

14 demonstration projects and 19 transition projects.²⁶⁹ By May 1991 70 of the CETP services assisting some 550 clients were funded under s.10 of the DSA.²⁷⁰ A total of 21 new CETPs were funded in 1990-1991, assisting 311 people.

5.197 The *Disability Services Act* defines competitive employment training and placement services as 'services to assist persons with disabilities to obtain and retain, paid employment in the workforce, and include:

- (a) 'services to increase the independence, productivity or integration of persons with disabilities in work settings;
- (b) employment preparation, and employment and vocational training services; and
- (c) services to assist the transition of persons with disabilities from special education, or employment in supported work settings, to paid employment in the workforce'.²⁷¹

5.198 Competitive employment training and placement services are further defined in the Principles and Objectives of the Act. DHH&CS describe the specific target group for competitive employment training and placement services as being those people with disabilities of working age who have the capacity to retain employment in the regular labour market but who need assistance with training and placement and time-limited support to obtain and retain such employment. PE Personnel in Perth was one of the first CETP²⁷² services established in Australia, commencing operation in August 1984. PE Personnel has established a national reputation as a leader in the CETP field and an initiator of the Rapid Entry Training model, and has assisted other CETP service providers throughout Australia in their foundation.²⁷³ Their article *Job Ready . . . Who Isn't?*²⁷⁴ illustrates how CETP services work in practice and reflects the emphasis placed by most of these services on facilitating access to jobs in the first instance rather than job-readiness (such as pre-vocational training). Only a few train-then-place CETP services have been funded under DSA.

5.199 The specific aim of competitive employment training and placement service is to assist people with disabilities into award wage work, usually on a full-time

269. *Ronalds Report*, p. 5.

270. Data supplied to the Committee by the then DCSH, 27 May 1991.

271. *DSA*, Section 7.

272. Competitive employment and training placement services are also identified by the acronym CETAP by some service providers.

273. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 5158 (Project Employment Inc.), p. 5378 (Jobmatch). See also Submission No. 59 (Personnel Employment).

274. Reproduced in *Transcript of Evidence*, pp. 5162-5179 (Project Employment Inc.).

basis. It is directed towards individual jobs which have existed or are created in regular businesses and which primarily employ non-disabled people. An underlying principle therefore of the CETP program is that 'options and settings for training and placement can be as varied as the jobs that exist in the community.'²⁷⁵ ACROD was 'very supportive'²⁷⁶ of the CETP program, believing that it would facilitate a higher percentage of people going into open employment. In their view, sheltered workshops had been unable to sustain a high placement rate because of inadequate resources.

5.200 Support and training may be intensive initially, then diminish as the employee becomes proficient in the job. When the person can perform the job without on-going assistance, agency involvement is reduced to ongoing contact with the employee. Should the nature of the job change or new tasks be introduced, training and support can be re-introduced. The Vocational Resource Agency in Adelaide provided a flow-chart²⁷⁷ which summarises their approach to assessing and negotiating an open employment placement (Figure 2).

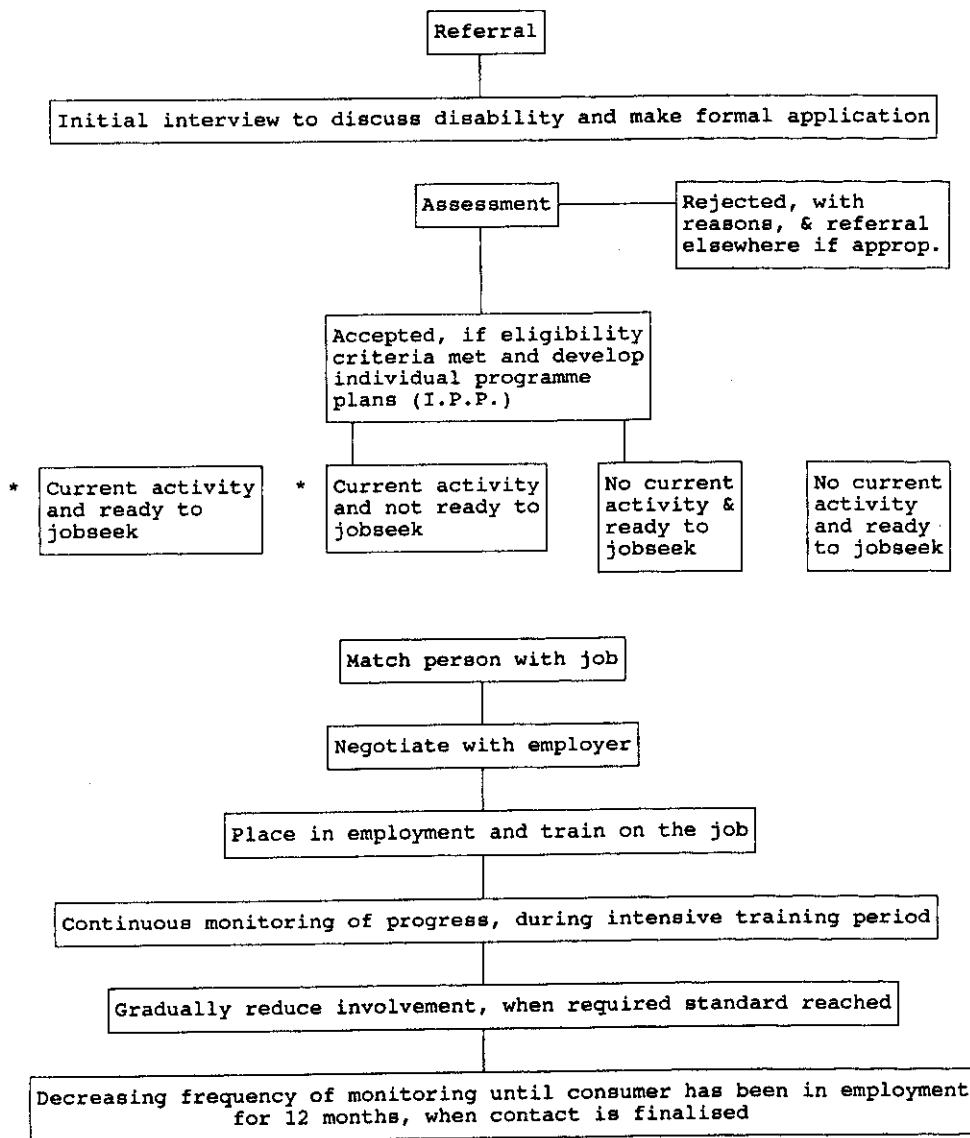
275. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 4575 (DHH&CS).

276. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 1452 (ACROD Limited).

277. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 235 (Vocational Resource Agency Incorporated).

Figure 2: Open Employment Placement Programme – Flowchart

Open Employment Placement Programme – Flowchart



* Responsibility for these I.P.P.'s rests with Agencies involved, i.e. Sheltered Workshops, Activity Therapy Centre, Schools, etc.

Source: *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 235 (Vocational Resource Agency Incorporated).

5.201 The key features of the competitive employment training and placement services include:

Employment – Full time, award wage positions in integrated work settings with the same benefits and conditions as non-disabled workers.

Targeted training – The preferred approach is that training will occur on the job. Specific job skills and job related skills are taught either on-the-job ('place then train' model) or prior to placement in a job which has already been targeted ('train then place' model). Training is systematic and intensive initially (usually on a full-time basis) and is gradually reduced as the employee's proficiency increases.

Support – to assist the worker to adjust to the demands of 'being an employee' for example, work disciplines and skills for meaningful social interaction with fellow employees as well as job tasks.

Funding

5.202 The Department's policy on the funding strategy for DSA services was outlined in the Financing Strategy Disability Services²⁷⁸ released in March 1989 which remains current. Many submissions received expressed concern with the approach taken by the Department and criticised the principles on which the strategy was based.²⁷⁹ Other criticism referred to the Department's apparent lack of awareness of commercial operation principles.²⁸⁰

5.203 Commonwealth assistance to the new services is on a per capita basis in recognition of the fact that reported numbers of people with disabilities differ little from the overall population distribution and to ensure equitable distribution of Commonwealth assistance between the states.

5.204 The per client approach is seen by the Department as enabling the objectives of the DSA to be fulfilled by 'focussing on the needs of the individual client in a way which facilitates greater accountability and comparability across and within service types'²⁸¹ and promoting increased access to services for all eligible persons. This is considered to enable the generation of data that will reflect the true costs of a service for the individual.

278. Attachment 11 of Submission No. 178 (DHH&CS). See *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 1563 (DHH&CS).

279. However, others accepted the value of flexibility in funding, although few people appeared to accept the end result.

280. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 679 (Centacare). See below, Paragraph 5.212.

281. *Financing Strategy*, p. 2.

The per client approach will enable the Department to ensure that people with severe or profound disabilities receive adequate priority in the funding process. While the legislation rightly places emphasis on positive client outcomes, there will be clients whose support needs are resource intensive, and where obvious lifestyle improvements will be more difficult to identify.²⁸²

5.205 The Committee notes the Department's concern to provide adequate funding for people with severe disabilities, and supports employment outcomes for some people with such disabilities. However, it also wishes to emphasise that while the potential of all people with disabilities should be maximised, not all individuals are able to obtain benefit from paid, open or supported employment.²⁸³

5.206 A notional cost per client was set to provide consistency in funding. However, the Department recognised that, in practice, working with some clients would be more resource intensive for service providers. Notional costs provided the benchmark against which proposals for funding new services would be assessed. Higher cost structures based on specific clients needs 'may be accepted' by the Department, 'but only if supported by adequate information'.²⁸⁴ Many service providers believed that additional funding of this type was difficult to obtain. Several submissions suggested that the funding formula should also recognise that trainers are needed beyond the initial on-the-job training – for example in the case of people losing their jobs, changes in demands of particular jobs and in the event of promotion.²⁸⁵ Other factors were also seen as needing to be costed so that a realistic model could be established.²⁸⁶

5.207 For CETP services, the notional costs were set, in the first year at \$18 per hour, for up to 384 support hours per year. For subsequent years, the rate was set at \$18 per hour for up to 96 support hours per year (if required). The rate is indexed and in April 1991 was \$19.10 per hour. A higher notional cost is recognised in the first year to acknowledge the higher cost of training and assistance provided to a client in this year. For a client who requires retraining for a new job the notional cost is set at 75 per cent of the average contact hours of a new client; that is, up to 288 hours in the first year of retraining. It is assumed in the financing guidelines that the cost of retraining is lower because the client is already known to the service

282. *ibid.*

283. See above, Recommendation 1 (following Paragraph 5.58).

284. *Financing Strategy*, p. 3.

285. See for example, Submission No. 158, p. 2 (Uniting Church in Australia Special Caring Services Division).

286. See below, Paragraphs 5.208-5.218.

and as a result there is no need to establish the client's capability and previous training and experience.²⁸⁷

5.208 The funding formula, based on the results of some of the demonstration projects, was perceived by a number of agencies as being unrealistic. The results of some of the demonstration projects were seen as unreliable because it was believed that the definitions of levels of disability had not always been consistently interpreted and applied in some of the early projects.

. . . disability is very variable. There are people who have a reasonably low level of need and there are people who have an extremely high level of need. I do not believe that the funding formulas that are being produced today take that into account . . . it is very difficult to ascertain exactly where the Department is getting its information from . . . I believe that some of the results [of] those [demonstration] projects . . . may be misleading or misrepresenting what the situation really is.²⁸⁸

This point was made very strongly by the Spastic Centre of New South Wales in 1989:

What the Department completely ignores there is the need that our people have for attendant care which involves toileting and feeding and, as such, is an additional cost to other types of disability and one that, as a very high cost component, just cannot be ignored or lumped into a general cost heading.²⁸⁹

5.209 In addition, some organisations believed that variations in local labour markets²⁹⁰ and regional conditions were not adequately accounted for in the formula.

5.210 The Competitive Employment Interagency of NSW which represented the majority of CETP services (about 30) in that state criticised the funding formula for CETP services.

The Department's per capita hourly rates also have to cover all administrative and ongoing costs associated with each particular CETP program. Funding bodies make no provision, in the form of additional allowances for employment programs which are established in country areas. These programs have to carry the additional costs associated

287. *Financing Strategy*, op.cit. p. 11.

288. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 694 (Centacare).

289. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 430 (The Spastic Centre of New South Wales).

290. See for example Submission No. 114 (Vocational Training Services), and Submission No. 120 (Competitive Employment Interagency of NSW).

with being located outside the metropolitan area eg; telephones, cost of petrol etc.²⁹¹

5.211 Other increased costs could result from the need to pay higher rates for qualified staff, including accommodation and various loadings. However, it should also be noted that some non-metropolitan costs (such as rent) may be lower.

5.212 The Spastic Society of New South Wales was vocal in its criticism of the Department, believing that staff had little practical knowledge of the costs of operating viable services and that this would operate against those services assisting people with severe disabilities.

. . . these business can be commercially viable only if the operating economics are accepted by the funding body. We have attempted to bring out examples in our presentation that show that the businesses on any straight accounting basis are not commercially viable. They are commercially viable only with the funding support at the level of disability for the people that we employ. Our people are averaging 15 per cent or less of productive output and we are attempting to set up businesses at that level of disability. There is no doubt . . . that this can be done providing there is a counterbalancing awareness of the need for the commercial viability of the business. One of our concerns is that there are no incentives to operate those businesses under some of the proposed funding guidelines. The other concern is that at the moment the [then] Department of Community Services and Health project officers are directing their attention to client outcomes, which is absolutely appropriate and correct, but there seems to be need for a counterbalancing commercial review of the business proposition.²⁹²

5.213 While the number of hours allocated for support per client appears to be generally accepted as being realistic for most clients, apprehension about the *real* dollar amount per hour of CETP support services is still a matter of concern. Westwork, in evidence to the Committee in late 1990, argued that:

We are supposed to put through 45 people into open employment in a period of 12 months, and the number of hours of support is something like 384 hours. We have the situation where the hours are adequate, but the dollar amount, which has been determined at \$19.10 now and which was \$18 before is not adequate on our costings. So you have a buffer in hours, but the costs are not high enough. Eventually the costs will outstrip the hours available, because the hours probably will not change but the dollar amount will go up as the cost increases. What we

291. Submission No. 120, p. 6 (Competitive Employment Interagency of NSW). See also Submission No. 114 (Vocational Training Service) for the problems of CETP services in non-metropolitan areas.

292. *Transcript of Evidence*, pp. 432-3 (The Spastic Centre of New South Wales).

are trying to do is have it assessed on the correct number of hours we require for each client – which may be 200 for argument's sake – and have a correct dollar allowance of \$25 an hour or whatever is the cost. . . . [the \$19.10 per hour is paid in respect of the job placement instructor] They might support four or five or six or whatever people in competitive employment. They have to travel around the different employers and find out the support which is needed for the individual worker. There are a lot of hidden costs in there. Whilst you have in theory so many working hours in a day, there are the unseen costs of travelling and report writing and training of the JPI [Job Placement Instructor].²⁹³

5.214 Consultations with the Department on the financing strategy had led Personnel Employment (Tweed Heads) to the conclusion that due to:

. . . inevitable pressures of high demand for services, a centralised bureaucracy and limited funds, a funding system will arise that will emphasise numbers of people placed for dollars spent. While this is an understandable response to a difficult situation, we can see that such a system will skew services to the most able, as service providers strive to meet their targets for funding.²⁹⁴

5.215 It is important that assessment of the success of services is not only based on cost efficiency. The qualitative results, which may be difficult to demonstrate, are also important, and these may not be apparent for a considerable period. Funding, and policy, should address this issue directly.

5.216 PE Personnel were also concerned about determination of the funding formulas for the service and particularly the distinction between types of individual jobs in supported employment and competitive employment.

They are not necessarily different. The funding should be flexible in relation to the person's need. For example, we have placed a girl who started off in an award wage job, but she has required 500 hours of support in the first year. I believe she is entitled to that support. She is working in an integrated job, she likes that job . . . Her level of support is such that it is really supported employment as far as the funding formula is concerned. So I think this arbitrary decision about who is in supported jobs and who is in competitive employment is a very false barrier. It should really be determined on the individual need of the consumer, rather than on a funding formula decided at head office . . . a problem I see is that [many CETP services] have been picking up people with very mild intellectual disabilities. If you address this problem . . . and help some of the individual job agencies that are

293. *Transcript of Evidence*, pp. 5644-5645 (Westwork Industries (Wesley Central Mission)).

294. Submission No. 59, p. 3 (Personnel Management).

now funded as competitive employment, we may be able to see more people with more severe disabilities getting access to integrated work.²⁹⁵

5.217 Some CETP services provided by traditional service providers may have access to supplementary capital and operating funding from the fund raising base of those organisations. However for stand-alone CETPs, such fundraising may not be possible because of resource constraints.²⁹⁶

5.218 There was considerable concern that the failure by DHH&CS to recognise these pressures in the funding strategy for CETPs could lead to a situation where agencies would feel under pressure to concentrate their resources on the easy-to-help cases in order to maintain a high placement rate and guarantee ongoing funding for the service. In this case, they would not necessarily be an improvement on programs such as SkillShare. In addition, because of limited data collected, it would be difficult to determine what components of CETP services (for example, support levels) were the most important relative to the abilities/experience of the individual clients – gender, age, education, socio-economic background. Ultimately pressure to meet placement targets with inadequate funding levels may induce some agencies to place clients in less than appropriate, or inappropriate, jobs in order to meet pre-determined targets.

Recommendation

The Committee RECOMMENDS:

14. That the findings of the regular evaluations carried out as recommended by the Committee in Recommendations 12 and 13 above be used to identify the factors which contribute toward the more successful outcomes of CETP and other services. The Department of Health, Housing and Community Services is to develop a strategy to assist people who are particularly disadvantaged for reasons additional to their disability, to obtain access to these services.

Evaluation and data issues

5.219 By May 1991 there were 136 new vocational services²⁹⁷, of which 70 were CETP services funded under s.10 of the *Disability Services Act*. Of the 70 CETPs twenty-four were in Victoria, thirteen were in New South Wales, thirteen were in Western Australia, eleven were in Queensland, four were in South Australia, three were in Tasmania and two were in the ACT. By December 1991 a total of 173 new services had been funded since 1987, of which 85 are CETPs.

295. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 5200 (PE Personnel).

296. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 182 (Vocational Resource Agency Incorporated).

297. New vocational services are defined as those funded under s.10 which includes new approvals and transfers from s.13 to s.10.

5.220 It has been difficult to assess the success of the CETP services as the Department does not collect systematically from service providers data on the numbers and characteristics of clients assisted into employment. However, in 1991 it funded a consultancy to evaluate these services, and the results of this work were to be available by March 1992.²⁹⁸

5.221 In response to a question during Estimates Committee hearings in September 1990 on the number of clients placed in employment by the Disability Services Program in the preceding three years the Department was unable to provide the data because:

The CETP services funded through the Employment sub-program are not directly provided by the Commonwealth and placement information is held by the service providers. Information on clients provided with these services will be collected from service providers in 1990/91 and future years.²⁹⁹

5.222 Given the Australian Public Service emphasis on the evaluation of government programs, and in particular of new programs, it is surprising that the Department does not appear to have been concerned to evaluate the success of the program or to collect relevant data from services in the preliminary stages of the program. The benefits of the CETP program to people with disabilities in enhancing their individual lifestyles, and its value to the community in general should be considered in any such evaluation of the new employment programs.³⁰⁰ Although, as noted above, it is difficult to evaluate or assess increased satisfaction/happiness, this must be a component of evaluation. It is also important that the Department monitor the quality of services continuously and ensure that required improvements are made.

5.223 In evidence DHH&CS indicated that they were intending to undertake a cost benefit analysis of CETP but were waiting until there was a 'reasonable size sample' before commencing such a study as 'most of the services had not been operating for a very long period of time'.³⁰¹

It is a very important component of our longer term strategy to try to assess how cost effective those employment programs are.³⁰²

5.224 Some submissions to the Committee by CETP services have attempted to offer estimates of the relative costs and savings of their activities, and while it would have

298. See Appendix 7, Paragraphs 7.3-7.4.

299. *Estimates Committee C Additional Information Received: Volume 16 October 1990*, p 2608.

300. See below Paragraph 5.249.

301. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 5931 (DHH&CS).

302. *ibid.*

been helpful to the Committee in its deliberations to have had some indication of the likely cost benefit breakdown on a national basis, these estimates are a useful beginning. If cost-effectiveness is a criterion for evaluation of CETP programs, then several small-scale studies have shown promising results. Decreasing levels of dependence on income support is also a probable indicator of the value of the programs to individuals, for example by increasing disposable income. Personnel Employment from Tweed Heads cited a 1987 Coopers and Lybrand study which found that the services 'actually save the taxpayer money whilst providing a high quality outcome for consumers'.³⁰³ Epic Employment (Brisbane) estimated in 1990 that each placement was then costing them \$2000, 'if we place them on 1 July we save the Government \$6,000 in the year [based on an invalid pension rate of \$8,000 per year] and it progresses'.³⁰⁴

5.225 Another early evaluation of thirteen placements made by the Vocational Resource Agency (VRA) in 1987 found that although in the short-term a trainer-intensive model such as CETP was expensive, the potential for the long term savings was 'colossal'.³⁰⁵ VRA were placing people with a range of disabilities and in April 1989, estimated that they had about a fifty per cent success rate in their placements.³⁰⁶ As Figure 2³⁰⁷ indicates, once a person had been in gainful employment for a period of 12 months their file was considered closed.³⁰⁸

5.226 In early 1991 the Department was unable to provide the total number of employment places being funded. Therefore, in the absence of comprehensive data from the Department on the placement rates achieved by CETP services, several agencies who had previously given evidence were asked in April 1991 to provide updated data on their activities.³⁰⁹ The services which responded to the request for further information represent a cross-section of CETP services, from the well-established such as PE Personnel in Perth, to services in a 'consolidation' phase such as Epic Employment in Queensland, and relatively new services such as JobMatch in Tasmania. Over time, individual agencies develop a profile within their

303. Submission No. 59, p. 2 (Personnel Employment).

304. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 4207 (Epic Employment Service, M.O.R.E. Inc.).

305. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 211 (Vocational Resource Agency Incorporated).

306. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 258 (Vocational Resource Agency Incorporated). It is interesting to note that VRA had placed people with intellectual, physical, sensory and psychiatric disabilities.

307. See Paragraph 5.200.

308. However, this may not mean that they continue in employment – see *Transcript of Evidence*, pp. 1167-8 (Professor T.R. Parmenter).

309. VRA (SA), Epic Employment (Qld), PE Personnel (WA), Jobsupport (NSW), JobMatch (Tas) and Advance Personnel (ACT) responded to this request. The variations in these statistics reflect to some extent changes in the level of funding and changes to the structure and operations of these services over time.

local community, particularly with the local employers (for example, 'repeat' business) and potential clients and their advocates, and as their funding is increased their capacity to assist greater numbers of clients is expanded.

5.227 Clearly caution needs to be exercised when using such data. The job security of CETP clients, like that of their non-disabled colleagues in open employment, is subject to factors beyond their control, such as economic downturn:

... in 1990 there was a substantial increase in the number of job separations: 188 compared to 103 in the previous year. The number of employees who were retrenched doubled (56 compared to 30 in 1989). This can be directly attributed to the current economic downturn.³¹⁰

5.228 In evidence to the Committee in October 1990 Westwork (Melbourne) had also noted the impact of the worsening economic climate on their retention rates – while they had made nine placements in that month they had 'unfortunately experienced eight retrenchments [of previously placed workers]. It was rather like taking nine steps forward and eight steps back'.³¹¹

5.229 PE Personnel, in their response to the Committee Secretariat's request for information, advised caution in the interpretation of 'retention rates' and indicated a preference for use of a 'success rate' which measured the number of workers employed against the number of workers currently available for work. For example, one third of all workers who have been placed in open employment by PE Personnel and who have subsequently separated from their jobs, are currently not available for work due to factors such as a preference for sheltered employment, a move away from Perth, poor health, and return to study. In a couple of cases, individuals have died.³¹²

5.230 From their establishment in January 1984 until 31 January 1991 PE Personnel generated a total of 975 jobs (that is, placements) for 518 workers; 227 workers were still employed as at 31 January 1991. The majority of their workers were employed in small, private businesses, reinforcing the evidence obtained by the Committee that the private, rather than the public, sector had provided more places for people with disabilities in those new services.³¹³

5.231 Data supplied by VRA in April 1991 showed that 38 people were then being supported in employment and the agency had made 54 placements since January 1990, while 28 clients had terminated their employment.

310. Response by PE Personnel 26 April 1991.

311. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 5641 (Westwork Industries (Wesley Central Mission)).

312. P.E. Personnel, *op. cit.*

313. *ibid.* See above, Paragraph 3.92.

5.232 Epic Employment Service in Brisbane which, in conjunction with the Red Cross had won the Prime Minister's Employer of the Year Award in 1990, were in October 1990 placing people with disabilities at a rate of 1.75 per week and were aiming to place 70 during 1990-91.³¹⁴ Epic had, in fact, reached this target by April 1991, having placed 71 clients of whom 56 were still employed at 22 April 1991. This appeared to be one of the most successful placement rates of CETP services and may reflect the fact that Epic was catering to a wide range of disability types. Epic provides services primarily to people with mild to moderate disabilities and its objective is to provide time-limited assistance with the object of ultimate independence of the client. In April 1991 thirty of the 55 clients placed in 1989-90 were still employed as were 6 of the 18 clients placed in 1988-89.

5.233 In February 1992, Epic considered that it was still maintaining a good rate of placement and retention, having placed approximately 78 people in 1991-92. They noted, however, that employers had a preference for younger people, and that there was a need for services for those people with disabilities in older age groups – in this context 'older' could include people in their twenties. As was the case with the broader community, there were an appreciable number of people in their twenties and older who had limited, if any, work experience and became more unemployable because of this. Epic management noted this as a major problem, although their concern with younger people not moving into inappropriate employment meant that their priority would be those persons moving from special schools to employment.

5.234 Westwork had placed 53 clients in a total of 91 competitive employment and training jobs since June 1987; most of these placements had been made in the last two years. The program provides support for 46 ex-sheltered workshop employees in addition to new clients. Clearly many of their clients had required assistance in securing more than one placement. Between January and October 1990 they had placed 27 clients in 35 jobs. As noted above, the economic downturn had also impacted on opportunities to place in the western suburbs of Melbourne. Westwork were considering developing other forms of vocational services for their clients to cushion the impact of the employment downturn.³¹⁵ These are discussed in Chapter 6.

5.235 Advance Personnel (ACT) were maintaining 57 clients in open employment at 20 April 1991. Advance Personnel is an employment agency which locates award wage positions in the private and public sector for people with mild to moderate intellectual disability. The service provides 'on site job-specific training to the employee in conjunction with the employer'.³¹⁶ Of the 32 placements made since 1 July 1990, 9 had since separated from employment, indicating a retention rate of approximately 72 per cent for 1990-91. In contrast with other CETPs, Advance

314. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 4192 (Epic Employment Service, M.O.R.E. Inc.).

315. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 5646 (Westwork Industries (Wesley Central Mission)).

316. Advance Personnel – Service Description material provided to the Committee, January 1992.

Personnel had been involved in the IDAP pilot project³¹⁷, and thus most of their placements had been with the ACT and with Commonwealth Government departments, which provided greater stability. However, multiskilling and redesign of low skilled positions had affected the number of positions available. The manufacturing sector in the ACT was small and private sector vacancies were subject to strong competition from other job seekers. At the end of 1991 the service was operating well; however, problems that had been identified in the public sector³¹⁸ would need to be addressed to ensure that positions remained available at the appropriate level and that adequate resources were available for training.

5.236 JobMatch commenced operations in early 1989 placing 31 clients in 1989 and 32 in 1990, and at December 1990 had a retention rate of 58 per cent. In April 1991 JobMatch were supporting 26 workers. JobMatch also noted that securing new placements had become more difficult after October 1990 as had maintaining existing placements.

Expertise/training/agency links

5.237 CETP agencies have consistently voiced their concerns about the implications of the lack of any formal or service-wide training for staff working in the field. In April 1989, an early witness, Centacare, pointed to a 'dearth of appropriately trained staff' and the negative impact it would have on the expansion of disability services and the implementation of the objectives of the DSA. As a result of the shortage of trained and/or experienced staff, poaching of staff from traditional services or services with a lower level of funding (who therefore could not offer high wages) was occurring.³¹⁹ Centacare was involved in the establishment of a tertiary level course to meet the need for such training in Sydney. However, 18 months later the CETP services continued to express their concern that the Department had not addressed the issue of training for staff, and to point out the ways in which less successful services detracted from the successful implementation of the DSA.

5.238 The Managing Director of PE Personnel (Perth) had visited many of the CETP services and was concerned about the quality implications of the rapid expansion of the model nationally.

It is all very well to put a lot of money into them but we have to see people being trained. PE Personnel has done a lot of training of agencies that have been established in the Eastern States. We have had people come to us and we have gone to them, but many others have not had any training. Then two years down the track you hear that

317. See above, Paragraphs 3.97 and 3.98.

318. See above, Paragraph 3.98.

319. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 688 (Centacare).

\$200,000 has gone into them but maybe not many people have got jobs.³²⁰

5.239 Her comments were echoed in late 1990 by the General Manager of JobMatch in Hobart who had recently been asked by the Department to provide an independent review of the operations of a CETP service in Port Macquarie.

It became apparent to me that the Department tends to fund services – CETAP's in particular – all around Australia, based on the track record of the success of the model. If the model is a good one and has results, new services tend to be granted funding continually. Apart from portraying the role of a general overseer and making sure that the agencies are actually meeting their targets, the Department does not appear to have any formal monitoring for the early identification of problems. Services were started here on the north-west coast – in Burnie – and the manager had no previous experience in CETAP at all, and apart from three days he spent in Perth learning about the values and philosophies, he had no basis to start from. I think it is very difficult for people like that to stay on track. The Department does not really have the monitoring in place to ensure that people are achieving what they set out to do, or what they are funded to do.³²¹

5.240 Jobsupport was concerned that the 'high level of professionalism achieved to date' was not undermined by a proliferation of new services without adequate support. There was a danger of less professional services undermining the credibility of the CETP services with employers.

We are concerned at the lack of knowledge evident in the CETP submissions we have sighted and we have already encountered large employers (for example, Grace Bros., Parramatta, and McDonalds, Burwood, Concord and Campsie) who have had such bad experiences with half-baked add-on "CETP" services that they were unwilling to try another disabled employee.³²²

5.241 PE Personnel perceived assistance with the training and development of staff in CETP agencies as crucial to the success of integrated employment. Such training and development would ensure that agencies develop strategies, were able to recruit competent staff and fulfil the objectives of the Act. The organisation expressed concern that services were being provided on the run, with funding provided on the basis of the 'number of people we have in jobs, so it becomes a bit of a number crunching exercise'.³²³ There was no time or money to plan or to establish

320. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 5201 (PE Personnel).

321. *Transcript of Evidence*, pp. 5377-5378 (Jobmatch).

322. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 518 (Jobsupport Inc.).

323. *ibid.*

information/guidelines for other services. An affiliated service, Project Employment in Tweed Heads was similarly concerned that 'no [formal] system is in place that will allow even the little expertise that exists to be passed on to new services'.³²⁴ 'It would be useful if some priority was given to providing expertise to those service providers attempting to set up new services or remodel existing ones.'³²⁵

5.242 In March 1989, JobMatch, as the first CETP in Tasmania, 'had looked to its counterparts elsewhere for an appropriate role model'.³²⁶ It had found that there was no infrastructure linking like services and, as a newly established service, identified the need for a formal 'linking together' of CETPs to 'access training, marketing and general community awareness of the issues facing people with disabilities in employment'.³²⁷

A systematic and united approach to the implementation of the DSA would provide strength to the concepts of affirmative action for people with disabilities Australia-wide and ensure that the objects of the Act are met with maximum efficiency.³²⁸

5.243 Jobsupport, JobMatch and Westwork all raised the need for an award covering job placement instructors and other CETP staff as a means of recognising and providing a career structure (which would contribute to a reduction in the frequency of staff turnover) and also to prevent 'dedicated and valuable staff being unfairly treated' and to provide safeguards and guarantees for staff.³²⁹ In conjunction with appropriate tertiary level courses, such an award structure would enhance the quality of service delivery:

People with disabilities can only maximise their potential when supported by trained staff with a long term [commitment]. It is not possible for innovative employment programs to attract and retain high quality staff without recognised qualification requirements, award coverage, a career structure or any guarantee of ongoing employment.³³⁰

324. Submission No. 59, p. 3 (Personnel Employment).

325. *ibid.*

326. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 5343 (JobMatch).

327. *ibid.*

328. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 5344 (Jobmatch).

329. *Transcript of Evidence*, pp. 5344, 5378 (JobMatch), pp. 5637-78 (Westwork Industries (Wesley Central Mission). Westwork had prepared a list of the skills required, and functions of a job placement instructor.

330. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 471 (Jobsupport Inc.).

5.244 The need for further development and refinement of the approaches to training of people with intellectual disabilities was also raised.³³¹ Further CETP models that incorporated established and innovative methods should be developed and there was a need to evaluate existing services and validate new options.

5.245 Resources were required to develop strategies because 'we have only been doing it for six years'.³³²

There is a lot more to learn about utilising co-workers, assisting people with more severe disabilities, about getting jobs in different areas such as large corporations and government. Sometimes you need more time to learn these sorts of things, so money has to be put into helping people to learn them. So we really need to think seriously about the support that is given towards the development of integrated employment.³³³

Recommendations

The Committee RECOMMENDS:

15. That resources be provided to enable workshops to be held regularly for service providers. These may involve participation of individuals from a variety of services and will be aimed at identifying successful initiatives as well as problems within individual services. Resources should be provided to ensure that materials can be produced and circulated detailing workshop findings and suggestions for developing strategies to improve services.

5.246 The role of co-workers was seen as crucial. The success or failure of individual placements often hinged on the level of support and understanding from co-workers, especially in the early stages of transition, particularly from sheltered workshops where clients were accustomed to a high level of support from their colleagues and supervisors.

We would have to look very seriously at providing support systems, not only for the workers themselves but for other workers and the employers. So we are looking perhaps at the education of those people.³³⁴

331. Submission No. 176 (Australian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability). See also *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 729 (Professor T.R. Parmenter).

332. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 5201 (PE Personnel).

333. *ibid.*

334. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 86 (Self Advocacy for Intellectually Disadvantaged People in S.A. Inc.).

5.247 The New South Wales Council for Intellectual Disability saw the 'very successful' pathway scheme established by the United Kingdom National Society for People with Intellectual Disabilities as providing a useful adjunct to the job placements. The pathway scheme identifies another worker in the workplace who will act as a mentor and guide for the person during their initial entry into the workforce. While the mentor was entitled to a small allowance most had refused it as they 'were more than happy to do it and felt that it was something worthwhile'.³³⁵ While it appears that many people in the workplace assume such roles on an informal basis and do support and assist CETP workers, this is an area which needs further development. The IDAP scheme for the entrance of people with intellectual disabilities into the Commonwealth public service places greater reliance on the role of co-workers and/or supervisors as mentors.³³⁶ Such workers are not paid and undertake a supervisory and counselling role on a voluntary basis.

5.248 In 1991 PE Personnel in Perth produced a training manual for co-workers entitled 'Getting the Job Done'. Other services, for example, Advance Personnel, distinguish clearly between the training provided to employees by the organisation, and the need for Departments to provide resources for supervision and, later, for training required to enhance promotion opportunities.³³⁷

Recommendations

The Committee RECOMMENDS:

16. That the Public Service Commission (PSC) undertake a study of the role of the co-worker in assisting people with disabilities enter into and maintain paid employment in the Australian Public Service.
17. That, if a co-worker service is instituted in the Australian Public Service, the Public Service Commission (PSC) provide any training required for its successful operation and that the PSC report on outcomes as part of its annual report on the employment of people with disabilities in the Australian Public Service.

335. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 3718 (The New South Wales Council for Intellectual Disability).

336. Advance Personnel – presentation to NCID Conference, Canberra, 20 September 1990. The IDAP scheme is discussed further at Paragraphs 5.260-5.261.

337. See above, Paragraphs 3.97-3.98. In the case of the private sector, other employees would have an equivalent role to individuals in the public sector who undertook to provide a support and counselling service. Insofar as individual development of staff and general counselling on performance is an accepted role for supervisors in the APS, this function is not unusual; where it may differ from the standard is in the amount of time, and hence resources, required.

Outcomes

5.249 The DSA requires that services funded under its provisions should assist people with disabilities to achieve positive outcomes in their working lives and, through this, in other aspects of their lives. These positive outcomes are defined in relation to the goals of CETP services which were discussed above³³⁸ and include wages and employment conditions, the nature of jobs, the public image of the employer (that is, the nature of work/product or service offered), competence and self image, and social integration both in the workplace and in the community generally. Clearly many of these outcomes are very difficult to measure and relate specifically to improvements in the individual's quality of life which do not lend themselves to measurement, or even, in some cases, identification.

5.250 The extent of the progress made towards the achievement of one of the CETP goals, which has attracted some comment, is reflected in the opportunity for continuing skills development and promotion for people with disabilities placed in jobs by these services.³³⁹ In some cases such opportunities will be closely linked to the nature of the initial job placement.

5.251 Some agencies have suggested that CETP services need to maintain contact with people with intellectual disabilities to ensure that they have equal access, and encouragement, to compete for promotion opportunities etc. They have suggested that long term follow-up (even if only on an annual basis) should be included in funding contracts by DHH&CS as a means of achieving this goal.³⁴⁰

5.252 The Intellectually Disabled Services Council SA was concerned about the work placements and was quite pessimistic about whether they should be regarded as valued work or leading to advancement:

Even in competitive employment schemes, the type of job that becomes available is likely to be of low skill, odd hours (starting very early in the morning or shift), poorly paid in comparison with other jobs and dirty, or dirty and wet or dirty and wet and hot.³⁴¹

Other people pointed out their concern that:

We do not want a situation in 5 years time where a whole lot of people who left Sheltered Workshops are still in the lowest rungs of paid employment.³⁴²

338. See Paragraphs 5.165-5.166.

339. Submission No. 158 p. 2 (Uniting Church in Australia Special Caring Services Division).

340. Many CETP services do maintain on-going contact with their former clients.

341. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 320 (Intellectually Disabled Services Council Inc.).

342. Submission No. 158, p. 2 (Uniting Church in Australia Special Caring Services Division).

However, the lack of promotional opportunities in such unskilled occupations is not unique to people with disabilities and would not be significantly different from the experience of the general workforce.

5.253 The survey of CETP services by the Office of Disability had concluded that:

Given that the group surveyed consisted mostly of persons with an intellectual disability, it is not surprising that most of the jobs were in unskilled or semi-skilled production or process work . . . The fact that two thirds of the workers who came from sheltered employment indicated that their new job was harder, or at least as hard as, their old job, suggests that the complexity or speed (or both) of the tasks they were required to perform has probably increased.³⁴³

5.254 Data collected in the survey also suggested that the occupations undertaken by males in the survey were less well paid than is usually the case in the general labour market and that 'although they were in award wage jobs they were not yet gaining access to the better paid unskilled and semi-skilled positions'.³⁴⁴ However the survey report concluded that the CETP services surveyed were enabling people with disabilities to 'provide valued goods or services' in line with DSA goals and the work being performed was not in any way 'devalued work'.

5.255 Clients of Project Employment in Darwin had been placed in a range of fields, and several placements appear to have recognised limitations on a client's ability to work full-time. Successful placements had included: child care helper; storeman; trades assistant; trolley collector; recreational assistant (supervising children with disabilities in after-school and school holiday care); mineral laboratory assistant; clerical duties, litter collector (after a regular social event); junior shop assistants; P.A. announcer (for example, 'red light' specials); library assistants; delivery person; assistant gardener; houseman (in a five star hotel); bookbinding assistant and coldstores assistant.³⁴⁵

5.256 Jobsupport Inc. in Sydney acknowledged that at least some of the jobs taken by their clients had been ones that employers had found difficult to fill in the past because 'they are perceived as repetitive or boring'.³⁴⁶ Jobsupport was originally funded as a CETP service but is now funded as an Individual Supported Jobs program (part of the supported employment stream) because of its emphasis on people requiring substantial ongoing support. When giving evidence in April 1989

343. OOD Survey, p. 13.

344. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 4747 (DHH&CS).

345. *Guide to the Employment Services Funded Under the Disability Services Act*, May 1989, Attachment to DHH&CS Submission No. 178 (Department of Community Services and Health).

346. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 502 (Jobsupport Inc.).

they characterised their service as 'supported competitive employment'.³⁴⁷ However, placements made by Jobsupport further demonstrate the range of suitable jobs identified for people with more substantial disabilities, for example, kindergarten helper; animal attendant; factory hand; laundry general hand; kitchen hand; cleaner; handyperson; general hand; sales assistant; process worker; nurses' assistant; clerical assistant; insurance clerk; and tea attendant.³⁴⁸

The competence of these workers and the degree to which they have been accepted by co-workers is excellent. Ten employers have requested additional employees, one of the Laundry General Hands was voted Laundry Employee of the month and one of the Kitchen Hands was voted Crew Person of the Year. All clients now enjoy an improved self-image and greater economic independence as a result of working in the local community in the job of their choice.³⁴⁹

5.257 At this stage there is very little data to validate whether the other positive outcomes proposed by DHH&CS are being achieved, and in the case of opportunities for promotion in employment it is too early, as yet, to discern any trends.

5.258 CETP services are also required to meet set placement rates in competitive employment; these, as well as job retention rates, were regarded as key indicators by the Department of their success rate. However, as indicated above, quality of lifestyle is also an important component of 'success'.

Public sector employment

5.259 A number of submissions from CETP services mentioned the difficulties in placing people with disabilities into the public service at Commonwealth, State and local government levels. The structural barriers to public service entry were discussed above in Chapter 3. Selection criteria, which discriminated against those with low levels of educational achievement, were seen as being a particular problem.³⁵⁰

The greatest difficulty in finding employment is still with Government Departments and statutory bodies, who employ reasonable numbers in this area [Lithgow NSW]. To date some small success has recently been achieved with statutory authorities but despite considerable

347. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 475 (Jobsupport Inc.).

348. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 480 and data supplied to the Committee by Jobsupport, June 1991.

349. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 476 (Jobsupport Inc.).

350. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 5197 (PE Personnel).

efforts no placements have been made with a government department.³⁵¹

5.260 In October 1990 of the 230 people with disabilities then being supported in employment by the PE Personnel in Perth, only 20 had been placed in public sector jobs and most of these were in local government areas. The agency now has a joint venture with a State government body, the Authority for Intellectually Handicapped Persons, to secure jobs for people with disabilities within the Authority.³⁵² The problems for the people with intellectual disabilities in Canberra were highlighted by the ACT Inter Agency Taskforce in 1989 – as a ‘one company’ town, Canberra has a lack of ‘blue collar’ positions which significantly decreases the likelihood of people with intellectual disabilities obtaining employment anywhere other than in the public service.³⁵³ However, subsequent participation by a local CETP service, Advance Personnel, in a pilot of the IDAP scheme which was discussed earlier in Chapter 3, and also referred to in this chapter³⁵⁴, has helped to overcome some of the structural barriers to entry and has facilitated access to positions in the Commonwealth public service.

5.261 The IDAP pilot program administered by Advance Personnel identified suitable positions within the service by focussing on the concept of reasonable adjustment. Following the government's decision to extend the IDAP scheme nationally, identified CETP agencies in each state will work with the Public Service Commission to place people with intellectual disabilities in departments. At the end of 1991 only the ACT and NSW had provided places under the IDAP Scheme although technically it was available in all States. In October 1990 the Minister for the then Department of Community Services and Health acknowledged that the APS had not shown enough commitment to the employment of people with disabilities:

I regard as totally unsatisfactory the reported decline in the level of recruitment of people with disabilities into the public service. The Government cannot accept a situation where the public service is operating in a manner that is inconsistent with the broader objectives that the Government has set for the employment of people with disabilities.³⁵⁵

351. Submission No. 114 (Vocational Training Service), 28 February 1989. See also *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 4182 (Epic Employment Service, M.O.R.E. Inc.), and Submission No. 120, p. 5 (Competitive Employment Interagency of NSW).

352. Letter to Committee, 26 April 1991.

353. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 1649 (The Inter-Agency Task Force on employment and Disability (A.C.T.)).

354. See Paragraph 5.235.

355. Speech at the Public Service Commission's ‘Focus on Ability’ Disability Information Strategy, Canberra, 23 October 1990.

5.262 CETP service staff who gave evidence following this announcement were optimistic about the possibilities the scheme offered for their clients.³⁵⁶ However, limited departmental resources must necessarily affect the extent to which there is access and prospects of advancement.³⁵⁷

5.263 While the New South Wales public sector appears well educated in respect of surveyed attitudes towards people with disabilities³⁵⁸, it is necessary to test these attitudes by providing employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Having the right language is the first step; the next is to put it into practice.

5.264 Recommendations regarding the employment of people with disabilities in the public sector are also listed in Chapter 3; see Recommendations 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.

356. *Transcript of Evidence*, p. 5197 (PE Personnel), p. 5378 (JobMatch).

357. See Paragraphs 3.98, 5.235.

358. See Bruce Alcorn, *The Rhetoric and Reality – Employment of People with Disabilities*, (Spastic Centre of New South Wales, October 1991), p. 9.