for a day and a half a week.⁶⁰

- 7.66 The evidence received by the Committee leads it to the view that greater attention needs to be paid to addressing skill shortages in identified industry areas. Further, the development of generic workplace skills for all students would assist industries to develop job-specific skills more quickly. The MCEETYA Transition from School Taskforce has initiated a project to identify strategies that can be used to ensure that VET in Schools contributes to addressing skill shortages and meeting the needs of new and emerging industries.⁶¹ A more detailed inquiry conducted by the Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education References Committee, *Bridging the skills divide*, which reported in November 2003, examined skill shortages and future skill needs and highlighted the difficulties in determining skill shortages, predicting skill needs and providing a vocational education system to match the identified gaps.⁶²

- 7.67 The distinction between the workforce skills needs of traditional and new and emerging industries is not clear cut, as research on emerging industries has found.

Vocational education in emerging industries

- 7.68 In Australia, new industries are supported at the national level by the Commonwealth Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources (DITR). A definition that has been adopted by DITR states:

60 Mr Kimble Fillingham, Member, TAFE Directors Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 20 March 2003, Canberra, p. 199.

61 ANTA, *Submission No. 90*, p. 41.

62 Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education References Committee, 2003, *Bridging the skills divide*, pp. 38-40.

Emerging Industries are newly formed or re-formed industries that have been created by technological innovations, shifts in relative cost relationships, emergence of new customer needs, or other economic, sociological changes that elevate a new product or service to the level of a potentially viable business opportunity.⁶³

- 7.69 This definition suggests that technological changes are not the only changes that can lead to a new or high growth industry. Boundaries between emerging and traditional industries are not static, and innovations in process may lead to new opportunities in traditional industries.⁶⁴
- 7.70 Research work was undertaken in 2000 by the former Department of Industry, Science and Resources to identify what were considered to be emerging industries and the workforce skills needed to support them. Areas identified by DITR as new and emerging industries include: biotechnology, nanotechnology, medical products, pharmaceuticals, the space industry and aerospace, and bioinformatics. Emerging technology industries also include information technology, micro-electronics, telecommunication (including photonics), environmental management and materials technology.
- 7.71 The workforce skill needs identified as crucial for these industries are primarily scientific and technical skills, followed by business and management skills, then information technology skills. The blending of technical and business skills was seen as highly advantageous. Where skills gaps were identified they were primarily at the graduate and postgraduate level. Tradespeople were not expected to be in high demand in these emerging industry groups, except in microtechnology, photonics and those working in the agri/resource and manufacturing fields.⁶⁵ In other research on high technology start-up firms the minimum qualifications would be a VET Diploma at AQF 5 and 6 in the formative stages of the firms, and few companies would see a role for apprentices.⁶⁶
- 7.72 In 2001 ANTA funded NCVER to conduct research on the relationship of the VET sector and one section of the national innovation system, Cooperative Research Centres (CRCs). The report, *Going boldly into the*

63 Porter, M., 1980, *Competitive Strategy*, Free Press, cited on DITR website <www.industry.gov.au/content/controlfiles/display_details.cfm?ObjectID=E66A>.

64 Ferrier, F., Trood, C. and Whittingham, K., 2003, *Going boldly into the future: A VET journey into the national innovation system*, NCVER, p. 14.

65 DISR, 2000, *Skills need of emerging industries: A report of findings from a survey of Cooperative Research Centre to identify potential emerging industries and their associated workforce skills needs*. DISR, Emerging Industries Section, p. 1.

66 NCVER, 2001, *Going boldly into the future: Skills and Australian technology start up firms*, NCVER, Executive Summary, p. 5.

future: A VET journey into the national innovation system, found that the VET sector was not as active as it should be in making links with the CRC program. The work of CRCs can lead to innovations in industry. This could lead to areas of skills change or new skill development, potentially requiring VET involvement. The authors of the report comment that not all innovations will lead to changed or new skill requirements, and that some may be generic workplace skills common to several occupations or industries. In these cases specialist training may not be required. Other skills may be so specialized that they are beyond the scope of the current VET system and could be the responsibility of the university sector.⁶⁷

- 7.73 Anticipating skill needs is therefore highly specialized. If the numbers needed are small, no formal response from the education and training system is necessary. However, when many workers are required with new skills, better links with the VET system will be needed.⁶⁸

Photonics

- 7.74 One example where there are links between emerging industries and VET and involvement with the Cooperative Research Centre program, is the Australian photonics industry. Representatives told the Committee that the industry needed a workforce of which approximately half require university qualifications and the other half technical training to work in the field in roles such as laying optical fibres or in manufacturing components.⁶⁹
- 7.75 The broader VET system has been characterized as having insufficient links with emerging industries, and the linkage between schools and emerging industries is more diffuse. Concerted efforts by the photonics industry and NSW TAFE in the first instance have led to the development of better links and the production of curriculum for use across three jurisdictions, with the potential for greater expansion through online technologies. The box below provides a summary of the industry's links with education.
- 7.76 However, the process has been far from smooth, and the Photonics Institute considers that significant change needs to occur to enable

67 Ferrier, F, Trood, C and Whittingham, K, 2003, *Going boldly into the future: A VET journey into the national innovation system*, NCVER, pp. 10 and 15.

68 Ferrier, F, Trood, C and Whittingham, K, 2003, *Going boldly into the future: A VET journey into the national innovation system*, NCVER, p. 11.

69 Mr Lee Ridge, Chief Operating Officer, The Photonics Institute, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 June 2003, Canberra, p. 675. Photonics is the control, manipulation, transfer and storage of information using the fundamental particles of light. Photonics technology is used in telecommunication, defence and medical fields for diagnostic equipment.

emerging industries' skill requirements to be met. Timelines of five years for development and approval of AQF certificate courses were cited, and in order to accelerate the process trade-offs have been made such as gaining TAFE accreditation for the program but excluding it as yet from recognition for a Tertiary Entrance Rank. This could disadvantage students in the broader employment and education market, and these issues of development and recognition need to be addressed quickly.⁷⁰

The Photonics Institute

The Photonics Institute coordinates the education and training activities of the CRC. The partner universities and technical institutes provide technical, undergraduate and postgraduate education. They also offer mentoring and networks for young people, in addition to teaching and career resources.

Four TAFE qualifications have been accredited in photonics and photonics technology. Endorsement is being sought from the NSW Board of Studies for the Certificate II in Photonics to be studied by senior secondary students at TAFE as part of their Higher School Certificate in 2004. The Photonics Institute's approach to encourage students to participate in their industry involves strategies vertically integrated across the education sectors. These include:

- *From Fountains to Photonics*, a national awareness campaign designed by Questacon, Australia's National Science and Technology Centre, in partnership with Australian Photonics to inform and excite secondary students about the career opportunities in the expanding photonics industry. The program consists of a drama-based, high-tech multimedia show and teacher workshops. More than 50 per cent of students claim that they would consider a career in photonics after seeing the show;⁷¹
- Science Shows and e-summer schools for less advantaged students
- intensive workshops with high school students in the ACT, NSW and Victoria;
- development of senior high school physics curriculum;
- work with TAFE in NSW and ACT to develop and offer Diploma/Advanced Diploma in Photonics;
- development of online content through collaboration with five universities;
- facilitation of new degrees; and
- support for the professional development of TAFE teachers.⁷²

7.77 The submission from the Photonics Institute states that:

The vast majority of training packages and VET delivered in Australia are designed to meet the needs of mature industries and

70 Photonics Institute, *Submission No. 100*, pp. 4, 9.

71 Professor Graham Durant, Director, Questacon, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 June 2003, Canberra, p. 675.

72 Photonics Institute, *Submission No. 100*, pp. 3-4.

existing technologies and industrial practices ... Scarce VET funding is used to support established and traditional industry sectors, and is generally not made available to support emerging high growth industries. This becomes a serious structural barrier to the development and delivery of training in these areas.⁷³

- 7.78 In addition, the equipment investment costs are substantial, and the setup of clean room environments is necessary to give students a realistic view of the industry. The skills of setting up clean rooms would also be transferable to the biotechnology industry.⁷⁴ The Committee notes that the costs of VET involvement in such high technology industries is substantial and that it could not be considered as a broad offering across all jurisdictions. However, there is a case for specialisation.
- 7.79 The approach of the Institute is supported by the Committee as a generic model that could be used by other industries at a similar stage of development. Features of best practice identified for industry in the *Going Boldly* study include:
- involving VET at a time that maximizes the capability of VET to support the industry but early enough to allow course development and accreditation;
 - supporting the quick flow of new knowledge and practice into VET by openly encouraging VET staff to interact with the industry; and
 - structured agreements with defined responsibilities for the VET sector and if a CRC, with the Centre.
- 7.80 The VET partner would:
- need to recognize that there would be a future return on investment;
 - provide support for staff to interact with industry and provide single point of contact; and
 - take responsibility to address the complexity of VET systems and link schools with industry.⁷⁵
- 7.81 Other recommendations by the Photonics Institute include:
- reinforcing awareness raising with resources for students, for parents and teachers;

73 Photonics Institute, *Submission No. 100*, pp. 7-8.

74 Mr Lee Ridge, Chief Operating Officer, The Photonics Institute, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 June 2003, Canberra, p. 675.

75 Ferrier, F., Trood, C. and Whittingham, K., 2003, *Going boldly into the future: A VET journey into the national innovation system*, NCVER, p. 87.

- increased bandwidth for schools and TAFE in regional areas to participate in the digital culture;
- providing resources for the professional development of teachers;
- the development of generic workplace skills for school students, including innovation as well as entrepreneurship and communication; and
- work experience in industry, not mandatory but simulated through appropriate industry designed facilities at TAFE or other providers, plus interest heightened through open days.⁷⁶

7.82 Mr Lee Ridge, Chief Operating Officer of the Photonics Institute, commented on the need for the development of core generic workplace skills by students. This should be accompanied by some centres of excellence to facilitate the development of teachers across the country and to encourage students with simulations through broadband technology, allowing access to other regional centres.⁷⁷

Other emerging industries

7.83 As noted, future employment prospects are considered to be expanding in a range of emerging industries. In Questacon's submission to the Review of Teaching and Teacher Education undertaken by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training, a current message being taken to schools is that:

the future economic wellbeing of the nation is linked to today's students choosing to take up further studies in science and technology so as to position themselves for career opportunities as well as business opportunities related to emerging fields of science and technology.⁷⁸

7.84 Other emerging industries associated with science and technology from which the Committee received evidence included biotechnology and electrotechnology as a renewable energy. The biotechnology industry also advocated a range of approaches to engage student interest in the industry.

76 Photonics Institute, *Submission No. 100*, pp. 9-10; and Mr Lee Ridge, Chief Operating Officer, The Photonics Institute, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 June 2003, Canberra, p. 684.

77 Mr Lee Ridge, Chief Operating Officer, The Photonics Institute, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 June 2003, Canberra, pp. 683–684.

78 Questacon, *The Review of Teaching and Teacher Education*, Submission No. 108 undertaken by DEST, p. 10.

- 7.85 As discussed in relation to the photonics industry, coordinated strategies for providing information and further support appear to be an effective way to encourage students to become involved in other emerging industries such as biotechnology. The Gene Technology Access Centre (GTAC) based in Melbourne aims to encourage scientific literacy and enthuse students to consider careers in science.⁷⁹ Additionally GTAC is involved in pre-service education for teachers to provide basic skills in DNA manipulation tasks. Year 9 to 12 students work alongside research scientists to develop partnerships between the secondary, tertiary and research sectors in Victoria and hopefully across Australia.
- 7.86 The biotechnology industry represented by AusBiotech also supported greater partnership between industry, academia and schools to work with teachers and students. AusBiotech estimates that 20-30 per cent of positions in biotechnology would be in non-science fields to support the development of the industry, such as in IT, marketing, sales, journalism, administration and finance.⁸⁰
- 7.87 The Committee notes the future economic importance of these industries and the need for appropriately skilled workers, and considers that the key to encouraging students into them is student, teacher and parental awareness of career opportunities, supported by core general education, and employability skills.

In review

- 7.88 The Committee notes the efforts that have been introduced by governments and industry to address current skill shortages and anticipated new employment markets. However, although the accuracy of predictive labour market information varies, strategies need to be developed to support students through the volatility of economic cycles. The dilemma addressed in the preceding section is: What is the best way to prepare young people for post-school pathways? Is it best to focus on generic workplace skills or focus on industry-specific qualifications? The Committee supports the greater focus on, and development of, generic workplace or employability skills as a substantial base for all students on which further industry, occupation or job-specific skills can be built.
- 7.89 Addressing skill shortages at a regional or state level, supported by national skills initiatives, would appear to be most effective. The

79 Mr Brian Stevenson, Program Manager, Gene Technology Access Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 3 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1259.

80 Dr Tony Coulepis, Executive Director, AusBiotech Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 3 September 2003, Melbourne, pp. 1262-1266.

importance of the support of the community and industries represented by local employers is crucial. Industries with concerns about skill shortages need to take the initiative, supported by education providers, to develop effective methods to improve the image of their industry and to encourage VET in Schools.

- 7.90 Emerging industries have specific requirements that need to be addressed by the current VET system in relation to the long development time for the introduction of Training Packages. Greater links between industry and teachers to provide greater access for professional development opportunities are required.
- 7.91 Part of the challenge is to encourage all involved to consider the full range of opportunities for young people in traditional and emerging industries, and to address the perception that traditional trades and industries do not have good opportunities. This requires a concerted joint approach between school careers advisors, industry and government.

Recommendation 28

The Committee recommends that ANTA receive additional funding to facilitate the development of qualifications and industry links in new and emerging industries, and to better reflect the growing numbers of students undertaking VET in Schools courses.

University, VET and employment

- 7.92 Another area of discussion which reflects differing stakeholder views centres on the outcomes of the education process to assist young people in their transition from school to work. Considerable comment was made to the Committee about the need for raising the profile of vocational education and related occupations in comparison to university achievements. Some in the school community are critical of the role of industry in determining school outcomes. Others were resentful of the redistribution of stretched funds from general education programs into vocational education, even though the benefits are recognised.⁸¹
- 7.93 Outcome data on education and employment following participation in VET in Schools is not nationally available. This is an area requiring urgent

81 Dr Robert Steadman, *Submission No. 46*, p. 2; Temora High School, *Exhibit No. 93*, p. 1; AEU, *Submission No. 72*, p. 42.

attention. A nationally consistent approach to data collection is required.⁸² Victorian information indicates that there were improved rates of employment and further education participation for students in Victoria who had participated in VET in Schools.⁸³

- 7.94 The perceived lower status and reduced employability of vocational education qualifications was widely reported to the Committee. The wider distribution of available research on outcomes would assist in ensuring that the pathways chosen by young people in consultation with advisors in the school, community and at home are most suited to their needs.
- 7.95 Unfortunately, the fixation on university is often matched with a devaluing of VET programs. As discussed earlier in the report, a key driver behind what schools offer is student demand. The DEST submission indicates that through the work the Commonwealth is undertaking with business and industry in relation to skill shortages, it is evident that greater promotion of industry, trades and technical options to young people is needed. For some industries this is critical to ensure that young people have a contemporary understanding of the nature of work in particular industries and to dispel common misconceptions. Additionally, industry also has a role to play in marketing itself in order to generate the student demand needed to make VET in Schools in new and emerging industries and more traditional industries, including those experiencing skill shortages, viable options for schools and other providers.⁸⁴
- 7.96 Given the importance of both university and vocational education to Australia's economic growth and prosperity, industry groups and witnesses expressed the view that it is unacceptable that vocational education be devalued in comparison to university preparation. This reinforces the perception that to be successful one must hold or be studying the high value university entrance subjects. In evidence to the Committee an overzealousness on the part of government was suggested:
- unfortunately university education has been oversold by policy makers to many young people not suited to this form of education.⁸⁵
- 7.97 This has the consequence of suggesting that the 70 per cent of young people who do not undertake university study from school and are

82 NCVER, *Exhibit No. 22*, pp. 26, 27; DEST, *Submission No. 75*, p. 63.

83 Polesol, J & Teese, R, 2002, *Transitions from the VET in Schools Program the 2000 Year 12 cohort*. July 2002, Department of Education and Training, the Educational Outcomes Research Unit, University of Melbourne, p. 20.

84 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, p. 27.

85 Dr Ian Cornford, *Submission No. 67*, p. 5.

involved in vocational education are low achievers or are pursuing a second rate option. It has been suggested that applying for TAFE programs is seen as an insurance policy rather than being a positive choice.⁸⁶

- 7.98 The Australian Industry Group argued that this perception must be dispelled if vocational education is to become a valued option within the senior schooling curriculum. Employers facing current skill shortages are looking to the students coming from the school sector as the future employees upon which business competitiveness, productivity and growth can be built. This future should not be undermined by any artificial devaluing of vocational education.⁸⁷
- 7.99 A significant challenge reported is the difficulty in changing the image of manufacturing. The rural sector faces similar challenges. The Ai Group has been working with the Commonwealth through the National Industry Skills Initiative to develop a range of marketing materials. This includes a zoom CD-ROM which looks at new manufacturing in a high-technology sense, a web site that mirrors that compact disc and a range of printed materials which have been distributed to all high schools, libraries and Centrelink offices in Australia over the last two years, plus 5000 copies to Ai Group members as an aid for industry nights at schools. For example, Ai Group is currently producing materials for the aviation sector, as the average age of aviation technicians is around fifty and it takes seven years to train one.
- 7.100 Mr Stephen Ghost stated that there is a need to produce information that shows the true story about an industry. The effectiveness of that information also relies on how school teachers are prepared and their awareness of various industries. Many career choices are based on peer pressure, and how parents perceive an industry and their preferences for their children. These perceptions, particularly about manufacturing and many of the traditional trades, are not always accurate. It is a difficult issue, so multiple fronts are required, dealing with careers counsellors, with parents at careers nights and with young people in a variety of ways.⁸⁸
- 7.101 Suggestions have been made to improve the perception of VET broadly and VET in Schools.⁸⁹ The Queensland Government recommends that the

86 Cited in Teese, R, 2000, *Post Compulsory education and training: some recent research findings and their policy implications*. The Australian Educational Researcher Vol 27, pp. 49-57.

87 Ai Group, *Submission No. 76*, p. 6.

88 Mr Stephen Ghost, General Manager, Education and Training, Ai Group, *Transcript of Evidence*, 25 February 2003, Sydney, p. 89.

89 Queensland Council of Parents and Citizens' Association, *Submission No. 80*, p. 7.

Commonwealth commission marketing strategies to improve community understanding of VET in Schools, including a particular focus on improving the perceptions of employers and parents of the value of VET in Schools programs.⁹⁰ As an example of one strategy in Victoria, *education times* included a range of personal stories of the diverse pathways that students are choosing, recognising that not all young people attend or want to attend university.⁹¹

VET as one component of vocational education

- 7.102 The need for vocational education programs to be available in a range of forms, to be provided at multiple certificate levels, and to cater for a range of audiences is crucial to ensure that there is a skilled workforce across the broad range of industries. However, one of the challenges for greater promotion of the benefits of vocational education is the differing names and programs that operate around Australia. The Victorian EPIC Industry Training Board pointed to confusion over nomenclature in the range of programs in Victoria and stated that industry stakeholders in other states and territories face similar variations.⁹²
- 7.103 The Committee believes that developing consistent terminology would aid the community's understanding of vocational education as a key step in developing a common language to market vocational education and specifically VET in Schools. One of the challenges for the Committee in completing this report has been that most of the material has focussed on VET in Schools to the detriment of being able to provide a more holistic view of other aspects such as enterprise education and career development. The important role of teachers and specialists in providing a broader perspective on vocational education must be enhanced.
- 7.104 A key role has been identified for career advisers in raising the awareness of teachers, students and parents of the range of industries and opportunities that vocational education and training can provide. The fact that VET occurs in a broader context has been identified, one witness stating that:

vocational education and training ... offers one input. It offers that vocational skills training, it offers that experience in the workplace, but there is so much more that needs to be done with students, as we know from all the MCEETYA reports and the

90 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 93*, p. 21.

91 Victorian Department of Education and Training, 12 June 2003, *On Track unveils countless pathways*, *education times*, Vol 11, No. 9, pp. 1, 8-9.

92 Victorian Electrotechnology, Printing, Information Technology and Communications (EPIC) Industry Training Board, *Submission No. 13*, p. 8.

research that has been done into the employability skills and enterprising capabilities and attributes that we would like to see in our students and in our workplaces.⁹³

- 7.105 The next chapter will look in more depth at career development to assist in providing a context for vocational education in schools.

Summary

- 7.106 Greater consistency in terminology would assist educators, industry and the community to discuss the benefits and outcomes of vocational education in schools and VET in Schools, as well as other post-school pathways. The Committee believes that there needs to be greater promotion of the advantages of VET qualifications in the community relative to the absence of post-school qualifications and relative to university qualifications.
- 7.107 Focussing on VET qualifications, the Committee notes that for levels above Certificate II, the necessary teaching and resource expertise is more specialised and carries additional costs. Successful programs at the Certificate III levels are usually run in partnership with other providers. The Committee believes that the priority focus of VET in Schools should be up to and including Certificate II. Further qualification levels should be provided in conjunction with local industry, requiring them to demonstrate that there are skill needs and they can support the work placement requirements and contribute to infrastructure costs.
- 7.108 The Committee notes that most of the focus of vocational education in schools has been placed on VET in Schools, and yet given the broad range of expectations of the school system, the Committee suggests that too much is trying to be achieved under the National Training Framework. There should be greater focus and consideration of other areas to foster students' development, such as broader vocational learning, career education and enterprise education. Funding to enable resourcing of these through the schooling sectors also needs to be addressed.
- 7.109 The development of generic workplace or employability skills should be a priority of vocational education in schools, and the Committee supports efforts to develop a generic workplace Certificate I. Industry-specific qualifications should further develop generic workplace skills for those students who pursue identified industry pathways. Closer ties between

93 Ms Cathy Moore, Careers Counsellor, Head of Enterprise and IT, Mater Dei College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 969.

skill shortages and student programs need to be developed. However, the difficulty of predicting future skill shortages is acknowledged as problematic. Emerging industries have urgent needs to develop qualifications in their speciality areas and to recruit students. Centres of excellence to develop links with industry, schools and the broader VET and university sector is a model that the Committee recommends.

- 7.110 The Committee believes that the key to encouraging students into these emerging and more traditional industries is student, teacher, parental and community awareness of career opportunities, supported by core general education, and employability skills. The greater involvement of industry at a state and territory and national level, supported by local employers, is crucial to developing the awareness of career opportunities.

8

Career education

There is no consistent or comprehensive system of ensuring the delivery of career advice to secondary school students. Further, there is no systematic integration of career advice into the school to work programs.¹

- 8.1 MCEETYA's New Framework for Vocational Education in Schools locates career education within vocational education as part of student support services (see Figure 2.2 in Chapter 2). This chapter examines the place of career education in schools and how it relates to general vocational education and also VET in Schools.

The need for career education

- 8.2 Career education is one element of the complex issue of young people's transition from school to employment, training or further education. In recent years there has been significant activity in addressing the range of issues associated with effective management of transitions between school and post-school destinations. The Committee notes that school-based career education must take place in the context of a wider framework of support and information services, not all of which can be adequately explored in this report. Some reference will be made to various programs but the focus of the chapter is on career education delivered within schools, particularly as it relates to and impacts on vocational education.

1 ACCI, *Submission No. 95*, p. 14.

- 8.3 The Committee notes the importance of career advice and career planning beyond the immediate post-school transition or the needs of the unemployed. In recent years there has been a growing recognition of the need for life-long learning and career development to meet the constantly changing needs of the labour market.
- 8.4 There are certainly shortcomings in the career services offered to school leavers. More broadly in Australia there is a general 'lack of strategic attention to encouraging and supporting individuals in planning their upskilling and in making career moves that not only respond to but take advantage of economic and technological change'.²
- 8.5 In 1998 the then MCEETYA National Careers Taskforce endorsed a set of Principles for Career Education and Advisory Services, which noted the key role of career education in helping people to become lifelong learners, to move between work and learning and to adapt to changing situations.³
- 8.6 In 1999 the Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century acknowledged the importance for students of career advice, Goal 1.5 stating that when students leave school they should:
- have employment related skills and an understanding of the work environment, career options and pathways as a foundation for, and positive attitudes towards, vocational education and training, further education, employment and life-long learning.⁴
- 8.7 The 2001 report of the Prime Minister's Youth Pathways Action Plan Taskforce, *footprints to the future*, stated that:
- For career education services to be of high quality, they need to be offered by people with appropriate skills/qualifications and be an integral part of the curriculum.⁵
- 8.8 In 2002, as part of a major international review of career information, guidance and counselling policies, an OECD review team visited Australia. To complement the OECD review the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) funded a mapping exercise of career services throughout Australia to assist in identifying gaps, opportunities and good practice models in the provision of career services. The OECD report and

2 OECD *Review of Career Guidance Policies*, Australia Country Note, 2002, p. 19, <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/17/47/1948341.pdf>>.

3 OECD *Review of Career Guidance Policies*, Australia's response to questionnaire, p. 19, <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/27/40/2494499.pdf>>.

4 MCEETYA, <<http://www.mceetya.edu.au/nationalgoals/natgoals.htm>>.

5 *footprints to the future*, Report from the Prime Minister's Youth Pathways Action Plan Taskforce 2001, p. 34, <<http://www.ecef.com.au/principals/ASTF3/docs/footprints.pdf>>.

the mapping exercise will inform the work of the MCEETYA Taskforce on Transition from School.⁶

- 8.9 At the July 2003 meeting of MCEETYA, Ministers agreed to promote the Career and Transition Services Framework developed by the MCEETYA Taskforce on Transition from School, as a guide for all public jurisdictions and the non-government sector. The Framework comprises ten elements, including Career Education and Career Information, Guidance and Counselling. While it acknowledges the wide range of informal and non-professional sources from which students will draw information, it states that:

Career and transition services ... should be delivered by professionally trained and committed staff able to access an extensive school-community network.⁷

- 8.10 The Framework argues that career education has an important role to play both within compulsory education, in relation to knowledge of the world of work, decision-making and transitions, and also within post-compulsory education. Significantly, in the context of this report's emphasis on the crucial importance of effective links between industry, the community and schools, the Framework notes that career information services should include the use of current industry based information and that transition strategies generally should involve a community partnerships approach.⁸
- 8.11 There are two distinct but closely related aspects to career education. The first is the broader teaching about careers and various career pathways, either as a stand-alone subject or embedded in other courses. The second is the one-to-one student-specific careers advice or counselling. Both are of vital importance.
- 8.12 The Committee believes that with both there are two issues to be addressed: the organisation of career education within the curriculum and the allocation of staff to manage and teach that program. In relation to the first of these issues, career education has to be seen as a legitimate and significant part of the school curriculum. In relation to the second it has to

6 DEST, *Submission No 75*, pp. 37, 74-75; *OECD Review of Career Guidance Policies*, Australia Country Note, 2002, <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/17/47/1948341.pdf>>; DEST mapping exercise, <<http://www.dest.gov.au/schools/careers/CareerservicesAustraliareport.pdf>>.

7 MCEETYA, *Career and Transitions Services Framework*, p. 2, <http://www.mceetya.edu.au/pdf/c_t_services.pdf>.

8 MCEETYA, *Career and Transitions Services Framework*, p. 4, <http://www.mceetya.edu.au/pdf/c_t_services.pdf>.

be taught by experienced and appropriately qualified teachers. Until both of these requirements are met there will continue to be a danger of career education being seen as something marginal to the curriculum, which can be taught by anyone with a gap in their timetable, usually resulting in inadequate assistance to the students.

8.13 One witness told the Committee that:

I cannot emphasise strongly enough that I think the key to improvement in all areas – not only for students studying VET but also for academic students who go straight on to tertiary education – is career education and guidance.⁹

8.14 Some witnesses argued that:

The time spent on career education should be at least the same as the time spent on any other curriculum area ... it will have ongoing benefits for the rest of their lives.¹⁰

8.15 In recent years a range of reports, frameworks and sets of principles have all implied a more deliberate school to career orientation for schools. It is clear that there is a broad general consensus that effective career education is a centrally important element of a successful transition to post-school pathways. What then is the state of career education in schools in 2003-2004?

The state of career education in schools

8.16 The main coordinating mechanism for career information and guidance services in Australia is MCEETYA. State and territory education departments play a significant role in funding, developing and managing career services in schools, with the Commonwealth largely funding career information resources.¹¹

8.17 In the context of a range of approaches in different jurisdictions the consistent message that the Committee received about career education in schools was that it was very much a poor cousin to the major curriculum areas. A witness in South Australia told the Committee that 'schools

9 Ms Gabrielle Power-West, Executive Officer – Post-Compulsory/Curriculum, Queensland Catholic Education Commission, *Transcript of Evidence*, 9 April 2003, Brisbane, p. 321.

10 Ms Cathy Moore, Careers Counsellor, Mater Dei College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 982.

11 DEST, *Career Services in Australia*, February 2002, p. 5, <<http://www.dest.gov.au/schools/careers/CareerservicesAustraliareport.pdf>>.

generally need to get a lot better at it'.¹² The following comment, from a witness in Western Australia, was typical:

They do not have a subject called 'career education'. The children have to fit in their career development and their attempts at educating themselves about a career and how to develop it. They have to fit that in on the fringes, around the side. It has a lower priority than beliefs and values and phys ed and anything else. It is just an ad hoc thing that happens to happen.¹³

8.18 State and territory policies vary considerably. According to the OECD review of career guidance policies they are generally weak:

the provision of career education programmes is still patchy and diffuse, in some schools is for some students rather than for all, and seems likely to be of more variable quality than most other areas of the curriculum.¹⁴

8.19 In practice, decisions about the provision of careers advice tend to be taken at the individual school level, where there is considerable flexibility in the resourcing and delivery of careers activity. The range of approaches in the different jurisdictions¹⁵ is evident in the following comparison:

- New South Wales has a strongly professionalised structure, with formal provision of a full-time equivalent careers adviser in each secondary school. These advisers are required to have a teaching qualification and some form of careers-related training. They are distinct from the school counsellors who focus on learning problems and personal welfare issues. Career education elements are also included in all subjects.
- In Queensland these two roles are effectively combined. Guidance officers cover careers advice and personal counselling. They are qualified in educational psychology, not career guidance. The ratio of guidance officers to students is approximately 1:1200 and they spend about one third of their time on careers advice.

12 Mr Paul Billows, Principal, Willunga High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 6 August 2003, Willunga, SA, p. 1014.

13 Ms Cathy Moore, Careers Counsellor, Mater Dei College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 982.

14 *OECD Review of Career Guidance Policies*, Australia Country Note, 2002, p. 16, <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/17/47/1948341.pdf>>.

15 Information on career education in the jurisdictions is drawn from state and territory government submissions, the websites of the various education departments, the Australia Country Note of the *OECD Review of Career Guidance Policies* and Australia's response to the OECD questionnaire. A more comprehensive overview of activity in each jurisdiction can be found in Chapter 4 of the 2002 DEST publication, *Career Services in Australia*, <<http://www.dest.gov.au/schools/careers/CareerservicesAustraliaireport.pdf>>.

- Victoria has a system of part-time careers advisers, on a flexible staffing ratio of between 0.2 and 0.8. Individual schools determine the staffing and resources allocated to career education.
 - Western Australia has no state policy in relation to the provision of career guidance; schools make their own decisions.
 - South Australian schools do not have careers advisers. They have student counsellors, some of whom may give careers advice.
 - In Tasmania schools must include a focus on career and work education in Studies of Society Environment (SOSE) units, and teachers are required to integrate the personal futures dimension of the Essential Learnings Framework across the curriculum.
 - In the Northern Territory career education programs are usually delivered by classroom teachers in SOSE. The recommended course of study is 40 hours in either Year 9 or 10. Each high school has a career counsellor position to be used for career counselling at least 50 per cent of the time.
- 8.20 In addition to these differences, the location of career education within the curriculum varies widely. It may be located within personal development courses, in SOSE programs or it could be integrated into a number of subjects across the curriculum.
- 8.21 In the absence of structured careers programs within state curricula, and given the flexibility available to individual schools, successful programs appear to require active support from the school principal and an appropriately trained specialist on the staff. Without these key elements it is difficult to provide an adequate program.
- 8.22 It should be noted that witnesses pointed to the range of terms used to describe staff delivering career education in schools, including careers teacher, careers adviser and careers counsellor. In the context of the delivery of information and advice on an individual basis 'careers adviser' is common. In the context of the delivery of career courses as part of the curriculum, and also in the context of giving individual advice, 'careers teacher' is also common.
- 8.23 A range of witnesses from different jurisdictions presented to the Committee a picture of careers teachers, often without any training, carrying that responsibility in addition to a substantial teaching load, sometimes being chosen for reasons quite unrelated to expertise or enthusiasm and in some cases accepting the role reluctantly. Many have great commitment and considerable expertise acquired on the job, but

confront difficulties of a kind not faced by their colleagues teaching mainstream subjects.¹⁶

- 8.24 The Department of Education Science and Training's 2002 report, *Career Services in Australia*, stated that:

While examples of creative practice and promising new initiatives are becoming far more widespread, there are still few assurances for students that they will have access to a reasonably consistent level or quality of career guidance. Students' access to services is dependent upon the State or Territory in which they live, or the particular school in which they are enrolled.¹⁷

- 8.25 The Australian Education Union (AEU) offered a similar perspective, telling the Committee that:

there is an enormous variation in terms of the quality that students are getting in different schools because people are not trained. Many people have come into these jobs out of interest and have developed enormous amounts of expertise over many years but do not necessarily have any training. I think training would help. Giving people adequate time to actually do the job would also help. Careers educators are quite right when they say careers teachers are often loaded up with a whole lot of other jobs and consequently do not have the necessary time to deliver the sorts of careers advice services that they would like to particular students.¹⁸

- 8.26 The Department of Education, Science and Training told the Committee that a key finding of the evaluation of the Career and Transitions pilot projects was that:

access to a dedicated career and transition adviser is really important to young people and their parents and teachers. It is quite clear.¹⁹

16 See for example, Mr Michael Harrison, Group Training NT, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 April 2003, Darwin, p. 538; Ms Meredith Peace, AEU, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1216. Similar views were expressed to the recent Senate inquiry into skills needs. See *Bridging the skills divide*, report of the Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education References Committee, November 2003, pp. 149-152.

17 DEST, *Career Services in Australia*, February 2002, p. 6, <<http://www.dest.gov.au/schools/careers/CareerservicesAustraliareport.pdf>>.

18 Ms Meredith Peace, Deputy Vice-President, Secondary Sector – Victorian Branch, AEU, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1216.

19 Ms Shelagh Whittleston, Branch Manager, Transitions Branch, DEST, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 November 2003, Canberra, p. 1428.

8.27 The need for students to have face to face experience with a trained careers adviser, whatever the information packs and online resources available, was emphasised in evidence to the Committee. Generally the preference was for that person to be a member of the school staff. In Queensland a school principal told the Committee that:

a key part in individualising pathways [is] having really good guidance support. Unfortunately, we do not have enough guidance resources in schools. At our school, for example, we have a four-day-a-week guidance service and most of that service is taken up with crisis counselling ... A small portion of it is taken up by career counselling ... I would estimate that at our school we would need three full-time guidance officers to really do the job of individual goal setting and career path planning with kids properly.

It really is a big issue. Yes, there are wonderful web sites such as mycareer.com and so on that have been developed—they are great—but career guidance still needs that human interaction. Human interaction is expensive but it is crucial. Some of these students may not have started this pathway except for that crucial interview with the guidance officer.²⁰

8.28 The report of the Prime Minister's Youth Pathways Action Plan Taskforce, *footprints to the future*, noted that career information and guidance in schools came in for considerable criticism in community consultations.²¹ While the Committee can understand these criticisms, members were impressed by the level of commitment to achieving positive outcomes for students shown by teachers in the face of a variety of obstacles.

8.29 The extent of that criticism reflects the pressing need to address the structural and resourcing issues which are preventing teachers from meeting students' needs more effectively. While the Committee acknowledges the advantages of individual schools having flexibility in resourcing and programming, it also notes the need for a minimum level of career education in all schools, mandated by the relevant curriculum authorities.

8.30 The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) told the Committee that:

20 Mr Raymond Johnston, Principal, Tannum Sands State High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 10 April 2003, Gladstone, Qld, p. 399.

21 *footprints to the future*, Report from the Prime Minister's Youth Pathways Action Plan Taskforce 2001, p. 32, <<http://www.ecef.com.au/principals/ASTF3/docs/footprints.pdf>>.

ACCI and member organisations consider that Australia should develop a consistent and comprehensive system of ensuring the delivery of quality careers information and advice to secondary school students across all school sectors (i.e. government, catholic and independent). Whilst it is acknowledged that this responsibility primarily rests with State/Territory governments, there is a role that the Commonwealth should play in facilitating the development of such a system through provision of products, development of quality standards and provision of resources for best practice and employer engagement.²²

- 8.31 In Victoria, individual schools determine the staffing and resources allocated to career education. The submission from the Victorian Government noted the curriculum framework within which career education might be placed and referred to a range of possible resources available to support careers teachers.²³ However, in response to a question from the Committee as to whether careers guidance in Victoria was adequate, the Committee was told:

No – that is the simple answer. In Victoria it is not mandated that there be careers positions in schools. Schools make that decision from their global budget. Most schools ... will have someone who is not full time. So it was not adequate before and once the VET coordination was thrown into the mix it became less adequate.²⁴

- 8.32 Careers teachers in Victoria spoke positively about the context in which their New South Wales colleagues operate, where not only is there one designated, full-time careers adviser in every school but there is also a mandated and well defined framework for careers education, to which every student has access ‘at the crucial levels of Year 9 and Year 10, rather than at the post-compulsory level’.²⁵

- 8.33 The Committee was told that in Western Australia, where there is no state policy:

The level of career education in schools has been predominantly left up to the principal of the school, as to what sort of emphasis ... to place on the benefit of a program such as career education in schools. Some government schools do it very well, some

22 ACCI, *Submission No. 95*, p. 14.

23 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 86*, pp. 18-19, 24.

24 Ms Julie Ryan, President, Career Education Association of Victoria, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1152.

25 Ms Bernadette Gigliotti, Career Education Association of Victoria, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1154.

government schools do not do it terribly well, and the same in the non-government system as well.²⁶

- 8.34 A member of CareerLink in Perth told the Committee that: 'As far as support and backup from the school are concerned, it is very ad hoc. It is potluck as to what happens.'²⁷
- 8.35 The Committee believes that career education should be a mandatory part of the core curriculum, taught by qualified careers teachers. Otherwise, as noted above, career education becomes too dependent on individuals such as the principal and the careers teacher at a particular time. Whether it is taught as a separate subject or embedded, for example in SOSE units, there should be a clearly defined part of the curriculum in Years 9-10, possibly with some introductory work in Year 8, which is devoted to career education.
- 8.36 This view is supported by the Youth Pathways Action Plan Taskforce and the MCEETYA Taskforce on Transition from School.²⁸
- 8.37 The relationship between VET in Schools, vocational education and careers is discussed below but it seems clear to the Committee that the growth in VET has been a two-edged sword for career education. On the one hand it has given new emphasis to the importance of effectively managing transitions from school, and often given career advice greater profile within schools, but on the other hand, in many cases, it has added a significant burden to already stretched careers advisers and changed the focus of their work away from careers guidance to the management of VET programs and associated work placements.
- 8.38 The Australian Education Union commented in its submission that:
- career, vocational and educational guidance services in schools have been strained severely in recent years as resources for these services have not kept pace with the expansion of vocational education.²⁹
- 8.39 The Committee is concerned, not only that the provision of career education is so inadequate and so inconsistent, both between jurisdictions and within jurisdictions, but that this situation has been recognised and allowed to continue for so long. In 1997 the Committee's predecessor

26 Mr David Carney, President, Career Education Association of Western Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 937.

27 Ms Cathy Moore, Careers Counsellor, Mater Dei College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 969.

28 See paragraphs 8.7 and 8.9.

29 AEU, *Submission No. 72*, p. 30.

reported on youth employment and made a number of observations on careers guidance. The following comment from that report is just as valid today:

many teachers are ill equipped for the careers guidance role ... It is a systemic problem and not the fault of individual teachers who may, without any specific training, find themselves the careers teacher simply because their teaching load allows time for it ... Typically there will be one careers teacher, who may or may not be full-time, for as many as 1,000 to 1,200 students.³⁰

8.40 In 1998 the Committee reported on the role of TAFE and again had a section on careers guidance in schools, stating that:

careers guidance in schools should be better resourced to enable properly qualified and equipped counsellors to provide comprehensive advice to students. Careers guidance must be regarded as a legitimate need and right for all secondary students.³¹

8.41 It should be noted that some of the issues identified in these earlier reports have been the subject of significant and very positive developments. As noted elsewhere in this report, the scope of vocational education, particularly VET, a subject of some concern to previous committees, has expanded very significantly in recent years. This has brought new pressures and hence the current inquiry. There also appears to be a more balanced approach to the advice being given about post-school opportunities other than university. However, the fundamental problems and needs of career education identified several years ago generally remain.

Career education within the curriculum

8.42 The Youth Pathways Action Plan Taskforce found that every young person should receive 'professional and on-going career and transition support beginning at Year 8'.³² This view was reflected in evidence received by the Committee, some of which has been referred to above. A key question that arises is the form that support should take.

30 House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training, *Youth Employment: A working solution*, 1997, p. 49.

31 House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training, *Today's training. Tomorrow's skills*, 1998, p. 59.

32 *footprints to the future*, report from the Prime Minister's Youth Pathways Action Plan Taskforce, 2001, p. 32, <<http://www.ecef.com.au/principals/ASTF3/docs/footprints.pdf>>.

- 8.43 Reference was made in Chapter 2 to confusion over terms and their meanings in relation to vocational education, vocational learning and vocational education and training (VET). This report adopts the MCEETYA 2002 usage for vocational learning, which includes elements such as general employment skills, career education and community and work based learning.
- 8.44 The impact of VET programs on career education is discussed below, but one impediment to the development of effective vocational learning programs, including career education, has been the growth of VET. The Career Education Association of Victoria noted in its submission:
- the distinct lack of understanding in schools about the difference between vocational learning and VET, often confusing the two and using VET provision to satisfy the needs of vocational learning for all students.
 - the inability of schools to offer vocational learning programs in the crucial Years 7 to 9, as all resources have been tagged for the post compulsory years. Little to no funding by the education systems for formal vocational learning programs in Year 9 and 10.³³
- 8.45 The first of these is a perception issue and the second is a resourcing issue, both of which must be addressed before significant progress can be made in giving career education its legitimate place in the general curriculum.
- 8.46 The perception that VET programs alone can deal with the career education needs of students does a disservice both to VET students and to those aiming at university study. VET students still need the broad vocational learning program, including career education, which goes beyond the specifics of a VET program and associated work placement, and so do other students, including those planning tertiary education.
- 8.47 All students need to be introduced to general concepts associated with employment, the world of work and career planning and to be encouraged to begin considering their post-school pathway earlier than the post-compulsory years. In evidence to the Committee the Career Education Association of Victoria stated that:
- We need to start much lower down in our school system. We are concentrating all our efforts at the post-secondary level, and very little is happening at that Year 7 to Year 10 level.³⁴

33 Career Education Association of Victoria, *Submission No. 50*, p. 3.

34 Ms Bernadette Gigliotti, Career Education Association of Victoria, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1150.

- 8.48 It is not the intention of the Committee to canvass in detail possible curriculum structures, but to make some general observations on career education within the curriculum and indicate some of the approaches being adopted.
- 8.49 A Queensland witness gave the example of a Career and Transition pilot at Shailer Park State High School, which has introduced a careers program in Years 8-12:

The school operates seven lines, and the seventh line, for every student from Years 8 to 12, is career guidance and education ... I cannot emphasise strongly enough that I think the key to improvement in all areas—not only for students studying VET but also for academic students who go straight on to tertiary education—is career education and guidance, because ... the drop-out rate at university is quite significant ... If we had better career guidance and education, we would not be wasting nearly as many resources in that area at tertiary level.³⁵

- 8.50 In South Australia the Futures Connect strategy, launched in April 2003, aims to bring together enterprise and vocational learning, vocational education and training in schools and career and transition services, to develop a Learning Plan, a Transition Portfolio and an Exit Map. A school principal told the Committee that:

as of next year, every single student from Years 8 to 12 ... will have individual career plans and transition portfolios that they will develop in consultation with both school staff and out-of-school personnel that really explores one to one the career directions of students and informs them and their family in terms of the range of options available to them.³⁶

- 8.51 In Tasmania the Committee was told of significant curriculum reform in recent years, which includes careers education integrated into the curriculum:

The essential learnings curriculum, which is now in place in every K to 10 school in Tasmania, has as part of it a personal futures dimension which all teachers in all schools are required to integrate into their curriculum in every subject they teach. The whole point of that is to get students and staff thinking in a

35 Ms Gabrielle Power-West, Executive Officer – Post-Compulsory/Curriculum, Queensland Catholic Education Commission, *Transcript of Evidence*, 9 April 2003, Brisbane, p. 321.

36 Mr Paul Billows, Principal, Willunga High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 6 August 2003, Willunga, SA, p. 1014.

coherent way, across all subject areas in high schools, about the career and pathway approach that needs to be taken.³⁷

- 8.52 New South Wales also has an integrated approach, with career education content included in all syllabuses under 'A statement of Career Education Outcomes Years 7-12' and 'Career Education Modules Years 7-10'. All NSW secondary schools also have careers advisers who provide career guidance and coordinate career related activities.
- 8.53 The OECD review noted that integration of career education programs into a range of subjects attracts particular problems, and that such strategies are 'an enhancement of, rather than a substitute for, custom built career education provision'.³⁸ The Committee believes that the approach adopted in NSW and Tasmania, especially with the provision of dedicated careers advisers to provide individual guidance in addition to curriculum based career education, can achieve significant outcomes in the absence of separate career education courses.
- 8.54 The enhancement of dedicated career education courses that teachers of other subjects can provide is very important. Subject teachers must not assume that the presence of a careers adviser in the school means that they have no role or responsibility for the issue. As one witness told the Committee:
- Career advisory services need to be a whole school activity, from running the career expos for the Year 9 and 10 students to subject teachers talking about this subject leading to that career. It cannot be left to one person.³⁹
- 8.55 Just as literacy across the curriculum and the concept that every teacher is a teacher of English has been largely accepted for some time, there needs to be an awareness that all teachers can have some input, albeit often informally, to students' awareness and consideration of careers issues. This often involves subject teachers working with the careers adviser to ensure that complementary, consistent and up to date information and advice is being provided to students.
- 8.56 The Committee notes that each of the approaches described above can go a long way towards meeting the career education needs of students in the

37 Mr Nicholas Evans, Director (Strategic Planning and Development), Tasmanian Department of Education, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 October 2003, Hobart, p. 1379.

38 *OECD Review of Career Guidance Policies*, Australia Country Note, 2002, p. 16, <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/17/47/1948341.pdf>>.

39 Ms Susan Hyde, District Superintendent, Central South West, SA Department of Education and Children's Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, p. 1041.

respective systems. The essential elements are a clearly defined structure and effective delivery of the program.

- 8.57 There is also a strong need for courses to include locally and regionally specific information about education and training options, possible career paths and employment opportunities. A feature of curriculum frameworks in recent years has been the flexibility they allow to schools to design programs which cater to the needs and interests of particular student groups. It is important that career education takes the same approach and is adapted to the circumstances of the local community while delivering a comprehensive general program.

Recommendation 29

The Committee recommends that careers education be a mandatory part of the core curriculum for the compulsory years of secondary schooling. It should include a clearly defined and structured program, distinct from VET programs.

Careers advice and VET

- 8.58 The development of VET in Schools, and general vocational learning programs, provide significant opportunities for career education, for developing the skills and competencies that will equip school leavers to manage their careers. However, as noted previously, careers advice is a distinct element of general vocational learning and is separate from, and embraces more than, VET. As one witness told the Committee:

very often we do not realise that vocational education and training is a subset of the overall career development of our students. It offers one input ... but there is so much more that needs to be done with students.⁴⁰

- 8.59 The two are separate and although there are obvious synergies and each can benefit from links between the two, it is crucial that careers advice is properly resourced and neither a 'poor cousin' to the VET program nor a

40 Ms Cathy Moore, Careers Counsellor, Mater Dei College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 969.

narrowly focussed activity within it. VET is just 'one element in broadening pathways and opportunities for young people'.⁴¹

- 8.60 The Committee was told that where VET has been really successful in schools 'it goes hand in hand with integrated career education and career guidance programs', but that generally 'the amount of career guidance available is minimal'.⁴² One witness told the Committee that:

one of the things that has been missing in the whole VET agenda is quality career education for students entering these types of programs ... structured programs in schools and professional career practitioners in schools to be able to help and guide these students.⁴³

- 8.61 Vocational programs can be delivered in a narrowly focussed way and fail to deliver broader career education. Where a school offers a limited range of vocational options, without an accompanying broad career education program, there is a danger of those options focussing students' views and restricting their awareness of other opportunities available to them.

- 8.62 The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry expressed the view that:

there is a gap in some schools between the information and advice offered by careers advisors and that being offered by teachers who deliver VET. There is a strong need to establish links between these two groups that will ensure that information delivered to students is consistent.⁴⁴

- 8.63 Paradoxically, the growth of VET in Schools has created the danger of career guidance becoming marginalised within broader guidance services such as student welfare, while it is assumed that the VET program deals with career issues. In its submission to the inquiry the Career Education Association of Victoria expressed the view that:

The downgrading of career guidance and work education programs, based on the mistaken view that VET programs solve the problem, contributes to many of our members' inability to empower young people for the future.

41 Ms Julie Ryan, President, Career Education Association of Victoria, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1149.

42 Mr Joe McCorley, Executive Director, and Ms Gabrielle Power-West, Queensland Catholic Education Commission, *Transcript of Evidence*, 9 April 2003, Brisbane, pp. 318, 321.

43 Mr David Carney, President, Career Education Association of Western Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 937.

44 ACCI, *Submission No. 95*, p. 14.

For example, the new national website, *myfuture.edu.au*, cannot be powerfully brought to young people in schools whilst there is no classroom time for formal career/work education. It is a highly sophisticated website that requires initial guidance and support to fully support and facilitate student access.⁴⁵

8.64 MCEETYA's New Framework for Vocational Education in Schools locates career education within vocational learning as part of student support services. The OECD review notes the 'risk that it will be subordinated to other aspects of the framework'.⁴⁶

8.65 There is, in fact, evidence that the growth of VET pathways in schools has had some negative effects on careers programs. Careers staff have often been expected to play significant roles in establishing and supporting VET courses and associated work placements, and inevitably this has meant that they have had less time for other careers activity. According to the Career Education Association of Victoria, 'One of the dilemmas that we face is that VET in Schools is seen as the answer to careers education and to vocational learning':

in most cases careers teachers in Victoria have taken on the role of VET in Schools coordinators ... When VET was first introduced, it was thrown into the careers basket, for good or for bad, so most of our members have taken on the role at some stage – and many continue to do so.

...

The careers areas in secondary schools are huge. They are far bigger than one person, yet in most schools you will find only one careers counsellor, who deals with not only the careers needs of young people but VET needs, work placement and work experience, while also teaching as part of their allotment. That is not an uncommon role for many of our members. That is really what they do.

...

There are some schools in my region where I know for a fact that the position is called 'careers' but it is VET coordination and no careers counselling goes on, because it is not possible in the time.⁴⁷

45 Career Education Association of Victoria, *Submission No. 50*, p. 4.

46 *OECD Review of Career Guidance Policies*, Australia Country Note, 2002, p. 16, <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/17/47/1948341.pdf>>.

47 Ms Bernadette Gigliotti and Ms Julie Ryan, Career Education Association of Victoria, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, pp. 1149-1152.

8.66 In Western Australia the Committee was told that:

The careers advisers in government schools have disappeared and have been replaced by VET coordinators. The VET coordinators are so busy coordinating work placements and following up students that they do not have time.

... lots of careers advisers all of a sudden realised that they were no longer a career adviser full time, they were now having to deal with a whole lot of VET issues; and the VET issues continue to grow and are enormous ... Probably the ideal in an ideal world is to have a full-time VET coordinator and a full-time career adviser and for the two to work fairly closely together.⁴⁸

8.67 The Committee is concerned that much of the undeniably good work being done with VET in Schools is being achieved at the expense of general vocational and career education, in many cases already inadequate and/or marginalised in schools, despite the best efforts of committed teachers.

8.68 On the other hand, the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) expressed concern that:

specialists in this area [career education] often have little knowledge of the VET sector. The training of teachers or others to take on this important role in counselling young people needs to focus more on the VET sector and work, not just on the university pathway.⁴⁹

8.69 Clearly there is a need for expertise in both areas and for effective connections between the two. The two roles should be complementary but separate and should be filled separately. A possible framework for schools might be a vocational learning course, managed by a senior member of staff such as the SOSE coordinator, within which the VET coordinator, the careers teacher and other members of staff work together to ensure a systematic and comprehensive approach to assisting young people to manage the transition process.

8.70 As always, a recurring theme in this chapter, appropriate training of staff lies at the heart of dealing effectively with the issue. This includes equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills to deliver careers advice which does not focus primarily on tertiary entrance or on VET or any other pathway but raises students' awareness of a wide range of possibilities.

48 Mr David Carney, President, Career Education Association of Western Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 941.

49 ANTA, *Submission No. 90*, p. 31.

- 8.71 A coordinated approach of this kind, clearly articulated, might also avoid the confusion often felt by employers and industry in relation to career education, work experience, vocational learning, VET and VET-related work placements.

Resourcing and support

- 8.72 As is clear from a number of comments in this chapter, the essential careers resource in any school is a professionally trained and qualified careers teacher, available to deliver career education with the support of the school principal and staff in a sympathetic school culture.

- 8.73 The current situation is clearly inadequate, both in terms of the place of career education in the curriculum and the availability of staffing. One careers teacher told the Committee:

we would like to see one full-time careers counsellor in each school. I have 600 VCE students, for example, and I teach ... It is impossible to see every young person.⁵⁰

- 8.74 The Committee believes that every secondary school should have a minimum of one qualified specialist careers teacher, who can provide a dedicated career education service within the school and work with the VET coordinator where necessary. In small schools the two roles might be combined but a structured career education program, distinct from VET programs, should be clearly defined.

Recommendation 30

The Committee recommends that all secondary schools have at least one full-time professional careers adviser, with appropriate specialist training, who can provide a dedicated career education service within the school and work with the VET coordinator.

- 8.75 Beyond the issue of human resources and timetabling, however, there is a range of other material available to support career education, and to assist individual students.

50 Ms Julie Ryan, President, Career Education Association of Victoria, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1153.

- 8.76 As noted earlier in this chapter, the Commonwealth funds a range of career information resources. Among other things, the Department of Education, Science and Training:
- project manages *myfuture.edu.au*. DEST provided over \$4.4 million to develop the system and contributes half of the recurrent annual funding of \$1.6 million;
 - collaborates with state, territory and non-government education authorities to introduce *The Real Game Series* in Australia;
 - funds a network of twelve Career Information Centres;
 - produces Job Guide which is distributed free of charge through schools for all Year 10 students; and
 - produces a range of career information booklets, leaflets and posters.⁵¹
- 8.77 *Myfuture* is an online career information system, *myfuture.edu.au*, agreed to by MCEETYA in 2000 and launched in July 2002. It is available free online to all Australians and provides lifelong support to career planning.⁵² In its first year it received 24 million hits and in the following six months a further 16 million.⁵³
- 8.78 *Myfuture* allows individuals to explore options and to make informed career decisions. Individuals are able to develop a career plan and research options for further study or training. They can access information on occupations, industries, starting a small business, relevant courses and training providers, financial support and more.
- 8.79 Since 1999 the Commonwealth has collaborated with state, territory and non-government education authorities to introduce *The Real Game Series* in Australia.⁵⁴ The series was developed in Canada and consists of six career education and life skills experiential programs. During 2000 more than 100 schools piloted *The Real Game*, designed for 12-14 year old students and adapted for use in Australia.
- 8.80 Two additional games in the series, for 10-12 year olds and 14-16 year olds were piloted in 2001 and two others, for 8-10 year olds and 16-18 year-olds,

51 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, p. 38.

52 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, p. 75.

53 Ms Shelagh Whittleston, Branch Manager, Transitions Branch, DEST, *Transcript of Evidence*, 26 June 2003, Canberra, p. 708; Mr Tony Greer, Group Manager, Indigenous and Transitions Group, DEST, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 November 2003, Canberra, p. 1427.

54 DEST, <<http://www.realgame.dest.gov.au/index.htm>>.

in 2003. According to DEST, feedback from students, teachers and parents has been overwhelmingly positive.⁵⁵

- 8.81 In Victoria, some schools are embedding career education into the 7-10 curriculum using *The Real Game Series*.⁵⁶ The Committee was told that in Western Australia, even though the then Department of Education chose not to be involved in the pilots, the series has had a very significant take-up.⁵⁷
- 8.82 The Department of Education, Science and Training told the Committee that the MCEETYA Taskforce on Transition from Schools was examining another Canadian product for possible adaptation to an Australian model. A draft prototype, the Australian Blueprint for Career Development, has been created and is an integrated national framework for career services and programs that specifies the competencies that all Australians need to build their careers. Chapter 8 focuses on schools.⁵⁸
- 8.83 The Blueprint:
- identifies the eleven career competencies that all Australians need to build their careers⁵⁹;
 - provides a process for planning, implementing, developing, redesigning and evaluating career programs and resources;
 - provides a common language for career development initiatives throughout the country; and
 - enables career resource producers to design products, programs and services that address specific competencies.
- 8.84 The Blueprint's broad scope means that it can be used by a range of career professionals: curriculum developers, teachers and adult educators, career resource producers, work experience coordinators and career and

55 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, pp. 75-76.

56 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 86*, p. 19.

57 Mr David Carney, President, Career Education Association of Western Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 942.

58 Ms Shelagh Whittleston, Branch Manager, Transitions Branch, DEST, *Transcript of Evidence*, 26 June 2003, Canberra, p. 709;

DEST <http://www.dest.gov.au/directory/publications/australian_blueprint.pdf>.

59 1. Build and maintain a positive self-image; 2. Interact positively and effectively with others; 3. Change and grow throughout life; 4. Participate in life-long learning supportive of career goals; 5. Locate and effectively use career information; 6. Understand the relationship between work, society and the economy; 7. Secure/create and maintain work; 8. Make career enhancing decisions; 9. Maintain balanced life and work roles; 10. Understand the changing nature of life and work roles; 11. Understand, engage in and manage the career building process. DEST, <http://www.dest.gov.au/directory/publications/australian_blueprint.pdf>, pp. 22-23.

employment counsellors. Witnesses spoke very positively about the Blueprint but also spoke of the need for appropriate support for teachers using it:

I think it is this resourcing that underpins the success of that model ... I think it is going to be very sad, for instance, if that careers blueprint comes in and people are not given the time and support to do it properly. If a poor old teacher gets it as just another load with no time to do it, something that could be really fantastic could fall a bit flat.⁶⁰

- 8.85 It is anticipated that the Taskforce will recommend to MCEETYA that the Blueprint be trialled. The Committee believes that the Blueprint has the potential to be a very valuable resource and that its further development is desirable.
- 8.86 There are many other resources available. For example, in relation to new and emerging industries, which are the focus of one of the terms of reference for this inquiry, the Queensland Department of Innovation and Information Economy has a careers website www.smartfuture.qld.gov.au offering advice on careers in new and emerging industries, especially in mathematics and technology fields.
- 8.87 The Committee reiterates, however, that whatever the range and value of online resources and other support material, it is clear that the opportunity for students to discuss career options face to face with a trained adviser, possibly on a regular basis over an extended period – which may be two or three years – is essential. According to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry:
- There are many products and resources in the marketplace today. However, these resources are produced by many organisations, with no coordination, little industry involvement and little or no delivery mechanisms.⁶¹
- 8.88 A trained and appropriately supported careers teacher can add value many times over to whatever resources students are accessing for themselves, and can provide the necessary coordination and deliver effective programs.
- 8.89 A further initiative funded by the Commonwealth is the Career and Transition (CAT) pilot program, introduced in 2002 as part of the response

60 Mr Bernie Fitzsimons, Senior Education Advisor, Catholic Education South Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, p. 1061.

61 ACCI, *Submission No. 95*, p. 14.

to the *footprints to the future* report. The twenty-three pilots across the country are designed to test and evaluate innovative ways of improving the quality of career information and advice to all young people aged 13 to 19, including students and those who have left school.

- 8.90 The pilots aim to enhance, complement and build upon existing career and transition services in local communities. One of the key components of the program is the funding of CAT advisers, who assist young people to explore a range of career options and to develop a range of pathways to achieve their goals. A primary responsibility of the CAT adviser is the development and implementation of Learning Pathways Plans. These plans are flexible documents which set out the goals of a young person and outline the strategies required to achieve these goals.⁶²
- 8.91 In practice there are some elements of the CAT pilots which overlap or are similar to some state and territory initiatives which have been developed in response to the Framework for Vocational Education in Schools. However, none of those initiatives are designed to cover the broad range of activities, services, and level of investigation covered under the CAT pilots. The pilots present an opportunity for the Commonwealth and the states and territories to work more closely together to avoid areas of duplication and maximise use of resources.⁶³
- 8.92 The Department of Education, Science and Training told the Committee in November 2003 that funding for the pilots would continue in 2004.⁶⁴ The Committee is encouraged by the preliminary evaluation of the pilots and welcomes the continuation of funding in 2004. The Committee hopes that successful outcomes of the program can be incorporated into long-term programs with secure recurrent funding.

Industry and other external providers

- 8.93 The MCEETYA Career and Transition Services Framework notes that career information, guidance and counselling will include the 'organised and systematic use of community members such as employers,' that it will 'include the use of current industry based information' and be 'provided in a variety of settings'.⁶⁵

62 DEST, <<http://www.dest.gov.au/schools/catspoems/cats.htm>>.

63 DEST, *Career Services in Australia*, February 2002, p. 32, <<http://www.dest.gov.au/schools/careers/CareerservicesAustraliareport.pdf>>.

64 Mr Tony Greer, Group Manager, Indigenous and Transitions Group, DEST, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 November 2003, Canberra, p. 1425.

65 MCEETYA, Career and Transition Services Framework, p. 4, <http://www.mceetya.edu.au/pdf/c_t_services.pdf>.

- 8.94 There is no doubt that career education programs can be enriched by the active involvement of industry, employers, parents and other stakeholders. Some witnesses even suggested that school based career advisers could not keep up with the changing nature of the labour market and career opportunities.
- 8.95 Mr Eamon Moore, Executive Officer, Education, of the Western Australian Chamber of Minerals and Energy, told the Committee that:
- career advisers in schools are overwhelmed with the information that they have to provide to students at any particular time and for them to have perhaps a shallow view of a wide cross-section is really all we can ask for in terms of their time.⁶⁶
- Mr Moore suggested that a teacher placement scheme would be one way of addressing that issue.
- 8.96 In South Australia a representative of the Construction Industry Training Board referred to its school visits and said of one visit that:
- The career counsellor said to me, 'I didn't know there were so many careers in the building and construction industry' ... career counsellors in schools and career advisers need to have a lot of information ... it is very hard. There are all these industries out there. There is a huge range. That all needs to be presented to students.⁶⁷
- 8.97 Ms Carol Frost, Chief Executive Officer of the Northern Territory Chamber of Commerce and Industry, told the Committee that she would recommend specialist careers advisers who might have industry rather than education backgrounds and who could visit schools and take industry people with them.⁶⁸ There may well be benefit in careers advice coming from someone who is closer to the labour market than teachers tend to be, and who has a perspective that is not formed in part by belonging to a school and having associated institutional interests.
- 8.98 While having inherent value in itself, such a system could also provide a service that is clearly needed during the period before any targeted training of specialist careers teachers produces significant numbers of careers teachers to fill positions in schools.

66 Mr Eamon Moore, Executive Officer, Education, Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 964.

67 Ms Catherine Carn, Entry Level Training Manager, Construction Industry Training Board, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, p. 1080.

68 Ms Carol Frost, Chief Executive Officer, NT Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 April 2003, Darwin, p. 476.

8.99 However, Mr David Carney from the Career Education Association of Western Australia told the Committee that it is important in a school setting that students can relate to a person who is a permanent member of staff.⁶⁹ As noted earlier, part of the role of a careers adviser in a school should include forming networks with employers, industry and the community. A balanced careers program will include inviting industry representatives to talk to particular school groups, taking students to career expos and holding career information evenings, in which industry representatives participate.

8.100 The Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce told the Committee that for three years it has been running a mobile careers unit, which visits schools:

It is a big van. It has a lot of audio-visual stuff in it; hands-on stuff where young people can get in, sit behind a computer and so forth. It is equipped with videos. We try and give those young people who go through the van what we believe to be the correct idea of what the industry is all about and encourage them to look at the career opportunities, not necessarily just as apprentices, but in other occupations within the industry.⁷⁰

8.101 The Committee applauds initiatives such as this but believes that for such a visit to have more than novelty value or passing interest for students, there needs to be a careers teacher with whom the relevant industry group can liaise, who can prepare students for the visit and follow it up with students later.

8.102 The difficulty for careers advisers to keep abreast of developments and opportunities was noted by a variety of witnesses. One way of addressing the difficulty is through cluster arrangements, in which schools share information and combine resources. The Department of Education, Science and Training told the Committee that with the transfer of ECEF programs the Department had become responsible for 220 school/industry/community clusters which manage the Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) initiative. The Manager of the Indigenous and Transitions Group in the Department stated that:

69 Mr David Carney, President, Career Education Association of Western Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 939.

70 Mr Kevin Redfern, General Manager, Industrial Relations and Training, Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce, *Transcript of Evidence*, 3 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1228.

We would like to have the capacity to embed within these clusters a dedicated or an additional career and transition service that would service the students within these cluster schools.⁷¹

- 8.103 As pointed out elsewhere in this report, the effective use of cluster arrangements can add value and provide significant support to the work of teachers in individual schools. Dedicated career support in a cluster could be used, among other things, for the coordination of industry visits and the provision of material designed to keep school based careers staff up to date with developments in various fields.

Indigenous career education

- 8.104 The Committee received little evidence specifically focussed on career education for Indigenous students. A number of the comments made in relation to vocational education for Indigenous students also apply to the more specific area of career education. Centralian College in Alice Springs identified a range of difficulties associated with the delivery of programs to Indigenous students, including remoteness, high cost of delivery, low levels of literacy and numeracy, dysfunctional communities and a lack of engagement with the formal education and training system. The College noted that 'simplistic solutions ... are almost always doomed to failure' and that building relationships with Indigenous communities and individual families is vital.⁷²
- 8.105 In noting the need to examine how vocational education can assist in achieving improved participation, retention and learning outcomes for Indigenous students the DEST submission stated that: 'Access to appropriate career information and guidance is also recognised as critical for Indigenous young people.'⁷³
- 8.106 It is clear that the support required to enable Indigenous students to participate in education and to develop literacy and numeracy skills, general employability skills and specific vocational skills, will also assist them in pursuing post-school options, but as with all students, targeted career guidance provides a structure and focus to career planning, and an introduction to possible pathways which students may not be aware of or know how to access otherwise.

71 Mr Tony Greer, Group Manager, Indigenous and Transitions Group, DEST, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 November 2003, Canberra, p. 1427.

72 Centralian College, *Submission No. 30*, pp. 10-11.

73 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, p. 9.

8.107 As with the delivery of vocational education generally, the provision of culturally appropriate career services is an important strategy to address the low school retention rate, high unemployment and social disadvantage of Indigenous communities. The Australia Country Note of the OECD review of career education states that:

A number of initiatives are targeted at Indigenous groups. The Commonwealth and states provide funding for the development of programmes ... Around 3.5% of school-age children are of Indigenous descent; some live in isolated communities. Effective strategies need to be grounded in Indigenous culture and to include active involvement of parents and families. There is a need for more Indigenous staff with some guidance training to take part in such programmes.⁷⁴

8.108 The MCEETYA Taskforce on Transition from School is currently managing a project funded by ANTA, *Career Guidance and Advice for Indigenous Students*, the aim of which is to provide career and VET in Schools information and guidance to indigenous students, commencing below Year 8. The project will develop, trial and evaluate career guidance materials and appropriate structures for the delivery of career guidance to Indigenous students.⁷⁵

8.109 The final report of the project was presented to the Project Steering Group in November 2003.⁷⁶ It made eleven recommendations in the areas of programs and resources, training and professional development and funding and sustainability. The recommendations broadly reflect the Committee's findings in these areas. Interim reports of the project identified the following barriers to the provision of career guidance to indigenous students:

- low student expectations and too few successful Indigenous role models;
- limited exposure and experiences in the work community;
- lack of support and uncertainty about moving away from family and home in pursuit of education and training;
- the often short-term and temporary nature of specially funded projects and programs;

74 *OECD Review of Career Guidance Policies*, Australia Country Note, 2002, p. 9, <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/17/47/1948341.pdf>>.

75 MCEETYA, <<http://www.curriculum.edu.au/indigenouscareers/background.htm>>; DEST, *Submission No. 75*, p. 80.

76 <http://www.curriculum.edu.au/indigenouscareers/FinalReport_execsummary.pdf>.

- the limited number of Indigenous workers in education and community career pathway agencies;
 - insecure positions and preparation for people working with young Indigenous people, and limited opportunities and time for career teachers and counsellors to develop relationships with Indigenous students and their families and communities;
 - limited case management and individual support for work experiences given unfamiliarity with workplaces and culture.
- 8.110 Factors contributing to successful programs have included:
- successful Indigenous role models;
 - practical activities and workplace experiences in real settings, where students can combine practical experience with school work;
 - strong links with relevant people and the establishment of trust and mutual respect with a few significant people (e.g. the Aboriginal Education Worker);
 - partnerships and parental and community involvement and support; and
 - people working with young Indigenous students using case management approaches and mentor programs.⁷⁷
- 8.111 The Commonwealth funded Aboriginal Career Aspiration Program (ACAP) is designed as an early intervention strategy targeting the Year 7-9 transition period, which is seen as critical. The NSW Board of Studies has produced a range of resource material for the program.⁷⁸
- 8.112 The Commonwealth also provides funding through the Vocational and Educational Guidance for Aboriginals Scheme (VEGAS) to encourage innovative programs to assist Indigenous students in making successful choices about their education and careers. The scheme targets Indigenous students enrolled in school from the final year of primary to the final year of high school, and their parents or guardians.
- 8.113 VEGAS aims to help Indigenous students and their parents by telling them about options for further study and careers; introducing Indigenous school students to university life and teaching methods; helping them to develop study skills; providing access to Indigenous role models in further

77 MEETYA, <<http://www.curriculum.edu.au/indigenoucareers/news.htm#june>>.

78 DEST, *Career Services in Australia*, February 2002, pp. 86-87, <<http://www.dest.gov.au/schools/careers/CareerservicesAustraliareport.pdf>>.

education and employment; and by assisting Indigenous school students to participate in school-based work experience or VET programs. More than 700 VEGAS projects were funded in 1998, and nearly 600 in 1999.⁷⁹

- 8.114 In the Northern Territory the Aboriginal and Islander Tertiary Aspirations Program (AITAP) provides funding and central support for numerous initiatives that build the confidence and skills of indigenous youth. The focus includes all Indigenous students in Years 7-12. AITAP invests in resources and fosters networks of principals, parents and mentors, teachers and Aboriginal organisations that actively support the pathways of young people from school to career.⁸⁰
- 8.115 Of the twenty-three Career and Transition pilots introduced in response to the *footprints to the future* report five have a specific focus on Indigenous young people, two of those having a dedicated Indigenous CAT adviser.
- 8.116 The Committee acknowledges the work under way in the wider field of vocational education to enhance opportunities for Indigenous students and to encourage improved retention rates and successful post-school outcomes. The Committee also acknowledges the range of programs directed specifically at career guidance for Indigenous students. However, the Committee also notes the problems associated with the short-term nature of some projects and the need for long-term strategies.
- 8.117 The Committee notes the need for Indigenous staff with career guidance training to participate in the delivery of programs for Indigenous students and encourages education authorities to develop pathways for Indigenous career educators.

Training and professional development

- 8.118 In 1997 the Committee's predecessor stated that schools' provision of career guidance:

cannot improve until governments provide them with enough appropriately trained teachers who are equipped with comprehensive and up to date information.⁸¹

79 DEST, *Career Services in Australia*, February 2002, p. 87, <<http://www.dest.gov.au/schools/careers/CareerservicesAustraliareport.pdf>>.

80 DEST, *Career Services in Australia*, February 2002, p. 43, <<http://www.dest.gov.au/schools/careers/CareerservicesAustraliareport.pdf>>.

81 House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training, *Youth Employment: A working solution*, 1997, p. 53.

8.119 The statement still applies, but only more so. The OECD review of career guidance policies stated that the ‘extent of professional training in the guidance field in Australia is inadequate’ and that ‘a substantial expansion of training opportunities is needed.’⁸² Australia’s response to the OECD questionnaire, prepared by DEST, acknowledged that:

In Australia, career development practitioners enter the field through a range of pathways and many have no formal training in career related studies.⁸³

8.120 The Committee heard a consistent message across the country – that specialist training and continuing professional development are essential if career education is to be delivered effectively and credibly. It is a message repeated in research and policy statements; as noted at the beginning of this chapter, the Youth Pathways Action Plan Taskforce and the MCEETYA Taskforce on Transition from School clearly state that career education should be delivered by professionally trained and qualified staff.

8.121 Given the diverse and complex nature of possible pathways for students leaving school, individual careers teachers cannot be expected to be familiar with the details of all possible options. As one school principal told the Committee, career education has:

grown in complexity so much over the last decade that it is very difficult to come across one person who has an overview of all the opportunities and so on that are available for students.⁸⁴

8.122 However, a well-trained career education teacher can prepare students effectively for that transition to employment, training or further education by:

- providing knowledge of the world of work and general employability skills, including coordinating non-VET work experience for all students;
- raising students’ awareness of the variety of options available and broadening their understanding of the way in which particular courses of study and training options can lead to a variety outcomes;

82 *OECD Review of Career Guidance Policies*, Australia Country Note, 2002, p. 22, <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/17/47/1948341.pdf>>.

83 *OECD Review of Career Guidance Policies*, Australia’s response to questionnaire, p. 86, <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/27/40/2494499.pdf>>.

84 Mr Paul Billows, Principal, Willunga High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 6 August 2003, Willunga, SA, p. 1014.

- working with subject teachers to support career education across the curriculum, and with the VET coordinator to maximise the effectiveness of the VET program;
 - providing one to one career guidance, including directing students to appropriate sources of information, whether printed and online resource material or individuals and organisations who can assist further, and assisting students in developing their transition plan; and
 - liaising with the local community, employers and industry groups, both on behalf of individual students and also to arrange a program of school visits and information sessions appropriate to particular groups and year levels, and following up those visits with appropriate activities in class.
- 8.123 The expertise of the careers teacher lies in the awareness of available resources and programs and the ability to develop a comprehensive and effective course of study which brings together the different elements of career education and responds to the needs of students in particular situations with a combination of measures.
- 8.124 In its response to the OECD questionnaire the Department of Education, Science and Training stated in 2001 that there were two Bachelor of Education (B Ed) awards that offered electives in career guidance and eight postgraduate qualifications in the field, with approximately 180 places available in the postgraduate courses.⁸⁵
- 8.125 The fact that as recently as 2001 only two of the country's forty-three universities offered B Ed courses with a career guidance option, indicates the extent to which career education has been neglected.
- 8.126 As indicated in this chapter, there is a general consensus that effective career education is essential in preparing young people for the transition from school to an increasingly complex and changing work environment, and to equip them for lifelong career development. It is also widely accepted that appropriate training is essential to deliver career education effectively.
- 8.127 Teacher education must reflect the context in which teachers operate and cater to the needs of schools. The Committee encourages universities to examine teacher education courses with a view to developing career education courses that can be included in Bachelor of Education, Diploma of Education and higher degree courses.

85 *OECD Review of Career Guidance Policies*, Australia's response to questionnaire, p. 86, <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/27/40/2494499.pdf>>.

- 8.128 It is ironic that in Western Australia, where Edith Cowan University offers career education units as part of its Bachelor of Education program, there is no state policy for career education in schools. In August 2003 the Committee was told that the university was.

looking at redesigning their Bachelor of Education program and putting a compulsory [career education] unit into their Bachelor of Education program for their secondary teachers.⁸⁶

The Committee commends Edith Cowan University for its approach.

- 8.129 The Committee was encouraged by advice from the Department of Education, Science and Training that:

We are actually providing advice at the moment to the Minister on how we might address the need for professional development for careers teachers.⁸⁷

- 8.130 Opinions differed as to whether careers training for teachers should be pre-service or in-service. There is a case for all teachers having some training, at least at the level of awareness raising, in order for them to understand the nature and importance of careers advice and to enable them to support the careers adviser across the curriculum. This kind of training could form part of general pre-service teacher training, and was supported by DEST.⁸⁸

- 8.131 However, for specialist careers teachers the general view seemed to be that for someone providing advice to students on career options and possible pathways there was significant value in having some prior teaching experience. The person in that role is often required to coordinate work experience, negotiate release with classroom teachers, network with industry and individual employers and respond to a range of issues that arise for students.

- 8.132 It appears to the Committee that someone with experience of the classroom, of the various and often complex factors which impinge on the operations of schools and, perhaps most importantly, with an

86 Mr David Carney, President, Career Education Association of Western Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 937.

87 Ms Shelagh Whittleston, Branch Manager, Transitions Branch, DEST, *Transcript of Evidence*, 26 June 2003, Canberra, p. 710.

88 DEST, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 November 2003, Canberra, p. 1428. See also comments by the Minister for Education, Science and Training, Dr Brendan Nelson MP, *Taking Schools to the Next Level*, 13 November 2003, p. 10, <<http://www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/Nelson/2003/11/n526131103.asp>>.

- understanding of students' perspectives, is best suited to taking on the careers role.
- 8.133 Ideally, such a person would have a minimum of three years teaching experience before undertaking specific careers training. Such training would be in the form of a post-graduate diploma or as a substantial part of a post-graduate degree in education. This view was supported by the Career Education Association of Victoria.⁸⁹
- 8.134 If careers advice is as important as witnesses across the country have told the Committee it is – and the Committee agrees with their assessment – then it is necessary for the teacher responsible to have appropriate qualifications, just as a science teacher or a geography teacher is expected to have qualifications relevant to their subject. As one witness said, 'You would not get principals appointing a physics or calculus teacher with no training.'⁹⁰
- 8.135 It is time to dispel the notion of careers advice as something that can be 'picked up' and performed as a 'filler' by a member of staff with a few periods to spare. The development of structured career education frameworks in all schools, and the availability of appropriate training and professional development, should encourage the view that careers can be a valid pathway for teachers' own careers within schools.
- 8.136 Given the constantly changing nature of the labour market and the development of new industries and new career paths, it is vital that careers teachers have access to continuing professional development. The careers adviser must be in a position to provide students with accurate and up to date information.⁹¹
- 8.137 Professional development of occupation-specific skills and knowledge is generally provided by professional associations.⁹² In New South Wales the Department of Education and Training delivers retraining courses to teachers appointed as careers advisers.
- 8.138 In Victoria, the Government provides a grant to the Career Education Association of Victoria under a service agreement, for the provision of

89 Ms Julie Ryan, President, Career Education Association of Victoria, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1159.

90 Ms Cathy Moore, Careers Counsellor, Mater Dei College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 981.

91 Mr David Carney, President, Career Education Association of Western Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 940.

92 *OECD Review of Career Guidance Policies*, Australia's response to questionnaire, p. 87, <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/27/40/2494499.pdf>>

training for new careers practitioners and other professional development activities.⁹³ The Association told the Committee that it runs a two and a half day conference for new careers coordinators but that this was the only professional development available and that more was required.⁹⁴

- 8.139 The Committee believes that continuing professional development is necessary for careers advisers, just as it is for all teachers, and that education authorities, professional associations and higher education institutions should work together to coordinate the development and provision of appropriate activities. The Commonwealth should take a more active role in supporting professional development through subsidising such courses.

Recommendation 31

The Committee recommends that the MCEETYA Taskforce on Teacher Quality and Educational Leadership (TQELT) pursue changes to teacher education programs to achieve a nationally consistent approach. This should include greater consideration of vocational education issues, including the need for:

- **all pre-service teacher education to include some career education training.**

Recommendation 32

The Committee recommends that the professional development needs of careers educators be better met by:

- **private and public tertiary institutions providing additional and more accessible post-graduate courses; and**
- **sufficient resourcing for teachers to access both formal courses and industry knowledge including:**
 - ⇒ **state and territory support through salary continuity and release from teaching, and**
 - ⇒ **Commonwealth support in meeting formal course costs.**

93 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 86*, p. 19.

94 Ms Julie Ryan, President, Career Education Association of Victoria, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1157.

Standards and accountability

- 8.140 In 1992 a National Training Framework for Career Coordinators was developed by the then National Board of Employment, Education and Training, identifying the knowledge, understandings, attitudes and skills required by practitioners providing career guidance and related activities in different sectors.
- 8.141 In the twelve years since then there has been no systematic implementation of the framework, partly because of the splintered nature of the various professional associations. However, the formation of the Career Industry Consortium of Australia provides a mechanism to update and implement the framework.
- 8.142 The DEST report, *Career Services in Australia*, states that:
- As new categories of workers join an already diverse field, the implementation of an updated competency framework for practitioners should retain its priority on the workplan of the new MCEETYA Transition from School Taskforce. The involvement of the Career Industry Consortium of Australia will be critical to the successful development and subsequent implementation of a framework.⁹⁵
- 8.143 The workplan includes an intention to ‘facilitate professional associations to develop nationally agreed standards for career professionals’.⁹⁶ The Committee welcomes this development and encourages all jurisdictions to establish or maintain formal and informal links between the relevant professional associations and education authorities in order to develop the necessary framework.
- 8.144 In 1999 the Career Education Association of Victoria and the then Australian Student Trainee Foundation (later ECEF) produced the Careers Education Quality Framework. It is linked to the National Innovation in School Careers Programs Awards but participation in the scheme is voluntary.
- 8.145 The Committee believes that general implementation of this Framework or some other agreed set of standards as developed by the MCEETYA Taskforce is essential. The diversity of careers programs in different jurisdictions and in different educational settings responds to different
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95 DEST, *Career Services in Australia*, February 2002, p. 11, <<http://www.dest.gov.au/schools/careers/CareerservicesAustraliareport.pdf>>.

96 OECD *Review of Career Guidance Policies*, Australia Country Note, 2002, p. 22, <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/17/47/1948341.pdf>>.

needs and complements different general education programs. Such a quality framework would provide the basis for ensuring minimum common standards and give credibility to that variety of programs.

- 8.146 A national framework would also facilitate the development of training programs by education systems and higher education institutions.
- 8.147 Career education teachers themselves acknowledge the ‘need to have schools accountable for the career education that they are offering to their students’ and see accountability as an essential step to achieving the appropriate recognition of their subject.⁹⁷
- 8.148 The ECEF submission suggested that accountability could best be achieved by:
- Developing nationally agreed guidelines for career education and guidance in schools, including a broad statement of entitlement.
 - Ensuring that there is a clear but flexible policy framework to implement these guidelines at state and local levels.
 - Expecting schools to develop their own programs within this framework.
 - Requiring schools to make their programs transparent and accountable - through school prospectuses, school plans and school reports - to their end-users: students, parents and the wider community.⁹⁸
- 8.149 As indicated in this chapter, careers programs are often marginalised in the curriculum and seen as something which can be given to any teacher to deliver. It is only in the context of accountability to a clearly defined set of standards that careers programs and teachers can achieve parity of esteem with other elements of the curriculum.
- 8.150 The other key element in accountability is reporting. The OECD review expressed concern about the lack of accountability in relation to the quality of schools’ careers programs, noting, for example, that state and territory systems are not required to report to ministers on the extent to which they have implemented Goal 1.5 of the Adelaide Declaration.⁹⁹ The Committee shares these concerns.
- 8.151 The DEST report which was the basis of Australia’s response to the OECD questionnaire stated that:

97 Ms Cathy Moore, Careers Counsellor, Mater Dei College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 August 2003, Perth, p. 982.

98 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 36.

99 *OECD Review of Career Guidance Policies*, Australia Country Note, 2002, p. 18, <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/17/47/1948341.pdf>>.

There is room for substantial improvement in reporting. There are very little system-level data available for policy, planning or performance measurement of career guidance activities. Education and training authorities in some states and territories are unable to provide estimates of the numbers of staff who are engaged in career activities or the resources that are being applied.¹⁰⁰

- 8.152 The Committee finds the lack of appropriate standards for delivering career education disturbing. It is also concerned at the lack of appropriate data to inform policy, planning or performance measurement. The Committee believes that greater accountability and accurate collection and reporting of relevant data is essential, and that a clear set of national standards for the delivery of career education in schools, and a national system of reporting, are necessary.

Recommendation 33

The Committee recommends that in order to ensure consistency, transparency and accountability in the delivery of career education, a clear set of national standards for the delivery of career education in schools, and a national system of reporting, be adopted by MCEETYA.

Conclusion

- 8.153 The Committee cannot emphasise too strongly the importance of having appropriately trained, specialist career education teachers in schools, supported both by the curriculum structure within which general education and vocational education are delivered, and also by the specific courses and culture of individual schools.
- 8.154 A range of submissions and witnesses in all jurisdictions argued that career education should be a mandated part of the core curriculum, delivered by trained and committed professional staff.
- 8.155 There is universal agreement among researchers and policy makers on the vital importance of professionally delivered career education within the effective management of the transition to post-school destinations.

100 DEST, *Career Services in Australia*, February 2002, p. 10, <<http://www.dest.gov.au/schools/careers/CareerservicesAustraliareport.pdf>>.

- 8.156 The Committee has noted in previous reports the problems with career education, and has been calling for reform for several years. This system failure cannot be allowed to continue.
- 8.157 The Committee believes that this is an area which requires immediate, coordinated attention from education authorities in order to ensure a consistent, minimum level of career education, which can be tailored within jurisdictions to complement existing curricula and meet the particular needs of specific regions and school populations.
- 8.158 On 13 November 2003 the Minister for Education, Science and Training, Dr Brendan Nelson, stated that in coming months he would be making announcements regarding a new approach to careers advisers. Dr Nelson said that:
- Careers advisers need better resources attuned to their needs, and their timetable. They need better training and defined professional standards.¹⁰¹
- 8.159 The Committee welcomes the Minister's focus on matters raised in this chapter and looks forward to the announcements foreshadowed.

101 Hon Dr Brendan Nelson MP, Minister for Education, Science and Training, *Taking Schools to the Next Level*, 13 November 2003, p. 10, <<http://www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/Nelson/2003/11/n526131103.asp>>.

Individual needs and pathways

- 9.1 This chapter examines in more detail individual factors that affect the accessibility and effectiveness of vocational education for students. Students with a disability, or those at risk of leaving school early, such as Indigenous students, have a real need for individualised support and mentoring.
- 9.2 Support structures within schools and external to schools that aid students in the transition from school to further study or employment are particularly important in this context. The role of part-time work is also relevant. The important issue of the limitations of current outcomes data is noted and is critical for the meaningful evaluation of the effectiveness of vocational education.

Overview

- 9.3 The picture presented to the inquiry has been one of the emerging potential of vocational education programs, particularly VET in Schools and School-based New Apprenticeships (SBNAs), to assist students in pursuing their post-school pathways. However, there are significant improvements still to be made to address the following findings.
- 9.4 To gain an overview of the situation of young people in Australia it is useful to be reminded that in May 2003:
- 85 per cent of 15–19 year olds were in full-time study or full-time work; however:
 - only 55 per cent of Indigenous teenagers were in full-time learning or work in 2001;

- five months after leaving school, 26 per cent of school leavers (76,100) were either working part-time but not studying were unemployed or not in the labour force and not studying;
- full-time jobs for teenagers had declined by almost 7 per cent since 1995;
- entry level full-time work was a more effective pathway to sustainable full-time work over the medium term than part-time work; and
- school leavers completing an apprenticeship had a lower unemployment rate than other school leavers, while those who had completed a traineeship had a higher unemployment rate than other school leavers.¹

9.5 Australia is recognised internationally as having employment rates that are above the OECD average for young adults, and a relatively high proportion of young adults obtain tertiary qualifications, but teenage unemployment and early school leaving rates compare less favourably.² As outlined in Chapters 2 and 3, there is considerable momentum in addressing these issues, but significant work is still required. Identifying where resources and strategies should be targeted is central to improving outcomes in preparing students for post-school pathways. One strategy is to focus efforts on students with particular identified needs for assistance.

Access and equity

9.6 One of the key priority areas identified in the Principles and Guidelines for Improving Outcomes for Vocational Education and Training in Schools (2002-2004) is:

the introduction of specific strategies to improve access for students in rural and remote areas and for educationally disadvantaged students including Indigenous students and students with a disability.³

9.7 The Queensland Government's submission indicates that the intent of the initiatives introduced in that state is to ensure equitable access to VET in Schools, and that this access provides a pathway for transitions for students with identified needs.⁴ NSW aims to ensure that the cost to the student of participating in VET and the cost to the school of conducting

1 Dusseldorp Skills Forum, 2003, *How Young People are Faring: Key Indicators 2003*, p. 4, Dusseldorp Skills Forum, <<http://www.dsf.org.au/papers/108.htm>>.

2 OECD, 2003, *Economic Survey Australia 2003*, Paris, p. 91.

3 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, p. 9.

4 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 93*, p. 3.

VET courses is equitable across all its schools. The objective is that government school students have equal access to VET courses in a wide range of industry areas, independent of their location and circumstances. Where local or individual factors act to increase costs or reduce access (e.g. in rural and remote schools or for students with disabilities) additional funding is provided, such as distance and on line delivery, student and teacher travel subsidies, and disability support funds.⁵ However, this is recognised as a significant and rapidly growing cost,⁶ and in one region the managing committee in Wagga Wagga questions its ability to maintain such a diverse provision.⁷

9.8 As part of the Tasmanian Department of Education's VET in Schools Equity Project, barriers to participation and effectiveness were identified in the following areas:

- access to prerequisite skills, and the availability of courses;
- lack of learning supports, and the need for flexible provision;
- perception and awareness;
- costs to families and individuals of undertaking VET programs;
- discrimination and workplace culture; and
- lack of coordinated pathway planning and work place opportunities.⁸

9.9 The project is now looking to address these barriers and propose possible solutions. Included in the Tasmanian State plan is a destination survey to trace longitudinally the entire 2001 Year 10 cohort for the three years 2002-2004.⁹ Many state activities link with national plans to support greater participation and improved outcomes in VET. *Bridging Pathways*, the national strategy for people with a disability in vocational education and training, identifies the issue of the accessibility of VET in Schools.¹⁰ *Partners in a Learning Culture* identifies strategies for Indigenous students and vocational education in schools.

9.10 These national strategies are two examples of addressing equity issues for groups of students identified as having special needs. Other groups of young people who have been identified as needing additional support are students in rural and remote locations and students at risk of early school

5 NSW Department of Education and Training, *Submission No. 94*, p. 23.

6 NSW Department of Education and Training, *Submission No. 94*, Appendix, Table 1, p. 41.

7 Mr Peter Brabin, Chief Education Officer, Wagga Wagga District Office, Department of Education and Training *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 July 2003, Wagga Wagga, NSW, p. 829.

8 Tasmanian Government, *Submission No. 92*, p. 11.

9 Tasmanian Government, *Submission No. 92*, p. 12.

10 ANTA, 2000, *Bridging Pathways, National Strategy from 2000 to 2005*, <<http://www.anta.gov.au/dapBridging.asp>>.

leaving. Chapters 5 and 6 provided an overview of some of the issues affecting students and schools in rural and remote locations, and will not be reconsidered here.

- 9.11 Young people with a disability, students 'at risk' and Indigenous students experience particular challenges. The Committee notes with regret that more information was not received to consider more fully the issues concerning students in these identified equity groups, which could be the area for a specific inquiry. A recent publication, *Equity in vocational education and training: research readings*, provides an excellent overview of progress, activity and outcomes in the broader VET sector, with reference also to vocational education in schools.¹¹

Students with disabilities

- 9.12 Australian Bureau of Statistics data indicate that nearly 17 per cent of 15 to 64 year old Australians have a disability of some kind. The proportion of VET students with a disability is around 5 per cent of all students and so they are under-represented in vocational education. This has implications for their employability. One strategy has been to increase the use of vocational education in schools to improve the pathways for young people with disabilities.¹²
- 9.13 In NSW, Schools for Special Purposes (SSPs) have developed vocational programs for their students for over thirty years. These programs for students with disabilities have been successful in assisting students to gain employment in a wide range of vocational areas, from sheltered workshops through to apprenticeships ultimately producing qualified chefs, butchers, cabinet makers, cleaners, greenkeepers and vehicle detailers.¹³ The submission from the SSP Principals' Network notes that the student population in SSP schools has changed over the past ten years with the greater inclusion of students with disabilities in mainstream schools. This has resulted in SSPs enrolling students with more complex needs, and other secondary schools have had to provide more appropriate programs for the increasing number of students with learning difficulties and behavioural disorders, as well as intellectual disabilities.
- 9.14 Vocational programs in SSPs begin with students under fourteen years of age, with work studies integrated across the curriculum and practical

11 NCVER, 2004, *Equity in vocational education and training: Research readings*. This publication also includes reference to outcomes for women and people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

12 Barnett, K. 2004, VET-ability. The capacity of the Australian VET system to be inclusive for people with a disability, in *Equity in VET: Research readings*, NCVER.

13 NSW SSP Principals' Network, *Submission No. 11*, p.1.

components of work practices organised through enterprise activities or through school routines. External work placements take place once the student is over fourteen, with appropriate training and supervision in enclave sites, for example in factories, registered clubs and nurseries.

- 9.15 In South Australia, Salisbury High School manages a complex student population. Students with disabilities comprise over 13 per cent of the school. Salisbury High School has received *The Australian's Best School* award for excellence in disability education in a large public high school.¹⁴ The school focus is on pathways to success, with the aim of placing every student in higher education, training, or employment. They also focus on placing students with disabilities in community service.¹⁵
- 9.16 Salisbury High School is also part of a group of schools working with disability support services in the Department of Education and Children's Services. It aims to examine concerns across the north of Adelaide regarding access to and the effectiveness of vocational education programs in schools for students with disabilities. In 1999/2000, it was identified that students with disabilities and those with learning difficulties were not accessing VET modules with links to National Training Packages. Consequently, many students with disabilities were not well prepared for their role in the workplace, as other agencies did not recognise their achievements. It was considered that it would be beneficial for some students if VET preparation work could be commenced in Years 8, 9 and 10. This has resulted in the development of guides to assist teachers in the Certificate 1 in Employment Skills Training.¹⁶
- 9.17 Similarly, in Queensland, Certificate 1 in Work Readiness and Certificate 1 in Work Education were developed to enable a flexible delivery of VET in Schools. It has been reported that there has been a high growth in the numbers of students with special needs participating in VET in Schools. Nineteen special schools in Queensland are registered training organisations (RTOs), including Aspley Special School, which has an Australian National Training Authority funded Skills Centre for Hospitality.¹⁷
- 9.18 In NSW, the opportunities that vocational education in schools offers students with moderate levels of disabilities in mainstream schools have

14 The Australian, 5 December 2003, 'Salisbury High School SA', <<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/printpage/0,5942,8063094,00.html>>.

15 Ms Helen Paphitis, Principal, Salisbury High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, p. 1099.

16 Disability Services Adelaide North, 2001, *Steps to VET*, <http://www.northsupportservices.nexus.edu.au/pdf/dsm_vt05.pdf>.

17 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 93*, p. 28.

been recognised. The involvement of these students with VET and work placements has added to life skills programs that cover personal and social skills. However, there is still a need for sufficient resourcing.¹⁸ Additional support for some students may be required and the Queensland Government submission specifies that this support may include:

- workplace mentoring;
- tutorial support;
- adjusting the time to complete the course;
- modifying learning materials;
- adaptive equipment;
- transition planning support;
- transport to the industry and training placement; and
- on-the-job support.

9.19 It is suggested that the models for funding VET in Schools need to take account of the additional costs that are incurred in assisting students with a disability.¹⁹ Similarly, the Australian Federation of Special Education Administrators identifies the greater need for flexibility of course and program delivery. A commitment to adequate financial resourcing with appropriate accountability and monitoring of student outcomes is also required to ensure improvements for students with special needs.²⁰

9.20 Limited access to vocational education programs for students with disabilities has been identified in the broader VET systems as well.²¹ Improving the pathways from school to further education is identified as a way to improve the effectiveness of vocational education for these students. *Bridging Pathways* reported that in 1998 almost 20 per cent of VET students with a disability left school before turning fifteen. Vocational education and training in schools is considered an important development, that can encourage individuals who might otherwise leave school early to take up further training options. It is suggested that those who do leave school early need alternative transitional pathways to access vocational education and training.²²

18 Mr Philip Wood, Deputy Principal, Junee High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 July 2003, Junee, NSW, p. 769.

19 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 93*, pp. 28-29.

20 Australian Federation of Special Education Administrators, *Submission No. 108*, pp. 5-7.

21 ANTA, 2000, *Bridging Pathways, National Strategy from 2000 to 2005*, p. 5, <<http://www.anta.gov.au/dapBridging.asp>>.

22 ANTA, 2000, *Bridging Pathways, National Strategy from 2000 to 2005*, p. 12, <<http://www.anta.gov.au/dapBridging.asp>>.

- 9.21 Examples of successful programs are found in the Lighthouse Initiative of the Enterprise and Career Education Foundation (ECEF).²³ These programs focussed on early intervention, additional learning and other support for effective participation and work placement, and developing pathways to employment.²⁴
- 9.22 There is a need to develop links between schools, pre-vocational initiatives and disability employment assistance services to improve access, support and placement in appropriate training and workplace opportunities. This is one of the range of goals and areas of action identified for all the VET sector, which the Committee notes could equally apply in the subset of school vocational education. These goals are to:
- open the door:
 - ⇒ improve pathways to vocational education and training,
 - ⇒ provide accessible information;
 - Improve the learning experience:
 - ⇒ provide client focused training;
 - ⇒ equip the vocational education and training sector with skills in providing inclusive training;
 - Achieve employment and life-long learning outcomes:
 - ⇒ develop links with employers and employment assistance services;
 - ⇒ support efforts to undertake further education and life-long-learning;
 - Create an accountable system:
 - ⇒ ensure compliance with legislation and regulative frameworks;
 - ⇒ implement inclusive resource allocation practices; and
 - ⇒ promote collaboration through partnerships.²⁵
- 9.23 Improvements to school systems that incorporate and emphasise these changes, would assist young people with disabilities who may be at risk of leaving school early and not achieving their potential. Addressing these issues would improve opportunities for success in further education or employment.

23 ECEF, 2000, *Disability Initiative: Vocational Learning for Young Australians with a disability*, <<http://www.ecef.com.au/web/ProjInit.nsf/ECEF/disability?OpenDocument&site=ab>>.

24 Barnett, K, 2004, VET-ability. The capacity of the Australian VET system to be inclusive for people with a disability, in *Equity in VET: Research readings*, NCVER.

25 ANTA, 2000, *Bridging Pathways, National Strategy from 2000 to 2005*, p. 6, <<http://www.anta.gov.au/dapBridging.asp>>.

Recommendation 34

The Committee recommends that Commonwealth, state and territory education authorities give further attention to providing VET programs, and effecting transitions to work and further training, for people with disabilities, by:

- **providing necessary modifications to learning materials, programs and equipment;**
- **increased work placement mentoring and support; and**
- **improving links between workplace coordinators and disability employment services.**

Students 'at risk' and early school leavers

9.24 Around one in four young people in Australia leave school without completing their senior secondary certificate. As discussed in Chapter 2, this has been a fairly stable pattern throughout the 1990s, although at the start of the decade recession kept more young people at school. Two major motives identified for dropping out of school early are:

- a pull into the workforce with a demand for work or an income; and
- a push associated with a lack of interest in schoolwork.

9.25 Large variations exist across the states and territories, ranging from about 11 per cent who leave school early in the Australian Capital Territory to nearly 50 per cent in the Northern Territory. There are also significant differences between boys and girls. About one in five girls does not complete secondary school, compared with about one in three boys. As well as the gender gap, and the gap between the states and territories, there is variation based on region, socio-economic status and Aboriginality.²⁶ Reasons for leaving school can only be partly linked to low achievement and economic insecurity within the family. Therefore, a range of strategies is needed to identify the particular issues for the student and to provide greater support.

9.26 Early leavers generally find work, with more boys than girls finding full-time work, often involving an apprenticeship. Girls are less likely to find

26 Teese, R, 2003, Early school leavers and VET, in *Equity in vocational education and training: Research readings*, NCVER.

full-time work, relying heavily on part-time work or casual employment, usually associated with lower incomes and greater job insecurity.²⁷

9.27 The Queensland Government provided information to the Committee on the higher support needs of young people who are at risk of leaving school early. Programs and pathways need to be negotiated with young people, and focused on their individual needs. It was suggested that successful strategies must include:

- well-organised links between school and work or further study;
- assistance for those at risk of leaving school early;
- additional support and alternative education programs for those disengaged from learning;
- employment programs specifically designed to assist young people at risk of disengaging from learning; and
- good information and direction, and a key person to guide each student.

9.28 For the 2002 school year, \$2.5 million was allocated to the Youth Access program to support 1101 students at risk of not completing secondary schooling. The Youth Access program aims to provide pathways involving elements of general school-based education and formal vocational training, support and guidance, which can include on-the-job training. With early intervention, it is anticipated that young people will develop the basic skills necessary to move into employment or a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship.²⁸

9.29 The need for early intervention has been identified as crucial to the effectiveness of vocational education in schools in assisting with school retention rates. One purpose of VET in Schools has been ensuring that students 'at risk' receive education that will connect them to improved post-school opportunities in either work or education and training. However, research cited by the Australian Education Union (AEU) questions the extent to which VET in Schools is serving the needs of students most at risk of not completing school. The AEU implies that for the most disadvantaged students, VET is too demanding and comes too late. The union observes that the problems such students have with school arise much earlier and require earlier attention.²⁹

9.30 Other researchers note that the massive enrolment growth in VET in Schools has not coincided with any significant increase in overall Year

27 McMillan, J and Marks, G, 2003, *School leavers in Australia: Profiles and Pathways*, LSAY Research Report No. 31, ACER, p. 89.

28 Queensland Government, *Submission No. 93*, pp. 31-32.

29 AEU, *Submission No. 72*, p. 53.

10-12 retention rates.³⁰ They consider that VET enrolment growth has come from 'continuers' who switched preferences from general education subjects to vocational ones rather than from any decrease in the numbers of early school leavers. It is suggested that the nature of the VET currently being offered (i.e. based on a higher level, industry-specific, post school training model) may need to change if early school leavers are to be attracted to VET in Schools as an option.

- 9.31 More recently, there is evidence from 2003 that VET in Schools contributes to retaining more young people to the end of secondary schooling.³¹ The work/study mix has been found to be attractive, vocational careers are emphasised and there is more general interest. Additionally, quality relationships between students, teachers, schools and community partners are crucial to the success of vocational programs in re-engaging students in school.³²
- 9.32 The Committee notes that some evidence received indicated that VET was encouraging students who may otherwise have left to stay at school, and that this issue needs to be researched more fully. The further consideration and development of non-industry-specific work readiness or work education courses may be warranted for this group of students, as discussed in Chapter 7 in relation to generic workplace skills. Additionally, the earlier provision of support is required to ensure there is a safety net for students disengaging from school.
- 9.33 Achievement in literacy and numeracy in middle schooling was found to be an important influence on school non-completion, and its effects impact considerably on post-school outcomes. Students who had not completed schooling, with lower literacy and numeracy, were more likely to be unemployed, and those that were employed had lower earnings.³³
- 9.34 Additional examination of early school leavers has found that within three years of leaving school early, between two-thirds and three-quarters of these young people have some contact with VET. The evidence from a variety of sources is that this contact is positive in terms of employment and other social benefits. However, some of those early school leavers do not participate in further education and this 'at risk' group still needs

30 Malley, J et al., 2002, *The quest for a working blueprint. Vocational education and training in Australian secondary schools*, NCVET, p. 25.

31 Teese, R, 2003, Early school leavers and VET, in *Equity in vocational education and training: Research readings*, NCVET.

32 James, P and St Ledger, P, 2003, 'Crossing school-community boundaries for vocational education: enabling learning for potential early school leavers', *International Journal of Training Research*, vol 1, no. 1, p. 1.

33 McMillan, J and Marks, G, 2003, *School leavers in Australia: Profiles and Pathways*, LSAY Research Report No. 31, ACER, p. 88.

ongoing attention. Increasing literacy and numeracy, and providing a more general VET certificate before Year 10 may assist with the transition to more industry-specific VET.

Recommendation 35

The Committee recommends that the *Principles and Guidelines for Improving Outcomes for Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Schools (2002-2004)* be revised for the next period to reflect the greater need for access to VET qualifications prior to senior secondary years.

Recommendation 36

The Committee recommends that Commonwealth, state and territory education authorities through ANTA fast track the development of a Certificate I in Generic Workskills for all students to complete by Year 10.

- 9.35 While boys from lower socioeconomic families are more likely than other socio-economic groups to leave school early, Indigenous students have the highest rates of school drop out. Reference has been made previously in the report to Indigenous students' participation in vocational education programs and suggested strategies to assist.

Indigenous students

- 9.36 Reliable information about Indigenous students' participation in vocational education and VET in Schools programs and their outcomes is not currently available.³⁴ Barriers to completing school for Indigenous students are complex, and include low achievement, lower aspirations, racism and fewer role models of successful students and teachers. Sometimes Indigenous students suffer multiple disadvantages that provide a further barrier to making a successful school to work transition. There is widespread recognition of the poorer outcomes in general for Indigenous students, and as described in Chapter 4, the Commonwealth has provided funding under the Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives

34 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, p. 52.

- Programme (IESIP) and Indigenous Education Direct Assistance (IEDA) to support vocational education.³⁵
- 9.37 Key issues identified are that location has an influence on accessing training or work experiences, and thus the viability of VET in Schools programs. The importance of exposure to work environments and the culture of paid employment is important in seeing a future of alternatives. The development of role models is considered an important strategy to improve educational outcomes for young Indigenous people.
- 9.38 Flexibility in supporting pathways is a key theme in assisting young people for post-school options. Individual factors will be a major influence in the decision making to determine what pathway to take.
- 9.39 Under *Partners in a Learning Culture*, a Blueprint for the National Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Vocational Education and Training, 2000-2005, MCEETYA has commissioned projects to:
- address the lack of qualitative and quantitative information regarding Indigenous VET in Schools participation and outcomes;
 - develop pilot models which assist Indigenous students to participate in VET in Schools; and
 - expand awareness of career and VET in Schools options for Indigenous students in the middle years of schooling.³⁶
- 9.40 The Committee considers that these projects will provide considerable input to more effectively supporting Indigenous young people. The Committee looks forward to the reporting on activities and improved outcomes.

35 ANAO, 2002, *Indigenous Education Strategies*, DEST, Performance Audit Report No. 43, 2001-2002, pp. 12-14.

36 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, Appendix B, pp. 79-81. See DEST Appendix B for a more thorough description of Commonwealth support for Indigenous youth strategies.

Recommendation 37

The Committee recommends that there be an increased focus on earlier assistance to support students 'at risk' and Indigenous students by:

- **strengthening literacy and numeracy skills;**
- **supporting the development of vocational skills and VET qualifications earlier than Year 10; and**
- **monitoring the progress of *Partners in a Learning Culture* projects and programs for the purpose of replicating and expanding those which effectively meet the training and transition needs of Indigenous students.**

Recommendation 38

The Committee recommends that Commonwealth, state and territory education authorities fund additional support, mentoring and career guidance, ideally by Indigenous staff, for Indigenous students undertaking or considering undertaking VET in Schools or SBNAs, and that consideration be given to more effectively linking these courses to real post-school employment opportunities and career paths.

Recommendation 39

The Committee recommends that there be an evaluation of funding for a wide range of specific ancillary vocational education and careers support programs, in order to:

- **determine their effectiveness;**
- **improve coordination;**
- **ensure greater continuity of funding; and**
- **reduce community confusion by eliminating the frequent rebadging of similar programs.**

Diversity of pathways

- 9.41 Young people face a number of decision points and transitions in their mid to late teens:
- whether to leave school at the end of compulsory years of schooling versus participating in senior secondary school;
 - whether to complete Year 12 or not;
 - whether to pursue a purely academic program or include VET options;
 - whether to embark on a School-based New Apprenticeship to combine working with study;
 - whether to undertake post-secondary education or training; and
 - when to enter the labour market and gain employment.
- 9.42 Therefore, there is considerable diversity in the range of pathways that young people can choose to access the employment market. At most of these decision or branching points, processes of selection occur to be accepted into further study or by an employer. Much of the work to develop vocational education, and specifically VET in Schools, has aimed to increase the range of options for students post-school and increase the versatility of students in being able to access further study or employment through interconnected pathways.
- 9.43 ANTA commented that the ‘one size fits all’ approach is long gone, and that the current emphasis is on increasing the flexibility in moving from one path to another.³⁷ Examples of this flexibility include school, VET and university articulation, or the identification of generic workplace competencies to enable recognition of prior learning in order to embark on an alternative vocational path. However, as there are selection decisions involved, and as better employment outcomes are associated with increased education, a fundamental question to be asked is: What are the factors that assist young people in the transition to post-school options, and what delays that transition?³⁸ This report has discussed a range of system factors associated with the delivery of vocational education in schools, and individual factors relating to the background characteristics of students. The next section considers other influences and supports that can affect post-school pathways.
- 9.44 As an example of influences and support that can assist in this transition, many schools offer dual recognition and celebrate VET qualifications as
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37 ANTA, *Submission No. 90*, p. 6.

38 McMillan, J. & Marks, G., 2003, *School leavers in Australia: Profiles and Pathways*, LSAY Research Report No. 31, ACER, pp. 87- 88. Please refer to this report for an extensive discussion of students that do not complete school, including influences and outcomes.

enthusiastically as senior secondary certificate completions. One example is Bradfield College in Sydney.

- 9.45 Bradfield College is a TAFE-run senior high school within the Northern Sydney Institute of TAFE, and was the first of its kind in New South Wales. It began operating on its present site at Crows Nest in 1993. Those involved in the establishment of Bradfield College believed that by bringing education and work closer together learning could be more stimulating and students could see positive outcomes from classroom activities. Bradfield College students can gain their Higher School Certificate (HSC) as well as a TAFE Certificate and at the same time be introduced to the workforce through work studies and industry training. This initial approach has also been developed to offer specialised HSC studies to prepare students for further education in a particular field. The Director of Bradfield College, Mr Michael Hyam, stated that:

The outcome is for a student to get their HSC. But underpinning that are all sorts of layers which are really positive. One of the things we do not want to do is only have that one outcome, because that is how you set a student up for failure. If all a student ever wants is a HSC and a UAI [University Admission Index], if there is nothing else under that, I think you have real problems. If you have things underneath that, for example, a TAFE certificate, you are much better off. At our presentation night we would have 200 students on stage who are getting their HSC fantastic but, equally, we would have another 200 students, many of whom are the same, who are getting their TAFE certificate. It is a dual graduation. To us that is as equal a celebration as the HSC.³⁹

- 9.46 Other strategies are also in place to assist with school students who are contemplating leaving or have left. The Committee notes the success of Bradfield College, and considers that the vocational orientation of a senior college is a model that could be adopted in other metropolitan centres, as a joint facility between the schooling sector and TAFE.

Jobs Pathway Programme/ External services

- 9.47 The importance of individual support is emphasised in the Jobs Pathway Programme, and is provided as an external program to schools.
- 9.48 The Jobs Pathway Programme (JPP) is designed to assist young people to make a successful transition through school and from school to further education, training or work. JPP service providers are contracted by the

³⁹ Mr Michael Hyam, Director, Bradfield College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 25 February 2003, Sydney, p. 40.

Commonwealth Government to assist eligible young people by providing practical assistance based on an assessment of their needs. JPP assists young people between the ages of 14 and 19 who are still at school and preparing to leave school or who have left school within the preceding twelve months.⁴⁰

- 9.49 The JPP provider can also provide information about ways to improve literacy and numeracy skills, career choices, school-based and full-time New Apprenticeships, local jobs and the job market, and provide help and guidance throughout the year. If young people have been receiving unemployment assistance they can also use the service as part of their mutual obligation requirements.⁴¹ Other services, such as the Careers and Transition (CAT) Pilots referred to in Chapter 8, also provide more intensive assistance to students.
- 9.50 The JPP provider may refer young people to other providers for additional assistance, such as Career Information Centres operated through Centrelink⁴² and New Apprenticeship Centres (NACs). Additional support for early school leavers is also provided through the New Apprenticeships Access Programme. This is designed to support job seekers experiencing disadvantage, including early school leavers.⁴³ Greater involvement of the training system, such as New Apprenticeship Centres was one outcome of the review into School-based New Apprenticeships, which would assist in the transition for young people from school to work.⁴⁴
- 9.51 The view of community organisations, such as the South Coast Industry Schools Coordinating Organisation (SCISCO) in Queensland, as well as schools, is that students and young people need individualised attention. Putting strategies in place to meet most young people's needs requires one-on-one support. SCISCO indicated that in its view individualised support is poorly resourced, and suggested the use of existing community based organisations to enhance what is currently happening, particularly

40 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, Appendix B, p. 82.

41 DEST, *Jobs Pathway Programme, Quick Guide*,
<<http://jpp.dest.gov.au/Information/JPPQuickGuide.asp>>.

42 Centrelink, Career Information Centres are 'one-stop-shops' providing a free service to all Australians through 12 Centres. Specialist staff provide assistance to students, the unemployed, and career changers, including rural and remote clients.
<[jobshttp://www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/services/career_centres.htm](http://www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/services/career_centres.htm)>.

43 DEST, 2003, *New Apprenticeships Access Programme*,
<<http://naap.dest.gov.au/asp/InfoForJobseekers.asp>>.

44 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 31.

the Jobs Pathway Programme. Extensions or enhancements of the JPP program were considered worthwhile.⁴⁵

- 9.52 As highlighted by the range of programs and service providers referred to above, it has been reported that there is a need to develop better coordinated services, to avoid duplication and enable easier navigation for young people to access support services.⁴⁶ Suggestions have been made that a new youth transition service modelled on the Jobs Pathway Programme should be based within, but not delivered by, schools. Coordinating the service with existing state and territory and local initiatives would add greater value using a community based approach maximising existing resources.⁴⁷
- 9.53 The Committee supports further investigation of better integration of career and transition services, to enable a broadening of coverage of schools and to provide more intensive assistance to students in school and to those students who are at risk of leaving school.

Recommendation 40

The Committee recommends that a full analysis be undertaken of the wide range of training pathway, career and transition services in order to:

- **achieve better understanding and coordination of services, avoid duplication and remedy deficiencies;**
- **improve the links between SBNA's and New Apprenticeship Centres, making NACS more accessible for young people; and**
- **improve the information available to students on transition options and available assistance.**

- 9.54 One issue that has arisen in the discussion of reasons for students leaving school is the demand for work, and how students access work opportunities. Students gain access to work opportunities through three

45 Ms Andrea Meredith, Programs Manager, South Coast Industry Schools Coordinating Organisation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 9 April 2003, Brisbane, p. 373.

46 Whittleston, S., 2001, The report from the prime minister's youth pathways action plan taskforce: footprints to the future, *Understanding Youth Pathways*, ACER Research Conference 2001, Proceedings, p. 27; Dusseldorp Skills Forum, 2003, *How Young People are Faring: Key Indicators 2003*, Dusseldorp Skills Forum, p. 26, <<http://www.dsf.org.au/papers/108.htm>>.

47 Kellock, P., 2003, *Towards a new youth transition service built on JPP*, Jobs Pathway Programme National Provider Network and Dusseldorp Skills Forum, <<http://www.dsf.org.au/papers/101.htm>>.

means: work experience, structured work placements such as vocational placements and part-time work. Many of the students the Committee spoke to during the course of the inquiry were in part-time work.

Part-time work

- 9.55 Relatively little study has been undertaken into part-time work but it is generally agreed that the proportion of students participating is increasing. Somewhere around 50 to 60 per cent of Australian school students of working age in Years 10, 11 and 12 are believed to have formal part-time work.⁴⁸ There has been recent interest in acknowledging the learning that comes from paid work or community work and integrating this to develop a skills passport or recognition of prior learning for the demonstrated competencies.⁴⁹ This is part of acknowledging that extensive learning takes place outside the classroom and that it should be recognised.⁵⁰
- 9.56 The differences in participation in the three types of work place exposure have been examined in South Australia and NSW in a study funded by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER). Paid work for students was found to be highly concentrated in two industry areas, retail and fast food. This contrasts with work experience and structured work placements, which are more widely distributed across a range of industry areas. Other findings were that work experience was viewed as a process of career sampling, structured work placements were seen as sites for developing specific skills and paid work was primarily undertaken as a way of earning extra spending money, although significant learning also occurred in that context. The skills which were developed best in all workplace activity were verbal communication, how to behave at work, using initiative, dealing with customers and operating a computer. Written communication was the least well developed.
- 9.57 Ten per cent of the students in the NCVER study needed the money to support themselves or their families.⁵¹ Students worked on average 8.5 hours per week and generally could fit their study in without too much difficulty. However, the Committee found that with school and part-time work some students had little time to fit in other activities, especially when

48 Smith, E and Green, A, 2001, *School students' learning from their paid and unpaid work*, NCVER, Executive Summary, p. 2.

49 ECEF, *Submission No. 84*, p. 23; Ms Moira Scollay, Chief Executive Officer, ANTA, *Transcript of Evidence*, 9 April 2003, Brisbane, p. 350.

50 Ms Alice George, Assistant Principal, Senior School, Salisbury High School, *Transcript of Evidence*, 7 August 2003, Adelaide, p. 1106.

51 Smith, E. & Green, A. 2001, *School students' learning from their paid and unpaid work*, NCVER, Executive Summary, p. 3.

- combined with a School-based New Apprenticeship.⁵² Reasons students did not engage in paid work included wanting to focus on study or sport, or that they were unable to find a job in the local area.⁵³
- 9.58 As discussed in previous sections, there has been considerable pressure to locate work placements, and less attention has been paid to the quality of the learning taking place and the fact that students with specific needs may have less access to work site exposure and will be further disadvantaged.⁵⁴
- 9.59 There are some concerns that part-time work may interfere with effective studying and result in students disengaging from school. It has been argued that working five hours or less per week during Year 9 makes no difference to completing Year 12, but participation in employment beyond five hours is associated with an increased likelihood of dropping out before the end of Year 12, especially for males. On the positive side for students who do not wish to complete tertiary study, part-time employment while at school is associated with higher rates of participation in apprenticeships or traineeships and full-time employment rather than unemployment on leaving school.⁵⁵ Beyond the school environment, another question in youth transitions is whether part-time work without study assists young people to enter full-time work.⁵⁶
- 9.60 The Committee notes that further study is required to determine the causal relationship between part-time work and school outcomes. This would include identifying whether working part-time increases the likelihood of students leaving school and the extent to which those who are working part-time have already decided to leave and are establishing a work history. This raises consideration of pathways which is a key theme of this report.

52 For example: Ms Yolanda Erlandson, Student, Centralian College, *Transcript of Evidence*, 30 April 2003, Alice Springs, p. 557.

53 Smith, E & Green, A, 2001, *School students' learning from their paid and unpaid work*, NCVER, Executive Summary, p. 3.

54 Smith, E & Green, A 2001, *School students' learning from their paid and unpaid work*, NCVER, Executive Summary, p. 6.

55 Vickers, M, Lamb, S & Hinkley, J, 2003, *Student workers in high school and beyond: the effects of part-time employment on participation in education training and work*, LSAY Research Report No. 30, ACER, Executive Summary, pp. v-vi.

56 Dusseldorp Skills Forum, 2003, *How Young People are Faring: Key Indicators 2003*, Dusseldorp Skills Forum, p. 5, <<http://www.dsf.org.au/papers/108.htm>>.

Outputs and outcomes

- 9.61 Part of the policy agenda for vocational education in schools as outlined in Chapters 2 and 3 has been to increase the range of pathways open to students from a range of backgrounds. A critical question is: How successful has vocational education in schools been in preparing students for post-school options?
- 9.62 A major area of growth that has been noted is VET in Schools:
 There has been a continued increase in VET-in-schools, through states, territories and the Commonwealth actively promoting VET-in-schools as a pathway from school to post-school activities. This has made VET-in-schools an important alternative to more traditional pathways.⁵⁷
- 9.63 But what are those pathways and how has the success of VET in Schools been monitored? Indicators of success in determining the achievement of such goals are currently unclear, and there is only preliminary information available.⁵⁸
- 9.64 Witnesses at Committee hearings commented on employment prior to completion of Year 12 as an important measure of success which has not been recognised in retention rates to Year 12, or completion of Certificate II or III qualifications as another measure of success. The reporting of employment outcomes would provide a broader picture of outcomes.⁵⁹ Centralian College in the Northern Territory includes full-time employment and full apprenticeships as performance indicators in reporting to the NT Government.
- 9.65 Part of the lack of information on post-school options arises from not distinguishing between measures of success in terms of outputs and outcomes. The **outputs** of the vocational education and training system refer to the qualifications, skills and competencies achieved from undertaking a VET program. The **outcomes** refer to the students gaining their first employment, improving job prospects or increasing employment income. For employers, outcomes would include increased productivity or greater satisfaction with the VET system.⁶⁰

57 NCVER 2003 Australian Vocational Education and Training Statistics Students and Courses 2002: At a glance, p. 2.

58 ANTA, *Submission No. 90*, p. 22.

59 Mr Michael Stevens, Deputy Secretary (VET Strategies), Department of Education, Tasmania, *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 October 2003, Hobart, p. 1376; Centralian College, *Submission No. 30*, p. 4.

60 NCVER, 2000, *Australian Vocational Education and Training: An overview*, pp. 29-30.

9.66 Much of the evidence given to the Committee (as guided by the terms of reference) refers to outputs of vocational education and training, with only limited information on outcomes in terms of future employment and continuing participation in education. This information is required to fully evaluate the effectiveness and overall success of vocational education in schools. The South Australian Government considers that:

It is therefore recommended that further work be undertaken to research the efficacy of VET programs undertaken by senior secondary students which identifies both qualitative and quantitative outcomes.⁶¹

9.67 For employers, satisfaction with the outputs of the education system translates into employment outcomes for the students. As an example of the difference in industry acceptance of vocational education programs included in the National Training Framework, there is a preference for New Apprentices over VET in Schools students:

the achievement of parity of outcomes between VET and VET in Schools sectors is of critical importance for industry. To achieve this, on-the-job experience (where considered appropriate by industry) must be made available on terms acceptable to industry partners. On-the-job experience as part of the overall delivery process is a key reason why some industries (such as Retail) have declared a preference for School-based New Apprenticeships over VET in Schools programs.⁶²

9.68 However, the greater use of incentives to support employers' take up of School-based New Apprenticeships (SBNAs), and particularly for students with identified needs, has been suggested as a way to improve outcomes in employment.⁶³

9.69 Processes are underway to develop a nationally consistent approach for both outputs and outcomes, and a broader vocational education and training student outcomes survey. The Committee notes that it is essential that systems place as much emphasis on measuring the outcomes as they do in measuring student characteristics, training activity and the costs of training.⁶⁴

9.70 This summary of the Committee's findings has mainly reported on the outcomes of VET in Schools as provided by evidence to the inquiry.

61 South Australian Government, *Submission No. 97*, pp. 4-5.

62 MCEETYA, 2003, *National Data on participation on VET in Schools: Programs and School-based New Apprenticeships for 2002 school year*, p. 11.

63 Mr Matthew Row, Acting Operations Manager, BIGA Training Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, 9 April 2003, Brisbane, p. 340.

64 NCVET, 2000, *Australian Vocational Education and Training: An overview*, p. 30.

Evidence of the effectiveness of School-based New Apprenticeships is lacking, and yet the outcomes for apprentices are reported to be particularly favourable as shown in Table 9.1. The distinction between the types of vocational education in schools and their outcomes needs to be determined. The *National Evaluation of School-based New Apprenticeships* recommends data collection processes for measuring outcomes from SBNA be progressed as a matter of urgency.⁶⁵

9.71 The Longitudinal Survey of Australian Youth (LSAY)⁶⁶ provides some indication of outcomes, with data available from 2001 from students who completed Year 11 in 1997 and Year 12 in 1998. However, major growth in VET in Schools occurred after this time. More recent national analysis is therefore required. Given that qualification, an important criterion for judging the impact of VET in Schools is the extent to which that experience is associated with being in full-time work and/or formal education or training in the years immediately after completing Year 12. The key findings were that:

- Unemployment rates were similar for the VET in Schools group and for the non-VET in Schools group.
- Participation in VET in Schools appears to be more likely to be a pathway to the labour force than to further education or training, more so for males than for females. For young females, participation in further education is at a much higher rate than for young males.
- For those in the lowest achievement quartile at Year 9, VET in Schools appears to act to improve the pathway to employment, but not to tertiary education. Participation in two years of VET in Schools appears to facilitate the achievement of positive labour and education outcomes, particularly for young males.
- There is some evidence that VET in Schools is associated with a pathway either into a recognised form of post-secondary vocational education or training or work.⁶⁷

9.72 The Committee notes the importance of the LSAY program and encourages further investigation into vocational education in schools issues. Given the lack of national outcome data on VET in Schools, the broader VET system provides a frame of reference to gain some sense of VET, university and employment outcomes.

65 ANTA, *Exhibit No. 56*, p. 4.

66 The LSAY is a national programme jointly managed by DEST and the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) to improve the knowledge base concerning the transition of young people from school to further education, training and work in Australia.

67 Fullarton, S, 2001, *VET in Schools: Participation and Pathways*, LSAY Research Report No. 21, ACER, pp. ix-x.

National outcomes

- 9.73 The employment and earnings outcomes for university and VET graduates are summarised below. As an example, the NCVER reported on TAFE and university graduates in 2000. The report concluded that the two sectors service very different industries, and prepare students for employment in different occupations. TAFE graduates had higher employment outcomes in the first six months after graduation than their university counterparts and were employed in a broader range of occupations and industries.⁶⁸
- 9.74 The results on earnings indicate that generally, longer education and training leads to high earning occupations with higher skill levels, paying more than those with lower skill requirements. In 2000, a TAFE graduate's first full-time job earned \$494 on average per week, while university graduates earned \$659 on average per week.⁶⁹
- 9.75 There is thus a mixed message of VET graduates being more broadly employed in a range of industries and occupations, but with lower earnings in their first year following graduation. However, given the longer educational requirements for the completion of university qualifications and the costs of the Higher Education Contribution Scheme, there are some benefits in the shorter term for VET graduates. Further research needs to be done on the longer term situation.
- 9.76 Looking specifically at apprenticeships, full-time employment rates are more favourable than any other group with qualifications and well above those with no post-school qualification. The apprenticeship group was also the most likely to be self employed.⁷⁰ The table over provides a summary of the findings.

68 NCVER, 2001, *Statistics 2000. TAFE and university graduates: At a glance*, Conclusion, p. 1, <www.ncver.edu.au/statistics/aag/tafeuni00/graduate.htm>.

69 NCVER, 2001, *Statistics 2000. TAFE and university graduates: At a glance*, Graduate earnings, p. 1, <www.ncver.edu.au/statistics/aag/tafeuni00/graduate.htm>.

70 NCVER, 2001, *Australian apprenticeships: research at a glance. The outcomes from apprenticeships, traineeships and new apprenticeships*, p. 4.

Table 9.1 Employment and average full-time earnings outcomes for people with different qualifications, 2000

Measure	Highest level of post-school qualification held						Total working-age population 15–64 years
	Higher degree and post-graduate diploma	Bachelor degree	Diploma and associate diploma	Apprentice and other skills vocational qual'n	Basic vocational qual'n	No post school qual'n	
Probability of having a job	86.9	85.3	78.2	83.1	73.7	63.6	69.8
Proportion of employed who are:							
Employed full time (%)	82.5	81.0	74.0	89.0	70.0	68.0	73.9
Self-employed (%)	8.7	9.0	10.0	20.9	11.6	12.9	12.9
Unemployment rate (%)	2.9	3.0	5.0	4.1	7.2	8.5	6.8
Average annual earnings (\$ pa.)	70 000	58 500	50 000	43 500	36 500	37 500	45 000

Source NCVET, 2001, *Australian apprenticeships: research at a glance. The outcomes from apprenticeships, traineeships and new apprenticeships*, Table 11, pp. 4-5.

9.77 This information demonstrates the employment benefits of post-school qualifications, both vocational and university. Another consideration is that these outcomes are based on the successful completion of qualifications. When considering potential pathways the interest and capability of the student is of prime importance. The experience of failure at school impacts significantly on choices that students make in completing school or applying for TAFE or university programs.⁷¹

9.78 Of those students who are offered and accept a place at university, approximately 16 per cent drop out within twelve months.⁷² Reviewing the transition of school leavers to university, Deakin University found that the largest dropout occurs early in the first semester, that those dropping out were ill-prepared for university study, finding it difficult to adapt to the independent learning style and did not know what was expected of them

71 Mrs Carole Frost, Chief Executive Officer, Northern Territory Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Transcript of Evidence*, 28 April 2003, Darwin, p. 480; Mr Robert Taylor, Network Executive Officer, EE-Oz Training Standard, *Transcript of Evidence*, 26 February 2003, Sydney, p. 124.

72 *The Australian*, 15 December 2003, 'First-year blues for uni dropout'.

in their assignments.⁷³ Recognition of the difficulty of transition has been identified by the university sector, which is beginning to address the problem with strategies such as peer mentoring programs, orientation, encouraging independent learning skills and greater links between schools and universities.⁷⁴

- 9.79 The need to adapt in the transition is an issue for all students, but if a more supportive environment would assist the student to adjust, then an alternative learning experience, such as a VET qualification that could lead to a degree program, may be a more appropriate pathway. The importance of career counselling to engage students in realistic choices is a major step in encouraging the successful completion of a qualification. However, the pressures from many quarters of society for commencing university rather than selecting VET qualifications work against the positives that the VET system offers.⁷⁵

Victorian outcomes

- 9.80 As an example of state research on outcomes the Victorian Department of Education and Training has funded the Educational Outcomes Research Unit at the University of Melbourne to undertake post-completion research. This research is part of an ongoing study into the implementation of the VET in Schools programs of Year 12 students and their post-school destinations.⁷⁶ As an overview of their findings they report that:

The range of positive outcomes achieved by students over the past few years is evidence that VET in the VCE has become an important and successful pathway for many students.⁷⁷

- 9.81 There has been considerable debate about the focus of VET in Schools, with some suggesting that it is more suitable for lower achieving students and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. The Victorian research into transitions compared study and labour market destinations of VET in Schools students and non-VET students who were in Year 12 in 2000. The research found that there were benefits for VET in Schools students across all levels of achievement.

73 *The Age*, 2 March 2003, 'Why first uni days vital'.

74 DETYA, 1999, *Transition from secondary to tertiary: A performance study*. Report No. 36, Canberra, <<http://www.detya.gov.au/archive/highered/eippubs/eip98-20/executivesummary.htm>>; DETYA, 2000, *Trends in the first year experience in Australian Universities*; Report 00/06, p. 62, <http://www.dest.gov.au/archive/highered/eippubs/eip00_6/fye.pdf>.

75 Teese, R, 2000, 'Post-compulsory education and training: some recent research findings and their policy implications', *The Australia Education Researcher*, Vol 27, pp. 49-57.

76 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 86*, pp. 12-13.

77 Educational Outcomes Research Unit, 2002, *Transitions from the VET in Schools Program the 2000 Year 12 cohort*. Victorian Department of Education and Training, p. 41.

- 9.82 VET in Schools graduates are more likely to be employed, and less likely to be unemployed. Supporting this positive labour market outcome, the rates of transition to tertiary education are nearly comparable with those of non-VET students, who are more likely to go to university. VET in Schools students are more likely to go to TAFE,⁷⁸ so this largely compensates for the lower rates of transition to university.

Overview of outcomes

- 9.83 An overview of the outcomes of nine years of ECEF (formerly the Australian Student Traineeship Foundation) operation from 1994 to 2003, highlights the achievements of the organisation in combination with the many employer, school, government and community organisations including:
- the involvement of over 50,000 employers in school-based vocational education programs, through increased numbers of students participating in workplace learning;
 - a 6.5 per cent fall in the number of Indigenous students unemployed after participating in ECEF supported programs; and
 - an increase in the number of students with disabilities in supported work placements, and improvements in study and employment outcomes.⁷⁹
- 9.84 The Victorian example provides useful information for the state. However, there are concerns expressed at the difficulty in tracking students between education and employment sectors. These difficulties have been identified nationally at the post-compulsory level, in the transition from schooling to vocational education and training, and the transition from VET to higher education. Recommendations from NCVET include maximising the consistency of data fields in each collection, reporting all forms of participation in education and training and exploring the potential for a unique student identifier which is portable across all sectors.⁸⁰
- 9.85 Nationally, it is important to monitor participation and outcomes of those who do participate and those who do not participate in VET in Schools and other vocational education programs, to ensure that comparisons can

78 Victorian Government, *Submission No. 86*, p. 14; see also *Transitions from the VET in Schools Program the 2000 Year 12 cohort*, p. 20.

79 DEST, 2003, *the ECEF contribution: reshaping Australian Schooling*, <[http://www.ecef.com.au/web/Files.nsf/files/legacydocweb.pdf/\\$FILE/legacydocweb.pdf](http://www.ecef.com.au/web/Files.nsf/files/legacydocweb.pdf/$FILE/legacydocweb.pdf)>.

80 NCVET, *Problem of data collections – Mapping and tracking: data collection for monitoring post-compulsory education and training*, NCVET Project 8028, p. 3.

be made.⁸¹ The DEST submission includes a summary of areas for further research including:

- identifying the reasons students take up VET in Schools:
 - ⇒ While VET subjects have appeal for a range of students, different students are likely to take up VET courses for different reasons. Anecdotal evidence suggests that different students undertake VET subjects for varying reasons;
- the impact on the amount and type of VET studies:
 - ⇒ The ACER data compares those students who undertook VET studies in either Years 11 or 12 with those who studied VET in both Years 11 *and* 12. While this provides some important findings, more information is needed on the specific amounts of VET undertaken, in conjunction with the type of learning, and how this impacts on future destinations.
- the impact of VET in Schools courses on retention to Year 12:
 - ⇒ Currently there is little known about the direct relationship between VET in Schools programs and whether this can play an important role in keeping potential early school leavers at school.⁸²

Summary

- 9.86 This chapter has reviewed issues of improving the access to and effectiveness of vocational education in schools for students with particular needs. In particular, students with disabilities, students at risk of leaving school and Indigenous students have been considered. Common themes of the need for earlier and individual support have emerged. The role of external providers was also examined, with the Committee supporting the claim that additional support needs to be provided to assist in transition management, especially for those students with special needs.
- 9.87 The role of part-time work is generally seen as beneficial, but for some students over-commitment may impact negatively on their participation in senior schooling. Early outcome data indicates that vocational education in schools may assist in improving post-school outcomes. However, the provision of this needs to occur earlier to engage students who may consider leaving school early.

81 Fullarton, S, 2001, *VET in Schools: Participation and Pathways*, LSAY Research Report No. 21, ACER, p. 55.

82 DEST, *Submission No. 75*, pp. 63-64.

- 9.88 In general there is an urgent need for more data on the outcomes of vocational education in schools, rather than just participation. Specifically, further research is required to assist in identifying national outcomes to address the following questions:
- What evidence is there that there are more options for a greater range of students in the last ten years?
 - Has the provision of vocational education led to improving the equity of outcomes to address the diversity of students coming into school?
 - Has the increased provision of vocational education provided more opportunities for all students?

Recommendation 41

The Committee recommends that research be conducted at a national level into immediate and longer term post-school outcomes of students to better evaluate the effectiveness of VET in assisting students into career pathways.

- 10.1 Vocational education has grown significantly in recent years but has also faced major challenges. The development of a range of positive programs has been accompanied by examples of schools struggling to meet the funding, infrastructure and staffing requirements of VET. This report has emphasised the need for consolidation and for ensuring the sustainability of vocational education. Removing the threats to sustainable implementation and improving the quality of teaching and learning in vocational education should be priorities for the next phase of vocational education in schools. The facilitation of effective partnerships and better articulation arrangements are also keys to improved outcomes, as are a diversity of pathways and greater national consistency in a range of areas.

Consolidation and supporting schools

- 10.2 The increasing activity in vocational education in schools from 1996 to 2003 has placed many demands on schools, especially in the senior years. Concentrated effort is required to consolidate good practice and to ensure that all students can benefit from vocational education programs. There is a great deal of enthusiasm in a significant proportion of the community for the aims and potential outcomes of vocational education but that support is not universal. Any lack of support may well be based on a lack of understanding of what vocational education is and what opportunities it offers.
- 10.3 The difficulties of funding and resourcing vocational education programs are creating considerable stress for schools, other VET providers such as TAFE and providers of work placement and transition services. Without additional support the improvements achieved to date will not lead to

significant long term systemic change. For cultural change to occur the benefits of VET need to be promoted and its status raised, to convince the community that it is a viable option for students in developing a career path. Changes do need to occur within schools but many of the issues raised in the report can only be addressed at government, educational sector and industry levels. Schools are often adept at developing 'work arounds' to suit the local situation but longer term strategies are required.

- 10.4 This report includes recommendations mainly aimed at longer term strategies. In summary, there is a need to:
- raise the awareness and status of VET in Schools;
 - review and improve resourcing, operating infrastructure and processes, including across educational sectors;
 - expand partnerships to include a broader base of stakeholders, including links with industry to better target vocational education offerings;
 - provide greater connections between career education, structured workplace learning, VET in Schools, vocational learning and enterprise education;
 - review the requirements of Training Packages to specify work placement requirements;
 - improve access to vocational education for students with specific needs, in particular before the post-compulsory level;
 - provide training and development opportunities for teachers;
 - increase national consistency on a range of vocational education issues; and
 - ensure the collection and compilation of adequate data on which to base policy.
- 10.5 Many of these strategies require successful cooperative arrangements, both within local communities and nationally.

Partnerships for better practice

- 10.6 Partnerships are a key component of successful vocational education programs in schools. As the community, represented by parents, industry and local agencies becomes more involved the opportunities for students to experience a range of work options increases, and changes that schools make to reinvigorate the content and style of senior school may be better received.
- 10.7 Throughout this report reference has been made to a range of partnership arrangements designed to develop collaborative practices. Locally

managed networks across the country are based on former Enterprise and Career Education Foundation (ECEP) local community partnerships, school initiated VET clusters or industry-education advisory committees, or are initiated through state or territory arrangements such as the Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLEN) in Victoria and Regional Networks in South Australia.

- 10.8 Part of the role of such partnerships is to consolidate good practice and provide direction for future improvements. Mr David Dahl, the Manager of Cross Sectoral Programs at the Riverina Institute of TAFE in NSW, commented on the need for open debate in the community to articulate the purposes of senior secondary schooling and the place of VET:

Experience drawn from around the Riverina region has shown that there is much to be gained in stimulating a community wide debate by introducing VET courses into the senior secondary curriculum. However, the benefit to be gained appears contingent upon such factors as:

- The involvement of parents and community members at an early stage in a debate about the purposes of the senior years as preparation for transition rather than as a continuation of the style of learning found in the compulsory years of schooling
- The facilitation (or mandating) of collaboration between schools and the VET sector
- The expansion of debate about the nature of and interrelationships among the 3 aspects of VET in schools (namely: accredited vocational courses, preparation for careers, enterprise education).

Open debate about such issues does not usually occur.¹

- 10.9 Key themes of this report are reflected in this statement, that there is a need to:
- debate and clarify the purposes of vocational education and VET in Schools at national, state and territory, regional and local levels;
 - encourage greater cooperation, consistency and coordination between sectors; and
 - resource systems sufficiently to deliver vocational education effectively in schools.

Cross-sector issues

- 10.10 The interface between schools, VET providers (mainly TAFE) and universities has been growing, with increasing movement of students

1 Mr David Dahl, *Submission No. 102*, p. 1.

between vocational education and universities in both directions. While there have been improvements in credit transfer arrangements, there are still fundamental differences in learning styles and assessment practices in the different sectors. These have created significant challenges for the school sector in the design of curriculum and VET programs to assist with credit transfer, while still meeting their own mission of providing the broad education outlined fully in the National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century.

- 10.11 Collaboration is occurring mainly at a local level, and is being encouraged nationally in improved articulation, joint courses and shared campuses. However, the different funding and reporting requirements of the sectors, combined with few financial incentives for collaboration, are seriously undermining the success and the possible expansion of such seamless approaches to education provision.
- 10.12 Increased recognition of VET in Schools programs for university entrance and enhancement of credit transfer arrangements between the VET and university sectors are essential in improving the pathways from school for VET in Schools students. Adopting a graded assessment approach to VET subjects may have benefits in increasing the flow of students from VET programs or TAFE into universities. However, there is still a need to retain the integrity of the competency-based standards approach of the VET sector and VET in Schools, which is highly valued by industry.

Other government initiatives

- 10.13 The aim of governments and education authorities is to increase the coordination of support for young people, using business, community and government partnerships as outlined in the New Framework for Vocational Education in Schools. The *Australians Working Together* initiative is one example of promoting greater coordination between agencies in providing assistance to young people on income support and also specifically to Indigenous students. This coordination is also demonstrated in the listing on the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) website of information on a range of issues, such as careers and transitions and programs that are available through DEST, the Department of Family and Community Services and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. However, the coordination is not ideal, as reflected in the following comment, which touches on both funding and coordination issues:

I believe we have the JPP [Jobs Pathway Programme] funding, which is touching the school, and we have the ANTA funding, which comes to Education Queensland and is then distributed to

the school. But those things are a little bit disjointed. They invariably give a good service and the structured workplace programs that we have had with ECEF funding have been good, but they sit outside the school; they are funded outside the school and we send our kids to them. The JPP does good work but, again, it is not direct funding. What we do not have is enough funding.²

- 10.14 The move to absorb ECEF into DEST reduces the number of providers but the effectiveness of these arrangements is yet to be determined. In February 2004 proposals for a new advisory board were in train and contracts for work placement coordination were continuing until the end of 2004. Any change will become apparent in 2005 when contracts will have been reviewed.
- 10.15 Greater continuity in funding allows for staffing stability and more economic resourcing, which in turn allows staff to focus on improving the quality of current programs, thus supporting greater diversity of pathways.
- 10.16 Coordinated approaches can provide a more efficient provision of services and programs for students and schools. An example of such an arrangement is SCISCO, the South Coast Industry Schools Coordinating Organisation on the Gold Coast in Queensland, a school/industry partnership that operates a range of programs including workplace learning programs, JPP, school-based traineeships which are self-funded, fee-for-service programs with schools, and Plan-It Youth, a mentoring program. Alternatively, Group Training Companies can also bring together a range of related services such as those of an RTO, New Apprenticeship Centre, Jobs Network Agency, and JPP provider. In the Northern Territory joint contracts with both the Commonwealth and Territory governments facilitate the provision.
- 10.17 Many of these programs are designed to assist in the transition from school to work. Different pathways are more appropriate for students with different needs in that transition. From a national perspective, the challenge in the next phase of the development of vocational education in schools is to ensure that those diverse pathways are supported consistently across jurisdictions to ensure similar positive outcomes.³

2 Mr John Neville, Executive Member, Queensland Secondary Principals Association, *Transcript of Evidence*, Brisbane, 9 April 2003, p. 371.

3 Recent announcements indicate that a coalition of industry, school organisations, unions and social agencies propose that the Commonwealth Government should support a National Youth Transition Service: *Australian Financial Review*, '\$240m extra aid urged for school leavers', 24 February 2004, p. 3.

Diversity and consistency

- 10.18 There is still a need for focused debate on the purposes of vocational education in schools, and specifically VET in Schools, to guide effective development of a diversity of pathways. ANTA has reported on the need for flexibility and for multiple ways to address different student and industry requirements. Without additional guidance for educational providers on the development of appropriate and effective pathways, efforts to support those who are most at risk of not successfully completing their schooling and the transition to post-school education or employment may not be well served. The needs of more academically able students appear to be more adequately met by the direction of current improvements, for example with VET recognition in university entrance requirements.
- 10.19 Diversity in pathways needs to be based on real choices, reflecting variation in learning styles, assessment methods and differing outcomes that best meet the needs of the students. Maintaining the vocational emphasis and applied learning strategies of courses is essential to ensure that there is true diversity in pathways for a broader range of students. Associate Professor John Henry of Deakin University commented critically on VET programs in Victoria prior to the introduction of the more applied Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning:
- In Victoria, VET in VCE actually changed the vocational learning experience from what seemed to be the original intent, so that the programs themselves became much more academically oriented and less about preparing young people for employment or for a pathway into the tertiary TAFE vocational education and training sector. They became more bookish in the form of experience that students had, and there was a diminishing of the work placement experiences and the sorts of activities that would prepare young people for the world of work. That is an example of how, over the past five years or so, not only in Victoria but elsewhere, VET in Schools programs have become shaped to fit the school culture and not the reverse: the vocational education and training programs, in other words, acting as a catalyst for substantial transformation.⁴
- 10.20 Real choices allow programs to engage students across the full spectrum of needs. Stand-alone courses carry considerable benefits for many students

4 Associate Professor John Henry, Director, Research Institute for Professional and Vocational Education and Training, Faculty of Education, Deakin University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 2 September 2003, Melbourne, p. 1162.

and are generally preferred by industry. However, they do have implications for student workload and university entrance, as well as requiring greater financial and human resources. It is the Committee's view that greater analysis is needed of the relative costs and benefits of each approach, and that authorities move towards a more consistent national approach bearing in mind that different subjects may be better suited to either embedded or stand-alone courses.

- 10.21 Providing additional support to meet the special needs of students with disabilities or others requiring more individual assistance similarly has additional costs. The benefits of implementing generic workplace vocational education programs for the diverse range of students needs to be considered and resourced in addition to industry-specific programs.
- 10.22 However, with the greater provision of choice, greater assistance to students is needed to help them understand the differences between the increasingly diverse range of options made available to them. The importance of effective career guidance is fundamental to this process. In some states and territories this requires policy change and extra resourcing. Developing and mapping of learning pathways between schools, vocational education and training and university would assist students understand current arrangements and possibilities for their future careers. Opportunities in later life to complement decisions made at school leaving age also need to be encouraged.
- 10.23 In addition to the range of pathways there is also a need for a range of structures and providers to support the delivery of vocational education in schools. Some regions and students have access to multiple providers who can complement each other's services, but other schools are more remotely located and may be the primary source of expertise. Funding and guidelines need to be sufficiently flexible to suit such local arrangements. The model of senior colleges appeared to be one of the most successful approaches, with sufficient numbers of students to enable the resourcing of a range of programs and flexibility in timetabling. It is acknowledged, however, that this model is most suitable for urban areas or regional centres.
- 10.24 In providing future direction for the development of pathways, the OECD review of transitions from initial education to working life in 2000 found key features of effective transition systems include well organised pathways that:
- avoid making vocational education a residual and dead-end pathway linked to poor quality jobs and directed at the lowest achievers;

- provide institutionalised bridges between vocation education and apprenticeships and tertiary education and ensure that significant proportions of students and apprentices do take this pathway;
 - provide vocational educational and training programs for less successful young people as part of safety nets rather than as ordinary vocational programmes; and
 - pay attention to the financial costs and benefits for individuals and firms.⁵
- 10.25 Many programs within states and territories are addressing these key features but some require a national approach to assist in removing barriers in order to better meet the needs of students and ensure industry confidence in the quality of vocational education in schools.

National consistency

There is no one-size-fits-all template for best practice organisational arrangements for VET in Schools. Jurisdictional variation in roles and responsibilities and local area attributes create significant difference in the patterns of implementation and many interrelated elements impact on the quality of delivery of VET in Schools. However, some common organisational characteristics will ensure a strong and sustainable framework for the continued development of VET in Schools across Australia.⁶

- 10.26 A case is made throughout this report that echoes this finding from *Organisational Best Practice Delivery of VET in Schools*. Meeting local needs is a key feature of the success of vocational education in schools, including VET in Schools. However, system, school and community and business factors all interact to influence the quality outcomes, effectiveness and administrative efficiency of VET in Schools.
- 10.27 Innovative and cooperative programs have developed in partnership with all stakeholders to suit students' and the community's needs. However, the Committee was told repeatedly of structural and system inefficiencies and deficiencies that were preventing schools from most effectively catering for their students. For this reason the Commonwealth, states and territories are encouraged to work together to resolve matters of difference that have been identified throughout this report. These include:

5 OECD, 2000, *From Initial Education to Working Life. Making Transitions Work*, Chapter 4, Key Features of Effective Transition Systems, OECD, Paris, pp. 90-91.

6 Allen Consulting Group, 2003, *Organisational Best Practice Delivery of VET in Schools*, Report to MCEETYA on Transition from School, p. 1.

- the adoption of common terminology;
 - the recognition of VET for tertiary entrance;
 - the role of and requirements for structured workplace learning;
 - issues regarding nominal hours and units of competency;
 - approaches to stand alone course versus embedding of VET components;
 - teacher training;
 - policies for the use of TAFE and private RTOs;
 - data collection standards; and
 - reporting of participation and outcomes.
- 10.28 An ANTA action plan for quality of VET in Schools has been developed for 2004, and addresses a number of these issues, including ways of improving structured workplace learning.⁷ The ANTA Ministerial Council has agreed to continue to provide \$20 million a year for VET in Schools until the end of 2006, and guidelines for funding will be reviewed in mid 2004 for 2005-06.
- 10.29 Indication of DEST funding for careers, transitions and partnerships also looks as if it will be maintained at the same 2003–2004 rate for the next four years, \$205 million.⁸ This is about four times the current budget estimate of \$51 million for 2003-04. Savings of about \$4 million over four years are expected from the administrative savings from the termination of ECEF.
- 10.30 Given the increase in participation and the range of issues that still need to be improved the Committee questions the adequacy of the funding available. The Committee urges that with the release of this report and its findings, there is a reconsideration of funding needs.
- 10.31 Both industry and government need to increase their commitment to vocational education in schools. The Committee urges all funding bodies, Commonwealth, state and territory to raise their commitment through recurrent and special purpose funding in the short and longer term to support students, teachers, schools, communities and finally industry in this essential component of education:
- If all students are to be suitably equipped with a broad range of skills and knowledge, a renewed emphasis is needed to allow vocational learning to be universally desirable, achievable and

7 ANTA, 2003, *Quality plan targets VET in schools*, <<http://www.anta.gov.au/download/VETIS.rtf>>.

8 Dr Brendan Nelson, 2004, *Careers Guidance for Young Australians*, media release, 16 February 2004 MIN 628/04, <www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/Nelson/2004/02/n628160202.asp>.

sustainable ... What is needed is a culture that values vocational learning as integral to all learning to enhance young peoples' pathways to work and lifelong learning. Teachers, recognised as key factors in student learning, have to be professionally prepared and then professionally supported in an ongoing way to maintain the importance of vocational learning.⁹

Mr Kerry Bartlett, MP
Committee Chair
March 2004

9 Australian College of Educators, 2002, Building the profession to support vocational learning, Position Paper, *Learning in a Knowledge Society: The vocational dimension*, Unicorn, Vol 28, No. 3, December 2002, p. 74.



A

Conduct of the inquiry

Advertising the inquiry

The inquiry was advertised in *The Australian* and in regional newspapers between 7 August and 30 August 2002. The Committee wrote to the relevant Commonwealth Ministers and to State and Territory Governments. In addition, the Committee wrote to over 200 educational organisations, education research bodies and relevant industry associations inviting them to make a submission.

Evidence to the inquiry

The Committee received 116 submissions from 109 parties. These submissions are listed in Appendix B.

The Committee received 129 exhibits to the inquiry, which were provided as attachments to written submissions, offered during public hearings or sent to the Committee by other parties. These are listed in Appendix C.

Public hearings

The Committee held public hearings across Australia in Canberra, ACT; Mandurah, Henderson and Perth, WA; Willunga, Hindmarsh and Adelaide, SA; East Preston and Melbourne, Vic; Crows Nest, Junee, Wagga Wagga and Sydney, NSW; Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Gladstone, Qld; and Devonport, Burnie and Hobart, Tas.

The Committee called 455 witnesses. Details of the hearings and witnesses who appeared are in Appendix D.

School and site visits

School forums and/or inspections were held at:

- Bradfield College, NSW
- Centralian College, NT
- Hellyer College, Tas
- Junee High School, NSW
- Mandurah Senior College, WA
- Marymount College, Qld
- Northland Secondary College, Vic
- Nyangatjatjara College, NT
- Robina State High School, Qld
- Taminmin High School, NT
- Tannum Sands State High School
- The Don College, Tas
- Toolooa State High School, Qld
- Wagga Wagga High School, NSW
- Willunga High School, SA
- Yirara College, NT

In total 113 students participated in the school forums. Details of the forums and participating students and teachers are in Appendix D. The Committee also visited Erindale College, ACT; Shop 94, Mandurah Shopping Centre, WA; and Hydro Tasmania, Hobart, TAS.

Transcript of hearings

At the public hearings and school forums combined, 1432 pages of evidence were recorded by *Hansard*. The transcript of evidence taken at public hearings and school forums, and copies of all written submissions, are available for inspection from the Committee Office of the House of Representatives, the National Library of Australia or on the inquiry website at:

<http://www.apf.gov.au/house/committee/edt/index.htm>

**B****List of submissions**

No.	Individual/Organisation
1	Hamilton and Alexandra College, VIC
2	Mr Andrew Britton, NSW
3	Mr Anthony Leverenz, SA
4	Greater Green Triangle Area Consultative Committee Inc, VIC
5	Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce
6	Tasmanian Building and Construction Industry Training Board
7	Housing Industry Association Limited, WA
8	Vocational Pathways, VIC
9	Cranbourne Christian College, VIC
10	Mr Chris Beatus, NSW
11	NSW SSP Principals Network (NSW Primary Principals Association)
12	Professor Lyn Yates, NSW
13	Electrotechnology, Printing, Information Technology and Communications (EPIC) Industry Training Board, VIC
14	Construction Training Queensland

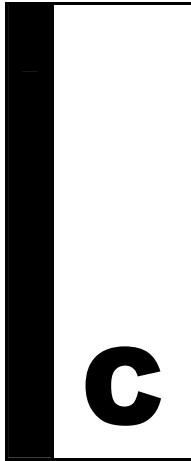
No.	Individual/Organisation
14.1	Construction Training Queensland
15	CREATE Australia, NSW
16	National Meat Industry Training Advisory Council Limited, NSW
17	PPTC Skills, WA
18	Curtin University of Technology, Faculty of Education, WA
19	Yirara College, NT
20	Deakin University, Faculty of Education, VIC
21	Fraser Cooloola District Schools, QLD
22	Hobart Education Business Training Partnership
23	Southside Education Centre, QLD
24	Nyangatjatjara College, NT
25	Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia, VIC
26	Loganlea State High School, QLD
27	VETnetwork Australia Inc, ACT
28	Gladstone Schools and Industry Network, QLD
29	WorldSkills Australia, NSW
30	Centralian College, NT
31	Catholic Secondary Schools in Cairns
32	BIGA Training Ltd, QLD
33	Australian Seafood Industry Council, ACT
34	Vincentia High School, NSW
35	Institute for Working Futures Pty Ltd, TAS
36	Ms Wendy Picone and Ms Joanna Stolz, SA

No.	Individual/Organisation
37	Construction Industry Training Board, SA
38	Northern Territory Government
39	Mr Arthur Davies, WA
39.1	Mr Arthur Davies, WA
40	Mr David Hawkey and Ms Lorna Hawkey, VIC
41	EE-Oz Training Standards (EEQSBA), NSW
41.1	EE-Oz Training Standards (EEQSBA), NSW
42	Group Training Australia, NSW
43	Victorian Farmers Federation
44	Mr Don Squires, NSW
45	Shop Distributive and Allied Employees Association, VIC
46	Mr Robert Steadman, VIC
47	Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network Inc (SGR LLEN), VIC
48	National Catholic Education Commission, ACT
49	Light Manufacturing Training Australia, VIC
50	Career Education Association of Victoria Inc
51	Association of Independent Schools of Victoria
52	La Trobe University, VIC
53	Catholic Education South Australia
53.1	Catholic Education South Australia
54	Catholic Education Office of Western Australia
55	Federation of Parents & Friends Associations of Catholic Schools, QLD

No.	Individual/Organisation
56	Ms Jo Beasley, VIC
57	Tasmanian Council of State School Parents and Friends Associations Inc
58	ECU Resources for Learning Ltd, WA
59	South Coast Industry Schools Coordinating Organisation Inc, QLD
60	Catholic Education Commission of Victoria
61	National Wholesale, Retail and Personal Services Industry Training Council, NSW
62	Australian Associations of Christian Schools, ACT
63	Western Australian Council of State School Organisations
64	South Australian Farmers' Federation
65	Western Australian Curriculum Council Secretariat
66	Queensland Catholic Education Commission
66.1	Queensland Catholic Education Commission
67	Dr Ian Cornford, NSW
68	Group Training Association, QLD and NT Inc
69	Macleay Valley Workplace Learning Centre Inc, NSW
70	Western Australian Department of Training
71	Western Australian Department of Education
72	Australian Education Union, VIC
73	Independent Education Union of Australia, VIC
74	Tyndale Parent Controlled Christian School, NSW
75	Department of Education, Science and Training
75.1	Department of Education, Science and Training

No.	Individual/Organisation
76	Australian Industry Group, NSW
77	SWISlink, WA
78	Association of Independent Schools of Tasmania
78.1	Association of Independent Schools of Tasmania
79	National Council of Independent Schools' Associations, ACT
80	Queensland Council of Parents & Citizens' Associations Inc
81	Association of Independent Schools of Queensland Inc
82	National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd, SA
83	TAFE Directors Australia, ACT
84	Enterprise and Career Education Foundation, NSW
85	Australian Council of State School Organisations Inc, ACT
86	Victorian Government
87	Junee High School, NSW
88	Queensland Secondary Principals' Association
89	Tamworth Teachers' Association, NSW
90	Australian National Training Authority, VIC
91	National Farmers' Federation Limited, ACT
92	Tasmanian Government
93	Queensland Government
94	NSW Department of Education and Training
95	Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, ACT
96	NT Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc.
97	South Australian Government

No.	Individual/Organisation
98	Engineering Employers Association, SA
99	Australasian Curriculum Assessment & Certification Authorities (ACACA), TAS
100	Photonics Institute Pty Limited, ACT
101	Dr Erica Smith, NSW
102	Mr David Dahl, NSW
103	Salisbury High School, SA
104	Don College, TAS
105	Hellyer College, TAS
106	Australian College of Educators, ACT
107	Mr Graeme Harvey, WA
108	Australian Federation of Special Education Administrators, QLD
109	Ms Patricia Magri and Ms Helen Pedel, Norfolk Island



List of exhibits

No.	From	Exhibit Title
1	Mr Anthony Leverenz	SA Training Revelation Industry Training Plan 2003-2005 (report, 2002)
2	Tasmanian Building and Construction Industry Training Board	Business Activity and Entry Level Training in the Tasmanian Construction Industry (industry background report, November 2001)
3	Vocational Pathways	Vocational Pathways: Company Background, (information sheet)
4	CREATE Australia	Attachment 1 - Information on CREATE Australia
5	CREATE Australia	Attachment 2 - Report on Social Inclusion: policy and research in the arts (research report, 2002)
6	Southside Education Centre	Appendix A - Prevention, Intervention and Re-Engagement in the Community (chart); and SEC Flyer, August 2002
7	Southside Education Centre	Appendix 2 - Comments from Students at Southside Education Centre about Schools - collated July 2002 (September 2002)
8	Southside Education Centre	Appendix 3 - Data from some Students who have been achieving Vocational Goals since November 2001

No.	From	Exhibit Title
9	Gladstone Schools and Industry Network	Links for Engineering Excellence (program)
10	WorldSkills Australia	Challenging Excellence: a Personal Challenge for every Young Australia following a Vocational Career (statement by the Board of Directors, 2002)
11	La Trobe University	Course brochures
12	Dr Ian Cornford	Learning-to-learn strategies as a basis for effective lifelong learning (article in the <i>Int. J of Lifelong Education</i> , Vol 21/4 2002)
13	Dr Ian Cornford	Schooling and vocational preparation: Is a revolution really taking place? (article in the <i>Australian Journal of Education</i> Vol 42/2 1998)
14	Dr Ian Cornford	The Location of VET in Schools: Some Important Issues (article in <i>Learning Together, Working Together</i>)
15	Macleay Valley Workplace Learning Centre Inc	Appendix 1 - The Macleay Valley Workplace Learning Centre - List of Awards and Credits
16	Western Australian Department of Training	Appendix 1 - Approved VET in Schools Qualifications for 2002
17	South West Regional Youth Committee	To VET or Not? (discussion paper, October 2002)
18	Western Australian Department of Education	Review of Enterprise and Vocational Education and Training in Schools (2001)
19	National Council of Independent Schools' Associations	Data, 1997-2001 VET in Australian Independent Schools, Tables with numbers of Schools, Students, and Curriculum Hours
20	National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd	Attachment 1 - Links between Subjects taken in Year 12 and Further Education and Labour Market Outcomes (research findings from K. Ball, NCVET and S. Lamb, ACER)

No.	From	Exhibit Title
21	National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd	Attachment 2 - School to Work Transition (excerpt from paper by C. Robinson, J. Misko and K. Ball)
22	National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd	Attachment 3 - Summary of Key Findings from S. Kilpatrick (2002)
23	National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd	Attachment 4 - VET Data Collection and Reporting (background information)
24	National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd	Attachment 5 - Paper Presented to the November 2001 Meeting of the National Training Statistics Committee (November 2001)
25	National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd	Attachment 6 - Report Presented to the ANTA National Workshop on VET-in-Schools Data Collection (August 2002)
26	Victorian Government	Attachment 1 - Local Learning and Employment Networks (information sheet)
27	Victorian Government	Attachment 2 - 2002 Certificates in VCE VET Programs (29 industry areas)
28	Victorian Government	Attachment 3 - 2002 Certificates in Part-Time Apprenticeships and Traineeships for School Students (15 industry areas)
29	Australian College of Educators	<i>Reforming Schools through Workplace Learning</i> (by J. Cumming and R. Carbines, March 1997)
30	Australian College of Educators	<i>Report of a National Meeting of Professional Educators Canberra April 2002</i> (June 2002)
31	Australian College of Educators	<i>Reforming Schools through Innovative Teaching</i> (by J. Cumming and C. Owen, February 2001)
32	Australian National Training Authority	Attachment A - Australian National Training Authority Act 1992 and ANTA Agreement 2001-2003

No.	From	Exhibit Title
33	Australian National Training Authority	Attachment B - Membership of the ANTA Board
34	Australian National Training Authority	Attachment C - A Bridge to the Future: Australia's National Strategy for Vocational Education and Training 1998-2003
35	Australian National Training Authority	Attachment D - Standards for Registered Training Organisations and Standards for State and Territory Registering/Course Accrediting Bodies
36	Australian National Training Authority	Attachment E - Stepping Forward: Improving Pathways for all Young People (presentation)
37	Australian National Training Authority	Attachment F - Principles and Guidelines for Improving Outcomes for VET in Schools 2002-2004
38	VETnetwork Australia Inc	VETnetwork Conference 2002 Survey Data
39	VETnetwork Australia Inc	VETnetworker Issue 8 Summer 2002 (national magazine of the VETnetwork Australia)
40	Australian College of Educators	Learning in a Knowledge Society: The Vocational Dimension, Vol 28 No.3 December 2002
41	VETnetwork Australia Inc	Survey Summary from the 2002 VETnetwork Australia National Conference
42	Bradfield College	Bradfield College Information Pack
43	Bradfield College	Bradfield College Industry Training Program Pack
44	Bradfield College	Bradfield College Industry Training Program Student Diaries
45	NSW Department of Education and Training	Various brochures from NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training

No.	From	Exhibit Title
46	Worldskills Australia	Leaflets: 2003-4 VET in Schools Nationals, and Regional Competitions
47	Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry	ACCI Principles of Education and Training Policy
48	Enterprise and Career Education Foundation	Towards a National Framework for Career and Transition Services (a framework endorsed by MCEETYA)
49	Dr Ian Cornford	Generic Competencies: A review of some recent literature and analysis from an historical perspective (working paper 01-04)
50	Dr Ian Cornford	Two Models for Promoting Transfer: a comparison and critical analysis (article in <i>Journal of Vocational Education and Training</i> , Vol 54 No.1 2002, pp 85-102)
51	Dr Ian Cornford	Skill Learning and the Development of Expertise (Chapter 11 from <i>Adult Educational Psychology</i> , 1999, pp 263-289)
52	NATWRAPS	Report of the MCEETYA Taskforce on Transition from Schools, July 2002
53	Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry	ACCI Schools-Industry Strategy: an integrated model for linking education to the labour market, July 1999
54	Marymount College	Summary of the Commonwealth New Apprenticeships Incentives Programme 1/1/2003 to 30/6/2003, Commonwealth Government
55	Marymount College	Marymount College Vocational Education Program
56	Australian National Training Authority	National Evaluation of School-based New Apprenticeships, Part One and Two (Report to ANTA, by the Allen Consulting Group November 2002)

No.	From	Exhibit Title
57	BIGA Training Ltd	An Evaluation of the Pilot Phase of the Youth ACCESS Program (by Dr L. Smith, March 2000)
58	Queensland Catholic Education Commission	Additional Supporting Documentation from Queensland Catholic Education Commission (9 April 2003)
59	Alice Springs Workplace Learning Community	Alternate Secondary Provision in Alice Springs (data)
60	Alice Springs Workplace Learning Community	Alice Springs Workplace Learning Community Strategic Plan 2002-2005, (prepared by S. Arlidge, Which Way Consulting)
61	Nyangatjatjara Aboriginal Corporation	Nyangatjatjara Aboriginal Corporation Newsletters
62	EE-Oz Training Standards (EEQSBA)	A Brief History of Government Funding for Industry Training 1989-2002 (report by the Industry Training Federation of New Zealand, January 2003)
63	Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Employability Skills for the Future (report, March 2002)
64	South Australian Government	Attachment 1 – Student Support Services offered to Students, Career and Transition Services
65	South Australian Government	Attachment 2 - VET Statistics
66	South Australian Government	Attachment 3 - Industry Areas (data)
67	South Australian Government	Attachment 4 - VET Delivery Arrangements in South Australia
68	South Australian Government	Attachment 5 - Qualifications from which competencies undertaken by South Australian school students have been drawn
69	South Australian Government	Attachment 6 - Organisation of VET within the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE)

No.	From	Exhibit Title
70	South Australian Government	Attachment 7 - Structured Workplace Learning
71	South Australian Government	Attachment 8 - VISA Self Assessment Guide
72	South Australian Government	Attachment 9 - VISA Operations Manual for School and TAFE Institute Staff
73	South Australian Government	Attachment 10 - Models of Good Practice Guide
74	South Australian Government	Attachment 11 - Targeted Programs and Anangu Education Services
75	South Australian Government	Attachment 12 - Letters from the Yalata Community
76	South Australian Government	Attachment 13 - Community Working Together (Article from Southern News, Term 2, 2002)
77	South Australian Government	Attachment 14 - Indulkana Anangu School Radio Program
78	South Australian Government	Attachment 15 - Leigh Creek Area School Regional Visitor Information Centre
79	South Australian Government	Attachment 16 - Roxby Downs Area School RITE Program
80	South Australian Government	Attachment 17 - Parafield Gardens High School Pathways Project
81	South Australian Government	Attachment 18 - Oakbank Area School Chinese Language Enterprise Program (Vocational Education and Learning)
82	South Australian Government	Attachment 19 - Lockleys Primary School (Vocational Learning)
83	South Australian Government	Attachment 20 - Port Lincoln Special School Enterprising Programs (Vocational Education)

No.	From	Exhibit Title
84	ACT Department of Education, Youth and Family Services	Submission to Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Education Inquiry into Vocational Education and Training, October 2002
85	Australasian Curriculum Assessment & Certification Authorities (ACACA)	2001 Report on ACACA effort required to support VET in Schools, Version 8A, April 2003
86	Australian National Training Authority	Australian National Training Authority Quality in VET in Schools Project Interim Report (by KPA Consulting, April 2003)
87	Questacon - the National Science and Technology Centre	Questacon, Review 2001/2002: Making science fun and relevant for everyone (Brochure)
88	Questacon - the National Science and Technology Centre	Background information: Photonics Awareness Program
89	Department of Education, Science and Training	The Cost of VET in Schools - An analysis of the costs of delivering VET in Schools including an analysis of cost efficiencies (Final Report, June 2003)
90	Department of Education, Science and Training	Case Studies from the project: Action research to identify innovative approaches to, and Best Practice in, Enterprise Education in Australian Schools (Report, 2003)
91	Department of Education, Science and Training	National Transition and Career Services/Products (Fact Sheet)
92	Temora High School	NSW Secondary Principal's Council Annual Report 2002-2003
93	Temora High School	Response to school survey on VET
94	Department of Education and Training, NSW	VET Wagga Wagga District Courses for the HSC 2004-2005
95	Department of Education and Training, NSW	Wagga Wagga District Annual Report 2002

No.	From	Exhibit Title
96	Mandurah Senior College	Mandurah Senior College, An Overview
97	Mandurah Senior College	Opening Statement from the Principal of Mandurah Senior College
98	Peel Local Learning and Employment Partnership - Mandurah Youth Commitment	Peel Local Learning and Employment Partnership hosted by Mandurah Youth Commitment (Opening Statement)
99	Department of Education and Training, WA	Our Youth, Our Future: Post-Compulsory Education Review Summary of the directions endorsed by the WA Government, March 2002
100	Department of Education and Training, WA	Our Youth, Our Future: Post-Compulsory Education Review, March 2002 (Report)
101	Department of Education and Training, WA	Report of the Committee appointed to Review the Interface between Education and Training in Western Australia, November 2002
102	Department of Education and Training, WA	Submissions to the Committee appointed to Review the Interface between Education and Training in Western Australia, November 2002
103	Department of Education and Training, WA	Future directions for VET in schools (Joint Policy Statement)
104	Salisbury High School	Vocational Education Training, Salisbury High School (Leaflet)
105	National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd	Australian Vocational Education and Training Statistics, Students and Courses 2002 in detail (published by NCVET for ANTA)
106	Erindale College	Erindale College Vocational Teacher Information Booklet 2003/4
107	Rural Skills Australia	Farm Recruitment: important information for people on the land, March 2003 (Brochure and CD)

No.	From	Exhibit Title
108	Rural Skills Australia	Good Times Hard Times: practical options for farm business, June 2003 (Brochure and CD)
109	Rural Skills Australia	On Track: Real Skills, Rural Future (Interactive CD)
110	Junee Railway Workshop	Presentation notes for public hearing in Junee, NSW, July 2003
111	Australian National Training Authority	Attachment A - Recognition of VET in Schools Subjects for University Entrance
112	Australian National Training Authority	Paper with update on quality in VET in schools; funding arrangements for 2004; AVETMISS compliance and VET in Schools data; National guidelines for SBNA
113	Gene Technology Access Centre	GTAC Information Pack
114	Northland Secondary College	Addressing the Causes of Skill Shortages, Bridging the Information Gap with Youth (Report by T. Van Lint and D. Knott)
115	Northland Secondary College	Industry Leadership Model for School to Work Transition, Developing Local School-Industry Partnerships (Report by T. van Lint and D. Knott)
116	Northland Secondary College	Northland Secondary College Information Pack
117	Inner Northern Local Learning and Employment Network	<i>Ntec</i> at Northland Secondary College, (Statement from D. Redfearn, LLEN)
118	Inner Northern Local Learning and Employment Network	Northern School and Industry Network Interim Report, July 2003
119	Erindale College	Vocational Education at Erindale College 2003 (Information Sheet)

No.	From	Exhibit Title
120	Erindale College	Erindale College Prospectus 2002-2003 Academic Years
121	Hobart Education Business Training Partnership	HEBTP Vocational Education and Training in Schools (Information Pack)
122	Hobart College	National Certificate in Electrotechnology (Leaflet)
123	Department of Education, Science and Training	Communications Strategy for the Here and Now Employer Segment, 15 June 2000 (Attachment by Australian National Training Authority)
124	Department of Education, Science and Training	First Progress Report, Coordination and Evaluation of the POEM and CAT Pilots (Prepared by Miles Morgan Australia for DEST, December 2002)
125	Department of Education, Science and Training	Expanding Opportunities for Youth, Greater Industry and University Recognition of Achievement in VET in Schools Courses (A Series of Papers, March 2001)
126	University of Sydney, Orange	Vocational Education and Equity in Senior Secondary Schooling, ARC SPIRT Project Report, September 2003
127	Department of Education, Tasmania	Tasmania: A State of Learning, A Strategy for Post-Compulsory Education and Training in Tasmania, August 2003
128	Australian Federation of Special Education Administrators	Submission to the Senate Inquiry into the Education of Students with Disabilities
129	Department of Education, Science and Training	Various Information Sheets from the Department of Education, Science and Training



List of hearings & witnesses

Thursday, 13 February 2003 - Canberra

VETnetwork Australia Inc

Ms Carolyn Lloyd, Treasurer and Committee Member

Ms Julie Samuels-Green, Executive Officer

Tuesday, 25 February 2003 – North Sydney

Bradfield College

Ms Janina Bauer, Manager, Industry Training

Mr Michael Hyam, Director

Ms Sharon Roberts, Acting Assistant Director

Mr Paul White, Assistant Director

Students:

Ami Goldberg

Elliott Harvey

Andrew Hellier

Deborah Jackson

Anna Martyn

Tim Plumb

Melina Purcell

Jim Seargeant

Georgina Thomas

Tahnee Wade

Julia White

Representatives from local businesses:

Mr Alan Cory, Support Manager Australasia, Sun Microsystems
Ms Mary Dennison, Administration Manager, Audio Loc Sound Design
Mr Gregory Kean, Managing Director, Lots of Watts
Dr Kim Kendall, Veterinarian, East Chatswood Cat Clinic
Mr Damian Leonard, Director, Integral Event Management

Tuesday, 25 February 2003 - Sydney**Australian Industry Group**

Mr Steve Ghost, General Manager, Education and Training
Mr Doug Wright, Special Representative

National Meat Industry Training Advisory Council Ltd

Mrs Margaret Tayar, Executive Officer and Secretary

NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training

Mr Bert Evans, Chairperson

Department of Education and Training, NSW

Mr David Collins, Director, Skills Development and Workforce Policy
Ms Leslie Loble, Deputy Director General, Strategic Planning and Regulation
Mr Bob Smith, Director, VET in Schools
Dr Gary Willmott, Assistant Director General, TAFE Educational Services

Wednesday, 26 February 2003 - Sydney**Individual**

Dr Ian Cornford

EE-Oz Training Standards (EEQSBA)

Mr Tony Palladino, Chief Executive Officer
Mr Robert Taylor, Network Executive Officer

Mr Brian Thomas, NETAG Adviser

Enterprise and Career Education Foundation

Mr Bill Healey, Chief Executive Officer

Mr Jim Syrmas, Director, Policy

Group Training Australia

Mr James Barron, Chief Executive Officer

Mr Jeff Friday, National Development Officer

National Wholesale, Retail and Personal Services Industry Training Council

Ms Jeannette Allen, Executive Director

Mr Ian Blandthorn, Chief Executive and Co Chair

University of Technology, Sydney

Professor Lyn Yates, Professor of Teacher Education

Worldskills Australia

Ms Jeanne Raper, Manager, VET in Schools Program

Thursday, 6 March 2003 - Canberra

Association of Independent Schools of South Australia

Mr Garry Le Duff, Executive Director

National Council of Independent Schools' Associations

Mr Bill Daniels, Executive Director

Ms Christine Klee, Director, Vocational Education and Training, Redlands College

Thursday, 20 March 2003 - Canberra

TAFE Directors Australia

Mr Phillip Clarke, National Board Member

Ms Margaret Fanning, Executive Director

Mr Kim Fillingham, Member

Ms Sheryl Mackie, Member

Thursday, 27 March 2003 - Canberra**Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry**

Mr Steve Balzary, Director, Employment and Training

Ms Mary Nicolson, National Manager, Business and Industry School to Work Alliance

Tuesday, 8 April 2003 - Burleigh Waters, Qld**Brisbane Catholic Education Commission**

Mr Neville McDonald, Area Supervisor

Marymount College

Mrs Joy Baird, Business Studies Coordinator

Ms Toni Bressan, Teacher

Mrs Gayle Jenkins, Home Economics/Hospitality Coordinator

Mr Michael Laidler, Deputy Principal

Ms Barbara McCarthy, Computer Coordinator

Mr Michael Pahoff, President, Parents & Friends Association

Mr Robert Peacock, Principal

Ms Ann Rebgetz, Assistant Principal, Administration

Mr Jason Sessarago, Vocational Education/Careers Coordinator

Students:

Sterling Alexiou Stephen Bagg

Jessica Barrett Frances Burns

Sarah Cole Kathryn Durie

Ryan Emerson Brett Jenkins

Jema Krause Mallory Lowe

Andres Palomar Matthew Pearce

Representatives from local businesses:

Mr Robert Brown, Assistant Store Manager, Big W

Mr Raymond Beaufiles, Managing Director, RJ Beaufiles & Son Pty Ltd

Mrs Karen Graham, Education Services Officer, The Gold Coast Bulletin

Mrs Karen Hannaford, Director, Lollipop Lane Child Care

Mrs Robyn Lindsay, Company Director, Sunburn

Ms Fran Ward, Training Manager, Sea World Nara Resort

Queensland Catholic Education Commission

Ms Gabrielle Power-West, Executive Officer, Post
Compulsory/Curriculum

South Coast Industry Schools Coordinating Organisation (SCISCO)

Mr David Ramsay, Career Consultant

Tuesday, 8 April 2003 - Robina, Qld

Individuals

Mr Brent Anthony

Education Queensland

Mrs Julie Grantham, Executive Director, Schools Gold Coast South

Robina State High School

Mr Chris Kern, Deputy Principal

Mrs Jeanette MacDonald, Head of Department, Senior Schooling

Mrs Lyn McKenzie, Principal

Mrs Jenny Tobin, Deputy Principal

Students:

Matt Anthony Sarah Kingsley

Kayleigh Pickrell Mark Tomkinson

Former Student:

Mr James Smith

Representatives from local businesses:

Mr Gary Appleby, Training Team Coordinator, Riviera Marine

Mr Mathew Hill, Head Chef, Robina Tavern

Mrs Katie Partridge, Retail Traineeship Adviser, McDonald's Australia Ltd

Ms Fran Ward, Training Manager, Sea World Nara Resort

Wednesday, 9 April 2003 - Brisbane

Australian National Training Authority

Ms Moira Scollay, Chief Executive Officer

Mr Adrian Stephens, Director, Client Relationships

BIGA Training Ltd

Mr Matthew Row, Acting Operations Manager

Mr Robert Row, Chief Executive Officer

Department of Employment and Training, Qld

Mr Rod Camm, General Manager, Training Quality and Regulation

Ms Zea Johnston, General Manager, Strategic Directions

Mr Chris Robinson, Deputy Director General

Queensland Catholic Education Commission

Miss Theresa Creagh, Project Officer, ETRF

Mr Joe McCorley, Executive Director

Ms Gabrielle Power-West, Executive Officer, Post
Compulsory/Curriculum

Queensland Council of Parents & Citizens Associations Inc

Mr Garry Cislowski, State President

Mr Greg Donaldson, Coordinator, Operations Support Unit

Department of Education, Qld

Mr Robert Barton, Assistant Director, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Education Unit

Mr Bob McHugh, Assistant Director General, Planning, Resourcing and
Performance

Mr Ken Smith, Director General

Ms Jude Williams, Acting Manager, Pathways Team

Queensland Secondary Principals' Association

Mr Jeffrey Major, Delegate for the Geebung and Stafford District Principals

Mr John Neville, Executive Member

Mr Ross Smith, Vice President, Curriculum

Queensland Studies Authority

Mr Ian Fyfe, Principal Education Officer (VET)

South Coast Industry Schools Coordinating Organisation Inc

Mr Stewart Cooke, Chairperson

Ms Andrea Meredith, Programs Manager

Ms Maureen Romanet, Head of Department, Elanora State High School

Thursday, 10 April 2003 - Gladstone, Qld**Individuals**

Ms Kerry Bedford

Mrs Tracey Cook

Central Queensland Institute of TAFE

Mrs Stephanie Fry, Educational Business Manager, Central Queensland Institute of TAFE

Central Queensland University, Gladstone Campus

Dr Roberta Harreveld, Senior Lecturer, Professional and Vocational Education

Professor Robert Prater, Head of Campus

Education Queensland

Mr David Manttan, Executive Director, Schools

Gladstone Indigenous Vocation and Enterprise Network (GIVEN)

Mr Robert Buck, Coordinator

Schools and Industry Network, Gladstone Region

Mr Rod Coleman, Manager, Schools and Industry Network, Gladstone Region

Tannum Sands State High School

Mr John Adie, Deputy Principal

Mr Rohan Brooks, Deputy Principal

Mr Malcolm Connolly, Head of Department, Practical Arts

Mr Wayne Hay, Head of Department, Business Education

Mr Raymond Johnston, Principal

Students:

Jason Bedford

Tracey Gainey

Patrina Prange

Former students:

Miss Kimberley Beare

Mr Ben Dunstan

Toolooa State High school

Mrs Julie Conti, Teacher

Mrs Loris Corowa, Community Education Counsellor

Mrs Raelene Fysh, Deputy Principal

Ms Debra Pacey, VET Coordinator

Mr Gregory Wade, Head of Department, Vocational Studies and Design

Students:

Ashleigh Andrews

Kingsley Caldwell

Janelle Patroni

Ian Robinson

Former Student:

Miss Ashley Herbener

Representatives from local businesses:

Mr Ronald Hawkins, Board Member, Comalco Community Fund

Mr Cameron Hoare, Manager, Technical Services & Engineering, NRG Gladstone Operating Services Pty Ltd,

Mr Bruce Loveday, Service Manager, Andersons Auto City

Mr Alban Manning, Manager, Monadelphous Engineering

Mr John Marxsen, Maintenance Training Specialist, NRG Gladstone Operating Services Pty Ltd

Mr Peter O'Sullivan, Safety and Employee Relations Manager, Gladstone Port Authority

Miss Robyn Sermon, Community Relations Superintendent, Comalco

Ms Julie Wood, Field Officer, Gladstone Area Group Apprentices Ltd

Monday, 28 April 2003 - Darwin

NT Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc

Mrs Carole Frost, Chief Executive Officer

Ms Terri-Ann Maney, Manager, Training Services

Department of Employment, Education and Training, NT

Ms Carmelita Dunn, General Manager, Indigenous Education Division

Mr Kim Jenkinson, General Manager, Employment and Training

Mr Peter Plummer, Chief Executive Officer

Tuesday, 29 April 2003 - Darwin

Group Training NT

Mr Michael Harrison, Chief Executive Officer

Mr Paul McConnell, Business Development Manager

NT Industry Training Bureau

Mr Barry Cramond, Chairperson, Management Committee, Darwin VET in Schools Workplacement Centre

Miss Shannon Spark, Manager, Darwin VET in Schools Workplacement Centre

Taminmin High School

Mr Ross Anderson, Teacher, Technical Studies

Ms Rose Calland, Assistant Principal

Mr Mark Clemmens, Trainer, Multimedia

Ms Suzanne D'Arcy, Teacher, Information Technology

Mrs Robyn Morrison, ET2, Senior School Coordinator

Mr Kai Pedersen, Teacher, Engineering, Technical Studies

Mr Maurice Rousell, Senior Teacher, Agriculture and Technical Studies

Mr Kim Rowe, Principal

Mr Tim Sinclair, Teacher, VET Music

Students:

Danya Briscoe

Jannah Calvano

Ross Caswell

Megan Caswell

Cavan Edwards

Rebecca Erkelens

Dean Forrest

Jim Freese

Nathan Gribben

Troy Inall

Bill Lawrence

Rebecca McAlear

Lucas Mijota

John Payne

Bobby Risk

Wednesday, 30 April 2003 - Alice Springs

Arrente Council

Mr Geoffrey Miller, Training and Employment Coordinator

Centralian College

Ms Liz Abotomey, Lecturer/Coordinator, Hairdressing

Ms Judy Bell, Assistant to Associate Director, Business, Arts and Tourism

Mrs Amanda Cawthorne-Crosby, Lecturer/Coordinator, Children's Services

Ms Sabina Smith, Associate Director, Secondary

Mr Victor Varley, Lecturer, Trades and VET in Schools Coordinator

Mr Don Zoellner, Executive Director

Students:

Camille Batson

Yolanda Erlandson

Julian Galindo

Roxy Murn

Kelly Smith

Representatives from local businesses:

Mr Gerd Beurich, General Manager, Alice Springs Resort

Mrs Dianne Sheedy, Owner, Alice Auto Repairs

Mrs Wendy de Souza, Owner, Cutting Remark Hairdressing

Group Training Northern Territory

Ms Kathryn James-Walsham, Field Officer, School Based Apprenticeships

Tangentyere Council

Mr Tony Linn, Training/Employment Coordinator

Yirara College

Mrs Coralie Boyd, IESIP Tutor

Rev Mark Doecke, Principal

Mrs Ann Goodwin, NTOEC Supervisor

Mr Graeme Hastwell, Academic Coordinator

Mr Graeme Phillips, Pathways Coordinator

Students:

Lekesha Armstrong

Marie Jane Bailey

Dane Campbell

Edwin Cook

Beverly Impu

Scott Rivers

Marissa Wollogorang

Nerileen Wollogorang

Athelita Yunupingu

Thursday, 1 May 2003 - Alice Springs

Alice Springs High School, Future Directions

Ms Jo Bartlett, Coordinator

Mr Justin Emerson, Teacher

Alice Springs Workplace Learning Community

Mr Anthony Pickett, Work Placement Program Coordinator

Ms Colleen Devlin

Centralian College

Mr Robert Chapman, Manager, VET in Schools

Mr Marty Isaksen, Pathways Lecturer

Gap Youth Centre Aboriginal Corporation

Ms Linda Chellew, Project Manager, Deadly Mob Projects

Group Training Northern Territory

Ms Kathryn James-Walsham, Field Officer, School Based Apprenticeships

Tangentyere Council

Ms Amanda Ahmat, Manager, Tangentyere Job Shop

Ms Heather Laughton, Coordinator, IHANT Employment & Training Unit

Mr Tony Linn, Training/Employment Coordinator, Arrernte Council

Mr Peter Lowson, Coordinator, Youth Activity Services

Ms Leonie Sheedy, Coordinator, Yarrenyty-Arltere Learning Centre

Friday, 2 May 2003 - Yulara

Nyangatjatjara Aboriginal Corporation

Mr Wayne Anthoney, Project Manager

Mr Clive Scollay, Chief Executive Officer

Nyangatjatjara College

Mr Chris Ashby, Program Development Officer

Mr Jorge Gonzalez, Teacher, Transition to Work Program Coordinator

Mr Ian White, Principal

Mr Harry Wilson, Teacher/Anangu Liaison Officer

Thursday, 5 June 2003 - Canberra

Photonics Institute Pty Limited

Mr Lee Ridge, Chief Operating Officer

Questacon - the National Science and Technology Centre

Professor Graham Durant, Director

Mr Graham Smith, Manager, Outreach Programs

Thursday, 26 June 2003 - Canberra**Department of Education, Science and Training**

Mr Tony Greer, Group Manager, Schools Group

Mr Colin Walters, Group Manager, Vocational Education and Training Group

Ms Shelagh Whittleston, Branch Manager, Enterprise and Career Education Branch, Schools Group

Tuesday, 1 July 2003 - Junee**Individuals**

Dr Erica Smith

Cootamundra High School

Mr Garry Mason, Principal

Department of Education and Training, NSW

Mr Bruce Norton, District VET Consultant, Wagga Wagga District Education Office

Junee High School

Mr Robert Barrett, Inaugural Chairperson and Member, Junee High School Vocational Education Committee

Mr Frederick Byrne, Careers Adviser

Mrs Leonie Cooper, Ancillary Support

Mr John Dietsch, Head Teacher

Mrs Judith Gentle, Hospitality Teacher

Mrs Sharon Hewson, Intern

Ms Marie Knight, Vocational Education Coordinator

Mr Philip Wood, Deputy Principal

Mr Lee Wright, Principal

Students:

Carl Baldry

Amanda Carter

Shara Couchman

Amy Heinjus

Mitchell Lawson

Courtney McNamara

Thomas Smith

Melissa Watterson

Jenna Woodall

Former students:

Mr Jason Barrett

Mr Mitchell Sweeney

Representatives from local businesses:

Mr Normon Bray, Partner, Hart and Bray

Mr Anthony Butt, Managing Director, TLB Industries

Mr Andrew Clinton, Managing Director, Junee Railway Workshop

Mr Ian Cooper, Secretary/Manager, Junee District Cooperative Society Ltd

Mr Neil Druce, Managing Director, Green Grove Organics

Mr Aaron Fuller, Community Development Officer, Junee Shire Council

Mr Colin Macaulay, Manager of Engineering Services, Junee Shire Council

Mr Roger Moore, Partner, Moore Ford

Mr Jim Wallace, Secretary/Manager, Junee Ex-Services Memorial Club

Temora High School

Mr Christopher Grant, Principal

Wednesday, 2 July 2003 - Wagga Wagga

Department of Education and Training, NSW

Mr Peter Brabin, Chief Education Officer, Wagga Wagga District Office

Koorinal High School

Mr Glyn Leyshon, Principal

Lockhart Central School

Mr Brian Buckley, Principal

Mount Austin High School

Mr Colin Feather, Deputy Principal

TAFE NSW - Riverina Institute

Mrs Judy Gissing, TVET Coordinator

Wagga Wagga Compact

Mrs Helen Renshaw, Workplace Coordinator

Wagga Wagga High School

Mr Nathan Gunter, IT Teacher and Computer Coordinator

Mr Anthony Harpley, Head Teacher TAS

Mrs Jan Nulty, Hospitality Teacher

Mr Michael Powell, Deputy Principal

Mr Gregory Robertson, Head Teacher Computing

Mr William Rogers, Principal

Students:

Michael Atwell

Hailey Burgess

Nathan Edyvean

Megan Garnsey

Matthew Hazell

Caleb Richards

Sally Taber

Mitchell Vidler

Nelson West

Kristie Westblade

Monday, 4 August 2003 - Mandurah, WA**Challenger TAFE**

Mr Michael O'Loughlin, Acting Managing Director

Mandurah Senior College

Mrs Michelle Fletcher, Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator

Mr Keith King, Principal

Mr Damian Shuttleworth, Manager, Enterprise & Industry Program

Mr Gary Yates, Deputy Principal

Students:

Tobi-Anne Meakins

Adam Pegg

Rebecca Selkirk

Phillip Weary

Mandurah Youth Commitment Inc

Mr Graeme Harvey, Executive Officer

Murdoch University

Ms Deborah Hamblin, Manager Regional Development

SWISlink

Ms Jocelyn Hope, Cluster Coordinator

Site Visit

Shop 94, Mandurah Shopping Centre

Monday, 4 August 2003 - Henderson, WA

Austal Ships Pty Ltd

Miss Maree Brookes, Senior Human Resource Officer

Mr Grant Howorth, Human Resources Manager

Tuesday, 5 August 2003 - Perth

Career Education Association of Western Australia

Mr David Carney, President

Careerlink

Mr Andrew Arnold, Head of Department, Design and Technology,
St Stephen's School

Mrs Kathleen Davey, Executive Officer

Mrs Sue-Ellen Dean-Bull, Head of Department, St Stephen's School

Ms Cathy Moore, Careers Counsellor and Head of Enterprise and IT,
Mater Dei College

Catholic Education Office of Western Australia

Mr John Nelson, Post-Compulsory Education Consultant

Chamber Minerals and Energy of WA Inc

Mr Eamon Moore, Executive Officer, Education

Curriculum Council of Western Australia

Mr Rees Barrett, Director, Accreditation and Moderation

Mrs Norma Jeffery, Chief Executive Officer

Curtin University of Technology

Professor Graham Dellar, Dean, Faculty of Education, Language Studies and Social Work

Department of Education and Training, WA

Mr Malcolm Goff, Acting Deputy Director General, Training

Mr Robert Player, General Manager, Training

Mr Gregory Robson, Executive Director, Teaching and Learning, Curriculum Policy and Support

Wednesday, 6 August 2003 - Willunga, SA**Willunga High School**

Mr Paul Billows, Principal

Mr Trevor Bray, Teacher

Mr Rodney Grant, VET Coordinator

Mr Jim McLean, Teacher

Ms Louise Megaw, Teacher

Mr Graham Murray, Teacher

Mr Grant Trueman, Teacher

Students:

Andrew Dallimore

Scott Ledgard

Gemma Murray

Hayley Simon

Matt Stanbury

Wednesday, 6 August 2003 - Hindmarsh, SA**Department of Education and Children's Services, SA**

Mr Ross Treadwell, Assistant Director, School and Preschool Technologies

Technology School of the Future

Mr Kym Nadebaum, ICT Consultant

Mr Stephen O'Connor, ICT Consultant

Mr John Travers, Manager

Thursday, 7 August 2003 - Adelaide**Catholic Education Office South Australia**

Mr Bernie Fitzsimons, Senior Education Adviser

Mrs Helen O'Brien, Coordinator of Curriculum and Education Services

Construction Industry Training Board

Ms Catherine Carn, Entry Level Training Manager

Mr Stephen Larkins, Chief Executive Officer

Mr Robert Stewart, Chief Executive Officer

Department of Education and Children's Services, SA

Mrs Marlene Boundy, State Program Manager, Futures Connect Strategy

Ms Susan Hyde, District Superintendent, Central South West

Douglas Mawson Institute of Technology

Mr Michael Mulvihill, Managing Director

National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd

Dr Tom Karmel, Managing Director

Mr Brian Knight, Manager

Regency Institute of TAFE

Mr Stephen Kelton, Director

Salisbury High School

Ms Alice George, Assistant Principal, Senior School

Mr Jeff Kennett, VET Coordinator

Mr Richard Megaw, Teacher

Ms Helen Paphitis, Principal

Thursday, 14 August 2003 - Canberra**Australian College of Educators**

Mr Michael Bradley, ACT President

Mr Peter Bulkeley, Project Manager

Professor Andrew Gonczi, Member of Council

Thursday, 21 August 2003 - Canberra**Rural Skills Australia**

Mr Geoff Bloom, Executive Director

Mr Niel Jacobsen, VET in Schools National Coordinator

Tuesday, 2 September 2003 - Melbourne**Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia**

Ms Hazel Day, Executive Officer

Mr Alan Ross, Member

Australian Education Union

Mr Wayne Craig, Member

Mr Rex Hewett, Federal TAFE Secretary

Ms Meredith Peace, Deputy Vice President, Secondary Sector Victorian Branch

Career Education Association of Victoria Inc

Ms Bernadette Gigliotti, Treasurer

Ms Julie Ryan, President

Deakin University

Professor John Henry, Director, Research Institute for Professional and Vocational Education and Training, Faculty of Education

Impact Creativity Centre

Mrs Joanne Beasley, Business Manager

Mr Malcolm Beasley, Chief Executive Officer

Shop Distributive and Allied Employees Association

Ms Therese Bryant, National Education and Training Officer

Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network

Ms Jennifer Dalton, Committee Member

Victorian Independent Education Union of Australia

Mr Harry Dobson, Careers Teacher

Mr Paul Fairlie, Teacher

Ms Cathy Hickey, Education Officer

Wednesday, 3 September 2003 - Melbourne**AusBiotech Ltd**

Dr Tony Coulepis, Executive Director

Electrotechnology, Printing, Information Technology and Communications (EPIC) Industry Training Board

Mr Rob Gullan, Executive Director

Mr Sean McCormick, Member of Divisional Council

Gene Technology Access Centre

Mr Brian Stevenson, Program Manager

Light Manufacturing Training Australia

Ms Tamara Hamilton-Noy, Vic TCF&L ITAB Executive Officer

Ms Andrea Maksimovic, Vic TCF&L ITAB Executive Officer

Mr William Tree, NSW Executive Officer

Ms Sue Woodward, General Manager

National Electrical and Communications Association (NECA) Victoria

Mr Philip Green, Chief Executive Officer

Printing Industries Association Australia

Mr James Hargrave, Employee Relations Officer

VICTEC Ltd

Mr Maurice Graham, Chief Executive Officer

Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce

Mr Kevin Redfern, General Manager, Industrial Relations and Training

Mrs Leyla Yilmaz, Industrial Relations Manager

Wednesday 3 September 2003 – East Preston**Northland Secondary College**

Ms Genevieve Baar, VCAL Coordinator

Mr Martin Coogan, Music Coordinator

Ms Raffaella Galati-Brown, Principal

Mr Daniel Knott, Community Industry Partnership Facilitator

Mr Mark Russell, Multimedia Teacher

Ms Julianne Spring, Careers/VET/MIPS Coordinator

Students:

Zil Jach

Chris Kirby

Kahli Lutterel

Kanapathy Ramasamy

Arthur Sargiotis

Representatives from local businesses:

Mr Noel Benton, Chairperson, Northern Stainless Steel Skills Development Group

Mr David Redfearn, Industry Liaison, Inner Northern Local Learning and Employment Network

Mr Frank Spranger, Business Development Officer, Darebin City Council

Mr Wayne Thiesinger, Head of Department, Faculty of Engineering,
Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE

Thursday 18 September 2003 – Site Visit

Erindale College, Erindale, ACT

Tuesday, 30 September 2003 - Devonport

The Don College

Mrs Pam Baker, Assistant Principal

Mrs Ann Hodgkinson, Teacher

Mr John Lee-Archer, Principal

Mr Phillip Purnell, VET in Schools Development Officer

Mr John Thompson, VET Programs Coordinator

Students:

Rebecca Carey

Grant Cooper

Rachel van Tatenhove

Joshua Williams

Representatives from local businesses

Ms Kerrily Jamieson, Manager, Jamieson Traders

Ms Vicki Shegog, Manager, Imaginarium Science Centre

Mr Frank Webb, Proprietor, Birchmore

Tuesday, 30 September 2003 - Burnie

Hellyer College

Mr Jeff Beddows, VET IT Coordinator

Mr Michael Brakey, Principal

Mr James Eaton, Teacher

Mr Stewart Hoyt, VET Engineering Coordinator

Mr Chris Lynch, VET Music Industry Coordinator

Mrs Cheryl McDivitt, VET in Schools Development Officer

Mr Philip Richardson, VET Transport & Distribution Coordinator

Mr Ashley Rist, VET Automotive Coordinator

Mr Graeme Rollins, VET Tourism Coordinator

Students:

Fiona Brooks

Sheldon Coyne

Sheree Dare

Daniel Flint

Patina Franklin

Grant Hasler

Cassandra Mansfield

Representatives from local businesses

Mrs Jennie Gibbons, Human Resources Officer, Australian Paper - Burnie

Mr Mark Lilloco, Senior Assembly Supervisor, Caterpillar Elphinstone

Mr Grant Scolyer, Services Manager, Onecare Umina Park

Mrs Rhonda Webber, Coordinator, Coastal Family Day Care Scheme

Mr Kevin Young, Managing Director, Angus and Robertson Bookshop, Burnie

Marist Regional College

Ms Judith Watson, VET Coordinator

Wednesday, 1 October 2003 - Hobart

Association of Independent Schools of Tasmania

Mr Tony Crehan, Executive Director

Mr Roderic Grosvenor, School to Work Project Officer

Australasian Curriculum Assessment and Certification Authorities (ACACA)

Mr Malcolm Salier, Chair

Department of Education, Tasmania

Mr Robert Dobson, Senior Project Officer, VET in Schools

Mr Nicholas Evans, Director, Strategic Planning and Development

Mr Michael Stevens, Deputy Secretary, VET Strategies

Hobart Education Business Training Partnership

Ms Elaine Brown, Committee Member

Ms Penny Driessen, Executive Officer

Ms Jodie Stephenson, Committee Member and Deputy Chairperson

Site Visit

Hydro Tasmania, Hobart

Thursday, 27 November 2003 - Canberra**Department of Education, Science and Training**

Ms Aurora Andruska, Group Manager, Vocational Education and Training Group

Mr Tony Greer, Group Manager, Indigenous and Transitions Group

Ms Suzi Hewlett, Director, Industry Skills Section, Industry Training Branch, Vocational Education and Training Group

Mr Ben Johnson, Branch Manager, New Apprenticeships Branch, Vocational Education and Training Group

Ms Shelagh Whittleston, Branch Manager, Transitions Branch, Indigenous and Transitions Group



Stepping Forward

In July 2002, Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministers for Education, Training, Employment, and Youth Affairs signed up to the joint Ministerial Declaration *STEPPING FORWARD – improving pathways for all young people*. This joint Ministerial Declaration outlined Ministers' vision and commitment to all young Australians and provided a common direction for improving social, educational and employment outcomes for all young people.

MCEETYA asked the Transition from Schools Taskforce to develop an action plan for the declaration which included ways of strengthening community support for young people through partnerships across all levels of government and with local communities.

The following tables are a companion to the Ministerial Declaration *Stepping Forward – improving pathways for all young people*. A key resource is the *Stepping Forward – Sharing what works*, which is a collection of initiatives relating to young people in transition. It can be found at www.curriculum.edu.au/mceetya/stepping/recommendations/about.htm

The five key areas for action are:

- education and training as the foundation leading to pathways for effective transition for all young people;
- access to career and transition support;
- responding to the diverse needs of young people;
- promulgating effective ways to support young people; and
- focused local partnerships and strategic alliances.

To ensure the effectiveness of this action plan, jurisdictions have been asked to report on the progress they have made against the plan through building on existing initiatives and commencing new initiatives. A progress report will be presented to MCEETYA in 2004.

Table 1 Education and training as the foundation for effective transition for all young people

Outcomes	Area of specific activity	Key agencies
Higher retention and completion rates and less young people disengaged with the senior years of schooling	Foster a philosophy of education to Year 12 or its vocational equivalent by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ implementing policies and practices that promote early recognition of risk of disengagement and intervention, ▪ implementing policies and practices that promote equality of pathways, ▪ providing seamless pathways from compulsory to post-compulsory education, ▪ implementing the National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first century, ▪ considering the role of income support such as Youth Allowance in keeping young people in education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State/Territory education systems and non-government school authorities ▪ DEST ▪ ECEF ▪ FaCs
An integrated education system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertake enterprise and career education programs. ▪ Include enterprise and career education in the compulsory years of schooling. ▪ Provide access to Vocational Education and Training (VET). ▪ Provide industry experience to VET students in the post-compulsory years of schooling. ▪ Promote students' engagement in real life learning contexts. ▪ Provide opportunities for students to extend knowledge and experiences of learning and work options that may be available within rural, remote or regional settings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State/Territory education systems and non-government school authorities ▪ DEST ▪ ECEF ▪ Business/Employer ▪ DEWR/Job Network ▪ FaCs
In partnership, schools and the community enrich the experiences of young people to prepare for life transitions Teachers skilled in partnership development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participate in local community activities through learning which involves schools, community and industry. ▪ Develop recommendations of FaCS' Due Credit initiative. ▪ Promote, support and recognise student involvement in Youth Development Programs. ▪ Focus leadership training on change management and school transformation. ▪ Focus on Youth Development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State/Territory education systems and non-government school authorities ▪ DEST ▪ ECEF ▪ Business/Employers ▪ AFOYO ▪ FaCs ▪ Community organisations

Source <http://www.curriculum.edu.au/mctyapdf/matrices.pdf>

Table 2 Access to career and transition support

Outcomes	Area of Specific activity	Key agencies
<p>Young people are educated to make informed decisions</p> <p>Seamless processes available for all young people in need</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure access to career and transition support, particularly at key episodes when decisions are made which affect future life choices. ▪ Provide support from an integrated, coordinated network of professionals including teachers, youth workers and community workers. ▪ Provide and support professionally trained and committed career and transition support staff including teachers, youth workers and community workers. ▪ Implement the new Career and Transition Framework outlining roles and responsibilities of stakeholders. ▪ Provide appropriate levels of support for connected, at risk, and disconnected young people, offering early interventions and long term assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State/Territory education systems and non-government school authorities ▪ Youth and welfare support agencies ▪ Juvenile justice ▪ Centrelink ▪ Local government ▪ DEST ▪ ECEF
<p>All young people participate in an ongoing learning pathways planning process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All young people develop a learning pathway plan. ▪ Individual pathway planning support, such as case management and mentoring, is provided to young people at risk. ▪ All students develop a portfolio to document and articulate skills and achievements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State/Territory education systems and non-government school authorities ▪ Youth and welfare support agencies ▪ Juvenile justice ▪ Centrelink ▪ Local government ▪ DEST ▪ ECEF
<p>Work place learning opportunities are available</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide access to effective employment preparation and placement programs and accredited training opportunities including VET, Structured Workplace Learning and other opportunities. ▪ Develop networks and partnerships with local community and industry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State/Territory education systems and non-government school authorities ▪ DEST ▪ ECEF ▪ Business/Employers

Table 2 - Access to career and transition support (continued)

Outcomes	Area of Specific activity	Key agencies
Follow up mechanisms are in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide access to follow up support if required to ensure successful transitions. ▪ Determine destinations of students by developing and implementing monitoring and tracking systems to identify young people who require follow up support. ▪ Establish cross-agency protocols to enable effective follow up support. ▪ Develop processes for local networks for the provision of follow up support for those who require it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State/Territory education systems and non-government school authorities ▪ DEST ▪ ECEF

Source <http://www.curriculum.edu.au/mctyapdf/matrices.pdf>

Table 3 Responding to the diverse needs of young people

Outcomes	Area of specific activity	Key agencies
Programs are flexible and varied to provide quality solutions to the full range of needs of young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve education and training programs to ensure equitable outcomes for particular groups of young people as well as communities with special needs. ▪ Create support networks for all young people which provide access to education and training in supportive and flexible environments. ▪ Create networks in collaboration with the targeted audience and their communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State/Territory education systems and non-government school authorities ▪ DEST ▪ ECEF
Policies and practices are in place to recognise and respond to young people at risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure appropriate intervention and early response strategies for those at risk of not participating effectively in education and training. ▪ Develop local programs that promote positive images that value young people and celebrate their achievements. ▪ Explore options for creating new models of schooling/education and partnerships with youth organisations to create more diverse options for young people in their transition pathways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State/Territory education systems and non-government school authorities ▪ DEST ▪ ECEF
More young people are retained in education and/or training, especially those at risk or with special needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide a greater range of alternative education and training opportunities that are relevant to young people who are unable to participate in mainstream education and identify where there is a need for alternatives. ▪ Engage stakeholders from across jurisdictions and agencies innovate new and complementary learning opportunities. ▪ Focus on youth development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State/Territory education systems and non-government school authorities ▪ DEST ▪ ECEF

Source <http://www.curriculum.edu.au/mctyapdf/matrices.pdf>

Table 4 Promulgating effective ways to support young people

Outcomes	Area of specific activity	Key agencies
There is coordination of approaches within and across governments to ensure young people are effectively supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure links between government tiers and across government by facilitating coordinated approaches, defining partnership roles and responsibilities and developing strategies for the future. ▪ Create champions within government departments and community partnerships. ▪ Work with other Ministerial Councils and taskforces to develop a consistent message and a coordinated comprehensive approach. ▪ Develop a checklist to be completed prior to establishing new programs to avoid duplication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All departments at all levels of government ▪ MCEETYA
Young people understand government and community support approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop policies and programs that support the provision of holistic delivery at the local level to reduce fragmentation of purpose and effect. ▪ Ensure appropriate ease of access. ▪ Initiate actions which drive the cultural change necessary to forge strong partnerships between schools, businesses and communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State/Territory education systems and non-government school authorities ▪ DEST ▪ ECEF
Young people are empowered to be innovative and responsive to change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage an environment of change, innovation and a focus on customer service. ▪ Ensure young people can engage in 'real life/authentic' activities including community and work based activities which promote innovation and enterprise. ▪ Support the involvement of young people in policy and procedures decision making. ▪ Promote and implement enterprise education as a necessary and complementary aspect of successful transitions. ▪ Develop an enterprising culture within schools which permeates partnerships within the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State/Territory education systems and non-government school authorities ▪ DEST ▪ ECEF ▪ Business/Employers ▪ FaCs

Table 4 - Promulgating effective ways to support young people (continued)

Outcomes	Area of specific activity	Key agencies
Communities with high needs receive the necessary support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initiate and strengthen cross-agency solutions for those communities in high need of services. ▪ Develop programs which specifically target the needs of young people in the full range of 'at risk' categories. ▪ Collate information on the development and implementation of cross-agency collaborations focused on transition to start local discussions leading towards a coordinated local action plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State/Territory education systems and non-government school authorities ▪ DEST ▪ ECEF ▪ Business/Employers ▪ Local government

Source <http://www.curriculum.edu.au/mctyapdf/matrices.pdf>

Table 5 Focused local partnerships and strategic alliances

Outcomes	Area of specific activity	Key agencies
<p>Active thriving partnerships exist in local communities</p> <p>The community – its people and facilities – are recognised as an essential part of the learning resources to be utilised in the provision of learning opportunities</p> <p>Community centres such as youth centres, arts centres, youth development centres and church agencies become hubs for young people, especially those who have become disconnected from schools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create new and strengthen existing partnerships between schools, other education and training providers, industry, business, government and non-government organisations to create learning in a range of contexts. ▪ Promote effective communication strategies between schools, employers and local communities. ▪ Ensure young people have the opportunities to contribute and participate in community based projects. ▪ Ensure local community centres are well placed to respond to the needs of young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State/Territory education systems and non-government school authorities ▪ DEST ▪ ECEF ▪ Business/Employers
<p>Schools responsive to the opportunities and challenges of operating collaboratively beyond the school gate</p> <p>Schools re-emerging as major learning hubs for the community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide training and development opportunities for teachers, business and community members to enable effective participation in local partnerships and their activities. ▪ Review school operations and structures to better enable partnership activity to flourish. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State/Territory education systems and non-government school authorities ▪ DEST
<p>Industry and business are engaged in and benefit from being involved in active partnerships with schools and the community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop more clearly defined roles for industry associations. ▪ Initiate and strengthen partnerships that respond to the needs of young people and the local community including business and industry. ▪ Provide access to education and training in supportive, flexible environments which respond to the needs of the local community. ▪ Provide examples of ways that business can enhance and support learning through active engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State/Territory education systems and non-government school authorities ▪ DEST ▪ ECEF ▪ Business/Employers

Table 5 - Focused local partnerships and strategic alliances (continued)

Outcomes	Area of specific activity	Key agencies
Young people are aware of industry standard work practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Incorporate workplace learning into VET. ▪ Develop local workplace learning programs. ▪ Integrate and contextualise technical and generic skills. ▪ Liaise with industry to develop strategies to enhance generic skill formation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State/Territory education systems and non-government school authorities ▪ DEST ▪ ECEF ▪ Business/Employers

Source <http://www.curriculum.edu.au/mctyapdf/matrices.pdf>



List of abbreviations and glossary

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACACA	Australasian Curriculum and Assessment Certification Authority
ACCI	Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Accredited Course	A structured sequence of vocational education and training that leads to an Australian Qualifications Framework qualification or Statement of Attainment.
Accreditation	The formal recognition that a course meets agreed national quality standards. In the VET and further education sectors, courses are accredited in accordance with the AQTF Standards.
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
ACSA	Australian Curriculum Studies Association
AEC	Australian Education Council
APAPDC	Australian Principals Associations Professional Development Council
AEP	National Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander Education Policy
AESOC	Australian Education Systems Officials Committee
AEU	Australian Education Union

AITAC	Australian Indigenous Training Advisory Council
ANTA	Australian National Training Authority
ANTA MINCO	ANTA Ministerial Council
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework. A nationally consistent set of qualifications for all post-compulsory education and training in Australia.
AQTF	Australian Quality Training Framework. The nationally agreed recognition arrangements for the vocational education and training sector. The Australian Quality Training Framework is based on a quality assured approach to the registration of training organisations seeking to deliver training, assess competency outcomes and issue Australian Qualifications Framework qualifications and / or Statements of Attainment
ARC	Assessment Research Centre
ARF	Australian Recognition Framework
Articulation	The arrangements to help students move from one course to another or from one education and training sector to another. Articulated courses are those which are linked through a series of qualifications at progressively higher levels so that a student completing one year of a course might, for example, earn a Certificate IV; after two years he or she would earn a Diploma, and after three years an Advanced Diploma.
ASCH	Annual Student Contact Hours also called Annual Hours. Denotes the total nominal supervised hours for the modules undertaken in a year by a student in a given course of study. Used as a measure of total system delivery, eg, for an institute, state or territory.
ASTF	Australian Student Traineeship Foundation replaced by the Enterprise and Career Education Foundation in February 2001.
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
Auspicings	The process by which a registered training organisation

	authorises industry or another training organisation to deliver training and/or conduct assessment.
AVCTS	Australian Vocational Certificate Training System
AVETMISS	Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard
AVTS	Australian Vocational Training System
BCA	Business Council of Australia
BEPA	Business Education Partnerships Advocate
BOS	Board of Studies
BVET	NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training
CATs	Careers and Transitions Pilots
CDEP	Community Development Employment Program
Certificates I–IV	A set of qualifications awarded in the vocational education and training sector and recognised under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). The four levels of certificate recognise increasing levels of skill.
Competency Standard	Competency standards describe the skills and knowledge required for a person to operate effectively in the workplace. The standards have been defined by industry, are nationally recognised and form the basis of training for that specific industry. Competency standards are made up of units of competency, together with performance criteria, a range of variables, and an evidence guide. Competency standards are core components of Training Packages.
DEST	Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training
DETYA	Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs which became the Department of Education, Science and Training in December 2001.
Endorsement	The formal process of recognition of Training Packages by the National Training Quality Council.

ECEF	Enterprise and Career Education Foundation. An organisation which promoted partnerships between schools and industry at the local level to develop and implement vocational education and training (VET) in schools programs combining vocational study in school with structured workplace learning. ECEF was transferred into DEST on 30 September 2003.
ECEP	Enterprise and Career Education Programme
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IEDA	Indigenous Education Direct Assistance
IEEP	Indigenous Education and Employment Project
IPO	Industry Project Officer
Industry Skills Councils	<p>Replacing the National ITABs, the roles of an Industry Skills Council are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Actively support the development, implementation and continuous improvement of high quality, nationally recognised training products and services, including enhancing innovation, rationalising materials where there are cross-industry synergies, and improving efficiency; and▪ Assist industries, enterprises and their workforce to integrate skill development with business goals and support accurate industry intelligence on future directions - including provision of strategic advice on industry skills and training needs to the National Industry Skills Forum.
ITAB	Industry Training Advisory Body. A national or state-based organisation representing a particular industry. ITABs advise governments about the vocational education and training needs of the industry they represent, including by participating in the development and implementation of Training Packages. From 2003 the number of National ITABs will reduce to ten Industry Skills Councils.
IYPI	Indigenous Youth Partnerships Initiative

JPP	Job Pathways Programme
JUPIY	Joined-up Programmes for Indigenous Youth
LLEN	Local Learning and Employment Network - developed in Victoria.
LLEP	Local Learning and Employment Partnership - developed in Western Australia.
LSAY	Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth
Mayer Key Competencies	Eric Mayer chaired the Committee that released a report in 1992 on <i>Key competencies. Report of the committee to advise the Australian Education Council and Ministers of Vocational Education, Employment and Training on employment-related key competencies for post-compulsory education and training.</i> The seven key competencies are: collecting, analysing and organising information; communicating ideas and information; planning and organising activities; working with others and in teams; using mathematical ideas and techniques; solving problems; and using technology.
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs.
Mutual Recognition	A feature of the Australian Quality Training Framework which allows: a registered training organisation (RTO) registered in one state or territory to operate in another without a further registration process; qualifications and statements of attainment issued by any RTO to be accepted and recognised by all other RTOs.
NAAP	New Apprenticeships Assistance Programme
National Goals	In April 1999, state, territory and Australian Government Ministers for Education, met in Adelaide as MCEETYA to endorse new National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century. The new goals replaced the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia which was endorsed as the Hobart Declaration 1989.
NCVER	National Centre for Vocational Education Research

NIELNS	National Indigenous English Literacy and Numeracy Strategy
NISI	National Industry Skills Initiative
NREC	National Research and Evaluation Committee
National Strategic Evaluation	An investigation of key elements of the operation of the National Training Framework, including the Australian Quality Training Framework and Training Packages, initiated by the National Training Quality Council to assist in its quality assurance role.
NTF	National Training Framework. The system of vocational education and training that applies nationally. It is made up of the Australian Quality Training Framework and nationally endorsed Training Packages. Training organisations must be registered under the AQTF in order to deliver, assess and issue Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualifications or statements of attainment in endorsed Training Packages and accredited courses.
NTQC	National Training Quality Council. A body established by ANTA to endorse Training Packages and advise the ANTA Board on policies to ensure quality and national consistency of training outcomes and the relevance of training to industry and regional needs.
OECD	Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development
OP	Overall Position
POEM	Partnership Outreach Education Model
QTP	Quality Teaching Programme
RTO	Registered Training Organisation. An organisation registered by a state or territory recognition authority to deliver specified vocational education and training and/or assessment services, and issue nationally recognised qualifications in accordance with the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF). Registered training organisations include TAFE colleges

	and institutes, adult and community education providers, community organisations, schools, higher education institutions, commercial and enterprise training providers, industry bodies and other organisations meeting the registration requirements.
SBNAs (or SAT or SNAPs)	School-based New Apprenticeships. A SBNA is defined as a full time program that integrates education, training and employment. It requires a registered training contract, a negotiated training plan that is endorsed by the student's school, and paid employment with terms and conditions covered by appropriate industrial arrangements.
SES	Socio-economic status
SILO	Student Industry Liaison Officer
STA	State Training Authority
SWL	Structured Workplace Learning (also called work placement). The on-the-job component of a VET in Schools program. The skills or 'learning outcomes' commonly reflect nationally recognised, industry-defined competency standards. The student is not paid by the employer.
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TCF	Textiles, Clothing and Footwear
TIP	Targeted Initiatives Programme
TQELT	Taskforce on Teacher Quality and Educational Leadership
Training Package	An integrated set of nationally endorsed standards, guidelines and qualifications for training, assessing and recognising people's skills, developed by industry to meet the training needs of an industry or group of industries. Training Packages consist of core endorsed components of competency standards, assessment guidelines and qualifications, and optional non-endorsed components of support materials such as learning strategies, assessment resources and professional development materials.

VEGAS	Vocational and Educational Guidance for Aboriginals Scheme
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VETIS	Vocational Education and Training in Schools
VET in Schools	Allows school students to combine vocational studies with their general education curriculum. Students participating in VET in Schools continue to work towards their secondary school certificate. The VET component of their studies gives them credit towards a nationally recognised VET qualification.
Work Experience	A period (usually one or two weeks) of unpaid work undertaken by secondary school students as part of their careers education, to provide some insight into the world of work.
Work Placement	See SWL



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