



**CICA response to
The National Career
Development Strategy
Green Paper**

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CICA response to the National Career Development Strategy Green Paper

1. Summary

This paper proposes a strategy that is committed to:

- Quality through CICA benchmarking, quality frameworks and processes and as a risk management strategy
- Lifetime access to career development services
- Development of career self-management skills and opportunity awareness
- Integration through the establishment of a national career service and effective marketing to achieve wide public appeal. The 4 elements are:
 - Create a single brand for career development services
 - Access for all and wide public appeal
 - High quality, personalised and impartial career services,
 - Labour market and course information through state-of-the-art, online, real time resources backed up with professional advice.
- Research and evidence-based service delivery and establishment of a research agenda
- A national leadership role for the Australian government and repositioning of responsibility for career development under the Minister for Employment
- National career management skills curricula including regular review and update of the Australian Blueprint for Career Development
- A taskforce rather than a leadership body focused on implementing a national career service
- A strong relationship with the career industry
- Links to our region and to our 3rd largest industry – i.e. Australia as a major regional education provider

The Career Industry Council of Australia is the national peak body for the career industry and has a vital interest in a successful outcome of an effective National Strategy that results in a stronger national career development system that is good for individuals of all ages and good for the country.

The Green Paper provides a useful summary of many of the issues that have been evident since the completion of the OECD review of career policy and programs more than a decade ago. The timing of this paper is particularly important because commitment to career development by the Australian

Government has reached a low point, particularly since its location under the umbrella of the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transition.

We believe that the Australian Government has an important leadership role to ensure that career development initiatives are able to address a broader range of national priorities than might occur with the narrower (albeit important) confines of a National Partnership Agreement. Accordingly, it is our view that career development would be better placed in the employment area of DEEWR.

We note that several countries are taking quite different approaches to dealing with changing economic circumstances of their citizens and we believe that a National Strategy can articulate a way forward that builds on past initiatives and sets out a vision for governments of all persuasions.

The case for doing things differently is compelling. The requirements of an effective career development strategy are shifting in Australia and elsewhere. Career services are focusing on a range of age groups including retention of older workers, transitions from welfare to work, disability services and apprenticeship completion etc. In short, by default we are moving service provision across the lifespan.

Assisting individuals to make informed learning and work choices is becoming more complex and of economic necessity for Australia. This country is investing significantly in upskilling of individuals but the investment in quality career services is not keeping pace with what is required of them. In particular, the mismatch between unemployment in some areas and a need to import labour to meet skills shortages in other areas is persisting.

Other well known issues such as globalisation, technological change, global urbanisation, connection to the Asia Pacific region together with changes in the way work is being undertaken suggest that a national career development strategy has quite a bit of ground to cover.

What is needed is a broader bipartisan vision that embraces these big picture challenges rather than a focus on who does what and when as outlined in the Green Paper. In addition, these big challenges demand a repositioning of career development outside of the National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions. Moreover, given the size of the task, government needs to commit to a budget for career development beyond the current end date of 2014.

A modernisation of *myfuture* is also required to ensure public access through multiple entry points and with access to real time labour market information. A National Strategy needs to include a national research agenda.

Our vision is that a National Strategy should take an integrated approach and focus on the development and implementation of a national career service with four key areas of focus:

- **Create a single brand (e.g. Careers Australia) for career development services** funded by government and through partnerships. There are dozens of career development initiatives that are underutilised and under marketed because they do not sit under an overarching National Strategy. The public simply cannot work through which service might serve them best and a cohesive integrated approach is needed. This would be more cost effective because it could utilise existing state and territory structures
- **Access for all** – Focus on universal service provision available throughout life. In essence, Careers Australia joins up the range of services available for different age groups; extends the age range for services where possible; and highlights specific targeted services. Clients of

all ages have access to service delivery that is independent of the interests of particular institutions or enterprises, is socially inclusive, supportive of equal opportunities and targets specialty services to disadvantaged groups, and improving delivery of services to regional and remote communities.

- **High quality, personalised and impartial career services**, with opportunities and experiences that help people to develop the skills they need to manage their own careers. Quality assurance, to drive improvements in performance and provision, could be managed through the implementation of CICA frameworks, central registration by CICA of career development practitioners and implementation of an evidence based research agenda. Stronger links to DES and JSA would strengthen the quality of career services in these areas.
- **Labour market and course information** through state-of-the-art, online, real time resources backed up with professional advice.

It is our view that a taskforce involving the career industry, employers and government is likely to be an important component of this challenge and our preference over the establishment of another leadership body. Over the past decade CICA has had representation on many career development related national bodies and their success has been mixed and not sustained. The current National Youth Careers Advisory group has achieved little. By contrast, a good example was the MCEETYA National Careers Taskforce. This body played a major role in progressing national career development policy¹ and was particularly successful in achieving significant outcomes for improving quality and access to career development. Among other things, it had: a clear purpose and tasks; broad representation from key stakeholders and links to a national decision making body in MCEETYA; high level support with its chair at Deputy Secretary and interest from the Minister and Prime Minister; and it was well resourced. The clarity of purpose and task based approach of the taskforce was a strong reason for its success. Such a body would be ideal to oversee the implementation of a national career service.

The Green Paper also recognises the importance of supporting individuals to acquire career management skills. It is an essential task that began with the development of the Australian Blueprint for Career Development but more recently, work has ceased on this project. We believe that it is time to revisit and update this project to take into account the changing context.

Career development initiatives have suffered over time because of funding models that lead to good programs such as the Lighthouse Schools initiative and National Career Development Week being short lived. They also suffer because the public cannot easily navigate the programs that may best address their needs. It is particularly difficult for those at risk who are offered career services that are below an acceptable standard and delivered by unqualified people. A national career service would have a level of expertise and accountability to ensure that fewer people fall through the cracks for want of good careers advice.

2. About the Career Industry Council of Australia

Established in 2003, the Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA) is the national peak body for the career industry. Its mission is to:

- Promote access to quality career development services for all Australians across the life-span with a particular emphasis on career management skills

¹ DEST, (2002) Career Services in Australia: Supporting peoples transitions across the lifespan. DEST:Canberra

- Focus on quality assurance through the implementation and embedding of professional standards for career development practitioners, endorsement of course providers and quality frameworks and assessment for career service and program providers
- Advocate for an international best practice career development system for Australia that provides access to quality career development support at multiple transition points across the lifespan; that recognises the importance of participation in the workforce ; provides access to real time labour market information; includes existing and older workers; is increasingly integrated; builds bridges to the Asia Pacific region; and has strong partnerships with parents and industry as key stakeholders
- Enhance strategic national and international partnerships
- Contribute to the evidence base to enhance quality and address gaps in career service delivery.

3. Introduction

The Green Paper provides an important opportunity to consider key issues that have been evident for more than a decade, particularly since the OECD Thematic Review of Career Development and Public Policy².

Over the last decade, and with Australian Government support, CICA has worked with member organisations to:

- Develop and implement professional standards and guidelines for career information and services.
- Promote career development, implementing the National Career Development Week, including distribution of resource material and support for participants conducting career awareness events.
- Provide expertise in the development of professional materials such as the Certificate IV in Career Development; frameworks such as the Australian Blueprint for Career Development; information such as *myfuture*; and services such as the telephone help line for adults.
- Endorse courses and training programs.
- Establish processes for benchmarking career development services in the VET and disability support sectors.
- Provide representation on behalf of the career industry.
- Promote the development of a careers helpline (now Experience+), advocate for improvements in career services in the VET sector; propose a national career development strategy in line with OECD recommendations³ and called for the re-establishment of a career development taskforce.

The Green Paper clearly articulates why career development is important for Australia's future. It acknowledges that the benefits of lifelong career paths have long been understood – both to individuals and to key public policy objectives.

The paper presents an opportunity to establish a vision that may well inspire action post the National Partnership. It follows on from a range of government papers focused on career development (Appendix 1) and we are hopeful that the outcomes of this paper will lead to an

² Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. (2004). *Career guidance and public policy: Bridging the gap*. Retrieved July 2, 2012, from <http://www.oecd.org>

³ Ibid

effective National Career Development Strategy that is sufficiently well resourced to achieve quality improvements in career development.

While good progress has been made in the past, progress has stalled during the period in which career development became an element of the National Partnership (NP) on Youth Attainment and Transitions. The focus has been to reduce career development to a component to support priorities of the National Partnership Agreement and, in doing so, an opportunity has been missed to broaden the role of career development to deal with a range of complex impacts on individual management of work and learning choices. The national advisory group under the NP is comprised solely of Commonwealth, State and Territory bureaucrats. Now at the back end of the National Partnership, with no strategy in place and unallocated funds taken as savings, opportunities have been lost.

The paper acknowledges that Australians “need the knowledge and skills to manage their careers ... to take full advantage of the opportunities that arise from ongoing changes in the labour market and in education and skill requirements”⁴.

This aligns with CICA’s views. Career development has a role to play in underpinning positive labour market outcomes and the Australian Government has a leadership role in addressing deficiencies in the current provision to meet new challenges. In a world of constant change, the policy challenges are enormous and the strategy should recognise that a simple delineation of responsibilities will not suffice.

The Government should not dilute its leadership role in the career development space. Good progress has previously occurred on the back of a strong commitment by the Australian Government.

A National Strategy that acknowledges State responsibility for delivery of career services must ensure accountability at a national level. There is potential over the next decade that Australia will follow in the footsteps of a recent policy shifts in the UK where there is a clear focus around jobs and particularly youth unemployment and the introduction of a free market model. This priority arises no doubt from the impact of a change in government, the GFC and the European crisis, and highlights how the focus can shift and the structure for delivery adjusted to meet new demands. In recognition that this model has risks the UK Government has set in place a quality assessment process and are moving toward a practitioner register body.

Australia is moving this way as well and Figure 1 on page 4 of the Green Paper nicely sets out the tasks but not how well we are doing in each of the three areas. There are specific additional tasks for career development in relation to older Australians, people with disability, unemployed and underemployed and social equity groups.

The case for doing things differently is strong and a National Strategy must embrace new approaches. The leakage from trade training is around 50%. Gaps in provision of career services with the VET sector are significant, yet government commitment to minimum standards for provision of advice is, so far, mixed. Worse, the transition systems in place are not sufficiently addressing skills shortages and other national priorities even though the expertise is in place.

The approach to delivery of course and career information is not cutting through. International evidence suggests that many young people drop out of post-compulsory courses because these do not meet their expectations or because their chosen course was unsuitable for them. Around 22% of

⁴ DEEWR,(2012),National Career Development strategy Green Paper, DEEWR:Canberra

non-learners who would have liked to learn say that lack of awareness of which courses might benefit them, prevented them from doing so.⁵ We also know that people from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to receive informal careers advice from their family and social networks⁶. And, that services for adults through an integrated service is effective⁷.

The EU notes that the labour market is characterised by the mismatch between persistent unemployment and difficulties in recruiting in certain sectors, and career guidance provides a means of responding more effectively to labour market needs⁸. In Australia, we have a similar issue. While unemployment is growing in some areas, Australia is importing labour to deal with systemic skills shortages. This disconnect will continue to be a problem for the Australian economy as demographic issues impact on economic capacity⁹.

The Government is making significant investment in the upskilling of individuals and return to work programs for welfare recipients, and is encouraging older Australians to continue to contribute their skills by remaining in the workforce for longer periods. Unfortunately, the current structures and level of investment in career and transition support has not kept pace with what is required of it. There is a compelling case for doing things differently.

Over the next two decades, our region will have to deal with the impact of the greatest migration of humanity in human history to urban environments¹⁰. It is changing the very nature of work itself and together with other influences from climate change (green jobs and greening of jobs), globalisation, demographic shifts and technology will drive new ways of working and collaboration and require changes in how careers are managed and career development services delivered. A National Strategy will need to have a clear vision to operate within the context of these issues.

Another context for a National Strategy is that it needs to reflect our place in the Asia Pacific region. Provision of career development services is no longer confined to Australia's borders and a national labour market. There are currently more than 150,000 Australians working in Asia – an increase of over 50% in the past decade¹¹ and more than 1.2 million Asian born people living in Australia.

A National Strategy should also recognise that international education is Australia's third largest export industry, generating \$18 billion in exports in 2009. It is 50% larger than tourism-related travel, and has grown by 94% since 2004.¹² Increasingly, international students are requiring higher level advice on the career implications of their course choices and the potential to work across several countries in their career.

Internationally and in Australia, the impact of the global financial crises (1&2) is affecting young people and new entrants into the labour market; reducing hours for part time and casual workers

⁵BIS, (2012) National Career service: The Right Advice at the Right Time: New Challenges, New Chances: Further Education and Skills System Reform Plan. BIS: London

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Council of the European Union, (2008), Council Resolution on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies, EU: Brussels

⁹ See Treasury intergenerational report findings retrieved July 3, 2012 at http://www.budget.gov.au/2002-03/bp5/html/O1_BP5Prelim.html

¹⁰ Dr Megan Clark CEO, CSIRO in a speech at the DEEWR funded Big Skills Conference in 2009, retrieved July 2, 2012 at <http://www.csiro.au/en/Portals/Multimedia/On-the-record/Megan-Clark-presentation-20090304-green-economy.aspx>

¹¹ See <http://www.myfuture.edu.au/The%20Facts/Skills/Climb%20onto%20the%20wave,-d-%20Working%20with%20Asia/Working%20in%20Asian%20countries.aspx>

¹² Phillimore, J. Koshy, P., (2010), The Economic Implications of Fewer Higher Education Students in Australia, John Curtin Institute of Public Policy: WA

and resulting in a manufacturing slow down. University graduates are also finding it more difficult to access work¹³ yet Graduate Outlook 2011 indicated that 27.6% of employers would have recruited more graduates if suitable candidates had been available¹⁴.

There is more to be done in relation to involving industry: providing access to real time labour market information; mandating a national career management skill curriculum; delivering better career services to regional and remote communities; improving accountability in schools; and establishing stronger links to the Asia Pacific region etc.

These are some of the broader challenges for a strategy and highlight the importance of taking an all-ages approach to a National Strategy and a whole of government approach. Ultimately, the value of career development activities can be defined by its contribution in assisting individuals to develop skills to make decisions, develop strategies and to locate satisfying and productive work and learning opportunities.

4. Comments on key priorities and proposed direction for the National Career Development Strategy as proposed in the Green Paper

A National Career Development Strategy

A National Strategy that inspires action, improves quality and access to services, and links policy initiatives seamlessly for citizens could have real value in Australia - a federation that, as the paper points out, is committed to individual choice and has a dynamic and highly flexible labour market.

We understand there is no budget beyond 2014 for any national career development activity. While this may be normal practice, funding will need to be guaranteed beyond this period to demonstrate Government commitment and for a National Strategy to be of any serious benefit.

The Green Paper suggests five initial priorities for a strategy:

1. Articulating the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders

As stated previously and in the Green Paper, the government has a key leadership role in a national career development strategy “given its national responsibilities for economic management and the labour market”¹⁵.

Of particular importance is the high level leadership task for the Australian Government to establish a national vision for career development that can be agreed to by other key stakeholders, including CICA.

The challenges identified in the paper around processes and coordination responsibilities, including the government’s involvement, are lesser issues that if given too much airplay, will distract effort from much more important issues. The space is complex and ever-changing so, within reason, it is wise and efficient not to waste too much effort on clarifying who does what, when that effort could be expended on moving forward and addressing missed opportunities to strengthen the contribution that an integrated career development system could make. We suggest that:

¹³ See GDS 2011 – it notes a drop in graduate recruitment of 3.4% retrieved July 3 2012 <http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/MediaCentre/NewsandMediaReleases/index.htm>

¹⁴ Graduate Careers Australia, (2012)

¹⁵ op cit pge9

First, the Government has an opportunity to reposition responsibility for career development outside of the National Partnership Agreement and to work with stakeholders to achieve an agreed vision for career development in Australia.

Second, the Government should ensure there is a budget provision beyond 2014 to implement a strategy.

Third, modernise *myfuture* and develop multiple entry points for accessing real time labour market information.

Fourth, fund the establishment of a national research agenda to increase the evidence base.

Fifth, strengthen international linkages particularly in the Asia Pacific region.

Each of the above would act as a scaffold to support a bigger vision for career development. Australia must now consider a more integrated approach to its ad hoc and uncoordinated range of career development services and establish a national career service. It would bring together, under a single brand, a disparate range of often under marketed services that help people to make educational, training and occupational choices, and to manage their careers.

Good examples of national all-ages career services can be found internationally, including in New Zealand, Scotland, Wales and most recently in England (see appendix 2). Each of these Services:

- Has brand awareness of services that the public understands
- Is broadly integrated with national education, training, participation and labour market priorities
- Focuses on quality of services and career development practitioner standards
- Has multiple access points for service delivery
- Has up to date labour market information
- Has strong links between the government, career industry and employers.

Recognition that the economy is changing was an important reason for moving toward an all-ages career development service in England¹⁶. Over the next year National Career service England will handle up to one million telephone advice sessions; 20 million online sessions; provide information and advice for approximately 370,000 young people through the use of the helpline and website. In addition, it will offer face-to-face advice to 700,000 adults each year in a range of locations in local communities and implement quality assurance mechanisms.

Over the next three years the focus in New Zealand is to support outcomes resulting in a more highly skilled workforce, maximising the contribution of education and the career system to economic growth, better matching supply and demand in the labour market and ensuring that the New Zealand careers system is high quality, cohesive and learner/user centred.

In Scotland the focus is on accessible, high quality, personalised and impartial Career IAG, with opportunities and experiences that help people to develop the skills they need to manage their own careers; more intensive, face-to-face support – including specialist help – for those whose career

¹⁶ BIS, (2012) National Career service: The Right Advice at the Right Time: New Challenges, New Chances: Further Education and Skills System Reform Plan. BIS: London

development needs are greatest; ongoing feedback from users to improve service delivery; and state-of-the-art, online resources backed up with professional advice.

From the examples of New Zealand, England and Scotland, it is clear that many of the building blocks in Australia are already in place. Key areas of focus for a national career service are as follows.

- **Create a single brand (e.g. Careers Australia) for career development services** funded by government and through partnerships. There are dozens of career development initiatives that are underutilised and under marketed because they do not sit under an overarching National Strategy. Members of the public simply cannot work through which service might serve them best and a cohesive integrated approach is needed. This would be more cost effective because it could utilise existing state and territory structures
- **Access for all** – Focus on Universal service provision available throughout life. In essence, Careers Australia joins up the range of services available for different age groups; extends the age range for services where possible; and highlights specific targeted services. Clients of all ages have access to service delivery that is independent of the interests of particular institutions or enterprises. Socially inclusive, supportive of equality of opportunities and targeted specialty service to disadvantaged groups, improving delivery of services to regional and remote communities
- **High quality, personalised and impartial career services**, with opportunities and experiences that help people to develop the skills they need to manage their own careers. Quality assurance, to drive improvements in performance and provision, could be managed through the implementation of CICA frameworks, central registration by CICA of career development practitioners and implementation of an evidence based research agenda. Stronger links to DES and JSA would strengthen the quality of career services in these areas.
- **Labour market and course information** through state-of-the-art, online, real time resources backed up with professional advice.

A task force involving the career industry, employers and government to implement a national career service is likely to be an important component of this challenge. However, a national career service is not the answer to all aspects of an effective National Strategy. In summary, there are nine areas that a National Strategy needs to address:

1. **Cohesive approach to service delivery through a national career service**
2. **Commitment to quality** through CICA benchmarking, quality frameworks and processes
3. **National career management skills** curricula mandated for schools together with accountability requirements through the My School website
4. **Research agenda for career development** established to focus on supporting an evidence base for improving career development policy
5. **Update the Australian Blueprint for Career Development**
6. **Lifelong focus, and targeted strategies**, for career development to increase participation, improve retention, support older Australians and people with disabilities, the unemployed and underemployed and social equity groups. It may also have links to Disability Employment Service and Job Services Australia to strengthen quality of career service provision within these programs
7. **Access to more detailed real time labour market information** (particularly regionally based information)
8. **Asia Pacific regional focus rather than European focus on career development strategies** to support Australia's international education industry

9. **Agreed national accountability mechanisms** that acknowledge who is responsibility for the delivery of career services in various settings, and how well they are meeting their obligations at both a macro and micro level.

2. A national leadership body

CICA has been funded by government to undertake a national leadership role on behalf of the career industry and it has a clear mandate to continue that role for the foreseeable future.

Rather than the establishment of another national leadership body, CICA advocates the establishment of a taskforce, with broad representation including CICA. This would be a taskforce that has direct links to the Minister and complements and supports rather than competes with CICA.

The current career advisory group under the National Partnership Multilateral Working Group has no membership outside of government or with a focus beyond youth transitions. While this may be logical given the focus of the NP and that it is an agreement between governments, there is an unintentional consequence – sidelining of input from national stakeholders such as industry groups including AiGroup, ACCI and CICA.

CICA has been a member of previous national leadership bodies such as the MCEETYA National Careers Taskforce. This body played a major role in progressing national career development policy¹⁷ and was particularly successful in achieving significant outcomes for improving quality and access to career development. Among other things, it had: a clear purpose and tasks; broad representation from key stakeholders and links to a national decision making body in MCEETYA; high level support with its chair at Deputy Secretary and interest from the Minister and Prime Minister; and it was well resourced. The clarity of purpose and task orientation of the taskforce was a strong reason for its success.

In contrast, the National Youth Careers and Transitions Advisory Group has achieved little. We therefore propose that a taskforce may be more appropriate than a leadership body. One reason for this proposal is that these kind of leadership groups have not been sustained by government over the long term, are often subject to changing political priorities, or can become dumping grounds for out-of-favour policy initiatives. In some instances, the establishment of such bodies can actually have a damaging effect because expectations are not met. It is therefore important who is on the body, that it has a clear focus and that it has influence.

We would welcome a body that complemented the work of CICA and involved CICA and other career industry stakeholders as recommended in the various consultancy reports informing the Green Paper¹⁸. The inaccuracies and dated approach in elements of these consultancy reports are a clear illustration of why it is more efficient and effective to involve the career industry throughout the process rather than just information gathering discussions.

¹⁷ DEST, (2002) Career Services in Australia: Supporting peoples transitions across the lifespan. DEST:Canberra

¹⁸ See <http://www.deewr.gov.au/schooling/careersandtransitions/careerdevelopment/pages/default.aspx>

3. Supporting individuals to gain career management skills

Career management skills are the range of competences which provide structured ways for individuals (and groups) to gather, analyse, synthesise and organise self, educational and occupational information, as well as the skills to make and implement decisions and transitions.¹⁹

Over the past decade the Australian Government has been active in introducing the Australian Blueprint for Career Development (ABCD) as a descriptor and underpinning framework for the acquisition of career management skills.

However, more recently, work ceased on this project and its long term future is therefore uncertain. Since the development of the ABCD, expectations on what is required to manage a career have shifted.

For instance, McIlveen and Patton contend that the nature of career development interventions is likely to require a greater understanding by career development practitioners of the context in which the client is operating and the available opportunities that surround that context²⁰. And the work of Bright and Prior²¹ characterises individuals as complex systems subject to the influence of complex influences and chance events and the idea of emergent patterns.

The ABCD needs to be regularly updated to take into account changing context, emergent patterns and a shift in career management skill requirements as work changes and the workforce restructures.

4. A national policy-focused career development research agenda

Since 2003, CICA has consistently proposed a national research agenda focused on supporting national policy. In 2010 CICA brought together key career development researchers to consider national research priorities under the banner of Career Development Research Australia. The project failed to eventuate, principally because individual researchers were focused on their own priorities and publication KPI's. In 2011, CICA commissioned research and while this approach was effective, there remain many gaps in the evidence for good practice which could be addressed through the establishment of a career development research agenda.

In 2005, DEEWR commissioned Allen Consulting to undertake a feasibility study²² to establish an Institute for Career Leadership. To some extent CICA has taken up many of the functions proposed for the Institute but the research function requires greater commitment by government. In 2007, CICA commissioned Richard Sweet to develop an issues paper on the topic²³. Sweet found that the case for the development of a national research strategy on career development and public policy, and on the public benefits of career development services, rests on the importance of having a solid

¹⁹ ELPGN,(2010).Lifelong Guidance Policies: Work in Progress, a report on the work of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network. ELPGN: Finland

²⁰ McIlveen, Peter and Patton, Wendy (2006) A Critical Reflection on Career Development. International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance 6(1):pp. 15-27.

²¹ Prior, R.& Bright, J (2011)The Chaos Theory of Careers: a new perspective on working in the twenty-first century Routledge:UK

²² The Allen Consulting Group (2005) Getting serious about careers: Leadership in career development. DEEWR:Canberra

²³ Sweet. R.(2007), The Public Benefits of Australian Career Development Services: Towards a National Research Strategy CICA: Melbourne

evidence base to support public policy goals at a time of increasing public investment in career development services.

He argued that the research strategy was needed in order to:

- Improve, through rigorous evaluation, accountability for the use of public funds;
- Improve the information base for policy development and for practice;
- Provide those who fund services with evidence of the value that they are getting for their money;
- Help policy makers and practitioners to evaluate better and to understand the impacts, costs and benefits of different types of career development services;
- Allow practitioners and policy makers to better target services;
- Improve practice by, for example, identifying gaps in services and better identifying community needs; and
- Assist governments to better allocate resources for career development services.

These remain important reasons to develop a research strategy that links to policy. Sweet suggested that a research strategy focus on three strands: need and demand; processes and costs; outcomes and benefits.

As a follow up CICA commissioned QUT to identify all of the centres and institutes involved in career development research²⁴. The list is extensive and a range of useful research was undertaken. The problem for the career industry is that much of this research is fragmented and not specifically career development focused and has been underutilised by governments to inform improvements in career service delivery and outcomes. On balance, a policy research agenda informed by consultation with the career industry is a good way forward.

5. Career development assistance in the labour market including for those at risk

A national career service that provides multiple, easily understood access points is a key step to supporting people at risk.

Again, the reasons for establishing a national career service in England are noteworthy. Recognition that the economy is changing was an important reason for moving toward an all-ages career development service in England²⁵. Upgrading skills within the economy to meet higher level skills requirements is a key factor.

Other evidence for moving toward an all-ages national career service included:

- many young people drop out of post-compulsory courses because these do not meet their expectations or because their chosen course was unsuitable for them. Around 22% of non-learners who would have liked to learn say that lack of awareness of which courses might benefit them prevented them from doing so²⁶
- people from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to receive informal careers advice from their family and social networks

²⁴ CICA (2009). Centres and institutes involved in career development, work and labour. CICA:Melbourne

²⁵ BIS, (2012) National Careers Service: The Right Advice at the Right Time: New Challenges, New Chances: Further Education and Skills System Reform Plan.BIS: London

²⁶ *ibid*

- services for adults through an integrated service was effective.

CICA is particularly interested in consistency, fairness and socially inclusive principles in the development of a National Strategy and it is our view that the best option is for a national career service in which those providing services meet CICA standards for professional career development practitioners.

The current approach is that some government funded programs meet the standards while others do not. Similarly, some states and territories meet CICA standards while others have no qualification requirements for giving careers advice.

For too long new career development programs have been started without sufficient attention being given to the client group who might access the services. A case in point was the establishment of a helpline to support people impacted by the GFC in 2009/10. The Service could only be accessed by contacting the DEEWR switchboard and being referred by the DEEWR telephone receptionist. The service was very poorly marketed because there was a fear that the demand would exceed capacity. It eventually drifted until it was rerieved and redeveloped under the Experience + banner where it has been a success (but still requiring more marketing).

Consider the following names which represent a small number of career related programs in Australia; *myfuture* (AG), Career Connect (WA), School-Business Partnerships (AG), Youth Connections (AG), Experience +, South Australia Works (SA), Careers Advisory Service (NSW), Local Learning and Employment Networks (Vic), Aboriginal Access Centres (SA), Australian Apprenticeship Access Program (AG), Skills Info (NSW), My University (AG), Guaranteeing Futures (T), Local Connections to Work (AG) and Education and Training Advisers Program(AG). How would a member of the public discern the differences of each of these programs?

We believe that a national career service model would ensure greater awareness of services for those at risk and for all Australians. It could also assist with improvements to career services under Job Services Australia and Disability Employment Service contracts. It would be recognised by the public, be cost effective, accessible and quality assured.

5. Conclusion

The Career Industry Council of Australia congratulates DEEWR for developing a Green Paper that gives stakeholders an opportunity to consider key issues that have been evident for more than a decade, particularly since the OECD Thematic Review of Career Development and Public Policy.

The Paper articulates why career development is important for Australia's future and suggests some potential processes to build a way forward given that progress has stalled during the period in which career development became an element of the National Partnership (NP) on Youth Attainment and Transitions.

From CICA's perspective a National Strategy needs to make up for missed opportunities to implement programs that support all citizens to acquire knowledge and skills to manage their careers and to take full advantage of the opportunities around them.

Clearly, through this strategy the Australian Government can reaffirm its leadership role in committing to a strategy that inspires action, improves quality and access to services, and links to policy initiatives.

However, we are concerned that this paper is heavy on who does what and when and is light on vision. From a process perspective, we support:

- a repositioning of responsibility for career development outside of the National Partnership Agreement;
- budget provision for career development beyond 2014;
- modernising of *myfuture* to address real time labour market information requirements;
- funding of a national research agenda;
- and strengthening of linkages to the Asia Pacific region.

CICA is particularly interested in a more integrated national career development system that is available for all Australians through the establishment of a national career service to increase awareness of career development initiatives by promoting them under a single brand as is occurring in countries such as New Zealand, England, Scotland and Wales.

A national career service is a model advocated by the OECD and has proven to be an effective means of increasing access to career services. If this model were to be adopted by government we would propose that CICA quality assurance frameworks be utilised to drive performance improvements in service delivery and outcomes.

We believe that an effective national career development strategy should lead to an effective national career development system. Such a system requires better access to real time labour market information; a stakeholder supported career development policy research agenda; collaboration with regional countries and ongoing accountability. This approach should be supported by legislation as occurred in England, Scotland and New Zealand.

We look forward to continuing to work with government on this important agenda.

Appendix 1: Examples of previous recommendations from more than a decade of reports that may contribute to a cohesive national career development strategy

Prime Minister's Youth Pathways Action Plan Taskforce (2001), Footprints to the Future, Australian Government: Canberra

The Taskforce recommended that:

1. All young people and their families have access to a career and transition support system through and beyond school which is focused on individual needs and circumstances and can assist them to:
 - make informed choices when selecting schools, courses and post-school opportunities;
 - connect education and training pathways with realistic career choices and employment prospects;
 - know how to access the broad range of community services and specialist support available to them.

2. The Taskforce also recommended that: the Commonwealth Government, working with State and Territory Governments, ensure that all young people have access to high quality career and transition support by:
 - ensuring each young person receives professional and on-going career and transition support beginning at year 8 (age 13) which should include the continuous development of a learning pathways plan designed to address transition issues as they arise;
 - making effective, relevant and appropriate career and transition support available for all young people and their families both in school and in local community settings; and
 - developing comprehensive career advice connected to job opportunities (including local opportunities) supported by information technology systems accessible at the local level.

3. The Taskforce recommended that this career and transition support be:
 - delivered by professionally trained and committed staff with good links both in the school and the community; and
 - overseen by school principals who should have the prime responsibility for ensuring that each young person has access to this professional career and transition advice; and – following-up young people's transition outcomes for a period of 18 months after leaving school.

OECD (2002) Review of Career Guidance Policies – Australian Country note recommendations

- Recruit more Indigenous staff with guidance training to take part in programmes targeted at Indigenous groups
- Support the continued development of the National Career Information System, including research to track its effectiveness
- Extend the support for exploratory work-experience placements to a level comparable with that currently provided for structured work placements in VET pathways
- Extend the provision in schools of alternative exploratory methods like work shadowing and ‘transition teams’
- Ensure that all schools in all states have at least one person on its staff who has specialist training in career education and guidance, with a substantial amount of time for this role
- Expand training for career guidance practitioners in schools and across the board
- Develop nationally agreed guidelines for career education in schools, including a broad statement of entitlement; ensure that there is a clear but flexible policy framework to implement these guidelines at state level, developed and supported by a policy team with appropriate expertise; provide incentives for schools to use the Career Education Quality Framework to review their programmes, with some external moderation; and require schools to make their programmes transparent and accountable to their end-users – students, parents and the wider community
- Develop a system of national reporting on career education and guidance in schools, building on the planned work on performance indicators
- In TAFE institutes and in universities, review how career services can work more effectively with teaching departments to help students link their learning to their career development, and the resources they need to perform this role effectively alongside their other tasks
- Monitor and evaluate current approaches to including career guidance elements into Job Network provision, and explore the wider potential of this approach
- Conduct a feasibility study to explore the possibility of a major initiative to develop a national Career Line with a single 1800 number, from which calls could be passed to a network of call centres linked to the Career Information Centres, and possibly also to some existing call centres
- Conduct a survey of the extent and nature of fee-for-service provision (both for-profit and not-for-profit) in the career guidance field, and of its potential for expansion
- Encourage the Australian Association of Career Counsellors to set clearer and stronger standards for practising in the private sector as a career guidance professional
- Explore means of encouraging employers to provide active support to their employees in planning their career development – possibly by awarding a voluntary ‘kite mark’ to employers who meet agreed standards in this respect
- Review the role of the Career Information Centres to see them as significant hubs in a more devolved and broadly-based strategy, and explore ways of separating them more clearly from Centrelink and its associations with welfare dependency
- Make resources available to strengthen community-based guidance resources in TAFE and in adult and community education

- Develop a quality-assurance framework to cover adult guidance services
- Develop a co-ordinated marketing strategy to promote use of the National Career Information System, the proposed helpline, and quality-assured face-to-face services, with each acting as a portal to the others
- Encourage the ANTA National Research and Evaluation Committee to fund a programme of policy-related studies in career guidance (e.g. impact studies)
- Explore the possibility of establishing a clearing-house for research in the career development field, with responsibility for making relevant research available to practitioners and policy-makers, and for writing regular briefing documents summarising such research in terms that policy-makers can use
- Update the National Training Framework for Career Counsellors and use it to review and reform current training provision in the field
- Support the MCEETYA Transition from School Taskforce in implementing its planned initiatives, including the development of a blueprint of the career development competences that individuals need to be helped to develop and apply throughout their lives
- Encourage ANTA and the ANTA Ministerial Council to adopt a stronger leadership role in the career guidance field
- Explore the possibility of establishing an independent Foundation or Council, or reconstituting the Enterprise and Career Education Foundation, to bring together the interests of the profession and of relevant stakeholder groups and act as a focal point for strategic thinking and innovation in the career guidance field
- Encourage all states to implement the MCEETYA recommendation to set up cross-sectoral co-ordinating mechanisms in the career guidance field
- Encourage more cross-sectoral sharing across states, possibly on a bilateral basis

Learning to Work: Inquiry into vocational education in schools- 2004²⁷

- That careers education be a mandatory part of the core curriculum for the compulsory years of secondary schooling.
- That all secondary schools have at least one full-time professional careers adviser.
- That professional development needs of careers educators be improved.
- That a clear set of national standards for the delivery of career education in schools, and a national system of reporting, be adopted by MCEETYA.

²⁷ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Training.(2004) Learning to Work – Report on the Inquiry into vocational education in schools.

Council of the European Union, (2008), Council Resolution on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies, EU: Brussels

Key priorities:

- Encourage the lifelong acquisition of career management skills
- Facilitate access by all citizens to guidance services
- Develop quality assurance guidance provision
- Encourage coordination and cooperation, coordination, and cooperation among local stakeholders

DEEWR (2008), Review of Career Development Services in Australian Tertiary Institutions DEEWR: Canberra

- A national policy and plan for career development should be developed by DEEWR in consultation with CICA and related to broader initiatives of the COAG Working Group on the Productivity Agenda. The plan would include a proposed national flagship institute for career development.
- A national institute of career development should be established to provide a focal point for policy research, professional development, evaluation of models, and information dissemination. It should provide advice to universities and TAFEs on how they can improve their career development services, including measuring performance.
- The proposed national institute should be the primary location for the facilitation of professional development activities for tertiary education career practitioners. With advice from CICA member organisations involved directly with tertiary education, it should develop a comprehensive plan of action for the professional development of career practitioners, including programmes for strategic leadership in tertiary institutions.
- The national institute should develop guidelines on the design and strategic use of outcome measures for tertiary institution career development services to be used at both national and institutional levels, and in quality assurance processes.
- Universities Australia should include specific reference to the contemporary roles of career services in future updates of the current guidelines for the provision of essential services for students. It should consider the development of a code and guidelines for career development services and for work-based and placement learning.
- Institutions in both higher education and VET sectors should ensure that their student charter includes a clear reference to the nature and level of career development services students can expect.
- HE and VET providers should articulate the nature and extent of the role they expect career development services to play in their institutions. The role of career development services should be included in strategic and operational plans, and student charters, with particular reference to the role of the services in supporting employability goals.
- Institutions should provide support and technical advice to career development services to ensure that the units have clearly defined missions, objectives and operational targets. These should include targets for student usage and levels of satisfaction.
- Institutions should encourage the use of service level agreements for career development services.

- Institutions should set and resource a minimum level of individual consultations appropriate for their student profile.
- Institutions should provide special funding for the provision of career development services for international students as a fixed proportion of income received from student fees.
- MCVTE should investigate the feasibility of establishing Career Development Centres in all states and territories.
- DEEWR should conduct a series of pilot projects to promote collaborative approaches to the provision of career development services across the HE and VET sectors.
- MCVTE should review the quality of the available data on the provision of career services by TAFE institutes and RTOs with a view to developing a national template for data collection and analysis.
- MCVTE should develop a set of guidelines to assist TAFE institutes to clarify the role of career practitioners.
- The Government should identify and fund strategic initiatives with priority to exploring alternative models for the delivery of career development services to reduce duplication of effort, and to ensure that students in all HE and VET organisations have access to career services of the highest possible standard relevant to their contexts and needs.

OECD (2010), Learning for Jobs: Vocational Education and Training Pointers for policy development

REFORM CAREER GUIDANCE TO DELIVER EFFECTIVE ADVICE FOR ALL

- Develop a coherent career guidance profession, independent from psychological counselling and well informed by labour market information.
- Provide adequate resources for career guidance and its pro-active delivery.
- Ensure an independent base to support objective career guidance.
- Provide good sources of information about careers and courses.
- Build a comprehensive framework of guidance through partnership with employers.
- Ensure that career guidance initiatives are properly evaluated.

NCVER (2011), Identification of issues that impact upon the provision of effective career development services for VET learners, CICA: Melbourne

Suggested ways forward:

- Recognising career management skills as a fundamental employability skill for all individuals and incorporating it in VET courses
- Developing well-integrated, well-publicised, high quality, comprehensive, readily useable and accessible career information that use available communication technologies well
- Having a cascading level of service delivery, including comprehensive career development services that are targeted at the most vulnerable 'at risk' groups
- Developing genuine and comprehensive wrap-around services, with career development as a central focus
- Building better approaches to sharing resources and expertise, especially through more effective networks and partnerships

- Having appropriate initial and ongoing training and professional development for career development professionals and others, especially those who are key influencers in career decisions
- Having better career counselling at or around enrolment for VET programs, and on-going access throughout their VET course and as part of the transition to employment or further study
- Increasing the focus career development professionals give to employers and their role in the career development process
- Better evaluating the quality and impact of the career development services

DEEWR, (2011), Employability Skills Framework Stage 1, DEEWR: Canberra

The report sets out a new employability skills framework and includes career development as a key component of core skills for all Australians

Navigate the world of work

Manage career and work life

Understand and work with roles, rights, responsibilities and protocols

Manage personal learning

Interact with others

Understand and be understood

Contribute and collaborate

Understand, respect and utilise diverse perspectives

Negotiate outcomes and identify and resolve conflict

Get the work done

Adapt and apply prior knowledge

Plan, organise and implement

Make decisions

Identify, solve and anticipate problems

Design, develop and implement new ideas

Use tools and technology

Manage information

Enabling Factors

Workplace support

Culture and values – both workplace and individual

External factors

Appendix 2. Approaches in New Zealand, England and Scotland

Good examples of National All Ages Career services occur across the world in New Zealand, Scotland, Wales and most recently in England. Each of these Services:

- Has brand awareness of services that the public understand
- Are broadly integrated with national education, training, participation and labour market priorities
- Focus on quality of services and career development practitioner standards
- Multiple access points for service delivery
- Up to date labour market information
- Strong links between the government, career industry and employers.

New Zealand – Careers New Zealand

Careers New Zealand (CNZ) is the leading careers support agency for all New Zealanders needing information, advice and support to make life-defining decisions – with particular emphasis on young people, Māori and Pasifika.

As well as providing services directly to New Zealanders, CNZ works with school careers advisors, individuals and groups to provide relevant, high quality careers programmes and services for their students, staff and clients.

Careers New Zealand offers expert, free advice and support to help New Zealanders make smart, well-informed decisions about their career. It provides an extensive nationwide hub of careers expertise and support.

CNZ works with businesses, industry and community groups so that people have wider access to the information they need to make successful transitions into learning and work, so they are active contributors to New Zealand's economy.

Careers New Zealand is uniquely placed to view all the elements, organisations, steps and links that come together to form the careers system in New Zealand. CNZ works in partnership with government agencies, schools, tertiary providers, community organisations, businesses, unions, influencer groups, and users of our service.

Careers New Zealand was described in a 2007 review²⁸ as having the world's most fully integrated example of an all-age organisational structure favoured by the OECD career guidance policy review.

It has particular skills in dealing with cultural diversity. For example, in working with Maori youth, the service focuses on the extended, intergenerational family rather than on the individual alone in the career decision making process.

CNZ works with:

- **schools** through assisting them to self-review and enhance their practice using the career education benchmarks, tailored career resources (including electronic resources), an e-newsletter, professional development for staff through cluster deliveries and

²⁸ Watts, A.G. (2007), Career Services: A Review in an International Perspective. Career Services: Wellington

ongoing support to management and career teams to support school-wide career development

- **tertiary providers and ITOs** through professional development for staff, tailored career resources (including electronic resources) and ongoing professional advice to management to support provider-wide career education
- **iwi, hapu and whānau** through working alongside people to build their ability to support rangatahi in making career decisions
- **regional leaders** through regional development initiatives (such as Capable Auckland, Canterbury Careers, the Mayors' Taskforce for Jobs, economic development projects) and partnerships
- **parents, churches, youth mentors and others in the community** through capability building sessions, and targeted sections of the website
- **employers** through tailored packages and online resources to support staff's career progression; and through advice and tailored programmes to support workers facing redundancy
- **professional organisations and industry sector organisations** through networking and partnerships.

Over the next three years, its focus is to support outcomes resulting in a:

- more highly skilled workforce
- more young people Maori, Pacifica and other priority groups make a successful transition into work and learning
- maximising the contribution of education and the career system to economic growth
- higher returns on governments investment in education
- better matching of supply and demand in the labour market
- career competent individuals making smart career decisions
- New Zealand careers system is high quality, cohesive and learner/user centred
- good career development practice is standard across the career sector, and career influences can positively contribute to career decision-making
- people accessing Careers New Zealand career development service get the information they need

Clearly, there is a much stronger focus on the link between the labour market, economic growth and career development in this model compared to Australia.

England – National Career service

Recognition that the economy is changing was an important reason for moving toward an all-ages career development service in England²⁹. Upgrading skills within the economy to meet higher level skills requirements is a key factor.

Other evidence for moving toward an all-ages National career service included:

- many young people drop out of post-compulsory courses because these do not meet their expectations or because their chosen course was unsuitable for them. Around 22% of non-

²⁹ BIS, (2012) National Careers Service: The Right Advice at the Right Time: New Challenges, New Chances: Further Education and Skills System Reform Plan. BIS: London

learners who would have liked to learn say that lack of awareness of which courses might benefit them prevented them from doing so³⁰

- people from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to receive informal careers advice from their family and social networks
- services for adults through an integrated service was effective.

In England, the National Career service offers independent, impartial information and advice on learning and work and access to a wide range of information about careers and the job market.

The National Career service will:

- Handle up to one million telephone advice sessions and at least 20 million online sessions
- Provide information and advice for approximately 370,000 young people through the use of the helpline and website
- Offer face to face advice to 700,000 adults each year in a range of locations in local communities
- Operate to the recently enhanced matrix Standard, the national quality standard for the delivery of information, advice and guidance
- Encourage its workforce to become members of the new professional body, the Career Development Institute (currently the Careers Profession Alliance (CPA)) and where appropriate, to register as a Career Development Professional on their register (see link at bottom of page)
- Provide detailed sector by sector labour market information so people can discover which industries are growing in their area
- Provide tools such as a CV builder and a Skills Health Check on the website to help people identify their skills strengths and gaps
- Allow people to open a Lifelong Learning Account, which gives them clear information and advice on skills, careers and financial support in a single, personalised online space.

This model utilises new and existing programs to create a cohesive national structure. The Minister has indicated that:

‘... part of my aim is to ensure that careers advice is a driver of improved social mobility, so that we provide people who do not receive best advice from other sources, such as familial and social networks, with the kind of advice that allows them to turn their ambitions into fulfilled reality.’³¹

‘A single, unified career service would provide major benefits in terms of transparency and accessibility. And a single service with its own unique identity would have more credibility for people within it as well as users than the more fragmented arrangements that are currently in place.’

‘I am clear that we need to restore a focus on specialist expertise in careers guidance for young people.’ In support of this principle, John Hayes cited the Browne Report’s ‘very clear recommendations’ that careers advice should:

³⁰ *ibid*

³¹ John Hayes in Education Bill Committee, 29 March 2011

‘... be delivered by certified careers professionals who are well informed, benefit from continued training and professional development and whose status in schools is respected and valued.’

More broadly, John Hayes stated:

‘I want the careers profession to return to a position of public recognition, prestige and value where guidance is seen as an essential part of life and experience.’

These statements are consistent with the direction that Australia is heading toward.

Scotland – Skills Development Scotland Career IAG

Career Information, advice and guidance is well established and makes a significant contribution to delivering the Scottish Government’s priorities, especially that of sustainable economic growth. It focuses on helping people make informed decisions about their learning, job opportunities and career options; ultimately, with a view to helping them get, stay and progress in work.

In modernising the current system to an all age universal services model the approach is as follows:

- accessible, high quality, personalised and impartial Career IAG, with opportunities and experiences that help people to develop the skills they need to manage their own careers;
- more intensive, face-to-face support – including specialist help – for those whose career development needs are greatest, including Looked After Children and others who need additional support for their learning;
- support for parents and carers so they can help their children to make the right decisions, at key stages of learning;
- ongoing feedback from users to improve service delivery; and
- state-of-the-art, online resources backed up with professional advice.

In addition, SDS will provide appropriate workforce development for its staff and work proactively with partners on joint CPD and opportunities for sharing good practice.

There is also a strong focus to improve employer communication of their needs and broader workforce development contributions.