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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.