The Review examined the patterns of participation and the outcomes of young people in post compulsory education and training in Victoria.

The Review Panel met from January to July 2000. More than 200 written submissions were received and a wide range of organisations and individuals were consulted.

For further information:
Telephone 9637 3178
Internet: www.eduvic.vic.gov.au
E-mail: kelly.howard.r@edumail.vic.gov.au
MINISTERIAL REVIEW
OF POST COMPULSORY
EDUCATION AND
TRAINING PATHWAYS
IN VICTORIA

Final Report

August 2000

Chair: Mr Peter Kirby
24 July 2000

The Hon. Lynne Kosky, MP
Minister for Post Compulsory Education, Training and Employment
First Floor
2 Treasury Place
EAST MELBOURNE Vic. 3002

Dear Minister

I am pleased to forward to you the final Report of the Ministerial Review of Post Compulsory Education and Training Pathways in Victoria.

Since our Interim Report was forwarded to you on 14 April 2000, the Panel has met on several occasions. Our deliberations have been enhanced by the consultations and the research undertaken on behalf of the Panel. The most valuable input to our work has come from the willingness of many individuals, community groups, local government, employers and education and training providers (TAFE, Adult and Community, and particularly schools) throughout the State to contribute their perspectives and share their hopes and concerns for young people.

It is the view of the Panel that significant opportunities exist for the Government to work with the industry, community organisations and local communities, across the traditional boundaries, to improve the current arrangements. Improvements require both a willingness to take new directions and genuine leadership. The Report and the accompanying recommendations present our view of the way forward.

I want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the time and commitment I received from the members of the Panel. Although they are all engaged in other full-time activities, they gave unstinting support to the Review process.

I also want to thank Howard Kelly and the staff who supported the Panel – Jill Anwyl, Brendan Schmidt, Jenni King, Graeme Luck, Tim Szlachetko, Moyla De Rosario and Jackie Morrow. They made a major and essential contribution to our work.

Yours sincerely

PETER KIRBY
Chair
Membership of Review Panel

Peter Kirby (Chair)
Jack Keating (Executive Officer)
Maurice Curwood
Diane Joseph
Graham Paynter
Jennifer Quick
Dahle Suggett

Howard Kelly (Project Director)
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Introduction

In January 2000, the Victorian Minister for Post Compulsory Education, Training and Employment, the Hon. Lynne Kosky, appointed an independent Panel, chaired by Mr Peter Kirby, to review participation and outcomes of young people in post compulsory education and training in Victoria. It was asked to make recommendations against terms of reference established by the Minister (appendix 2). A Ministerial Statement issued by the Minister has informed the work of the Review.1

The Review Panel has met from January to July, 2000, and produced an Interim Report in April.2 The Review has been supported by four working parties on key aspects of its terms of reference (appendix 3). We have received 235 written submissions (appendix 4) and heard the views of organisations, groups and individuals through regional hearings and forums held at sixteen locations across the State (appendix 5). Members of the Panel, and the project team for the Review have consulted with key stakeholder organisations. The Review has also been informed by a number of 'expert' presentations at Panel meetings, and has commissioned research papers and literature reviews on key aspects of its terms of reference. The Panel has also consulted with key personnel from associated reviews and enquiries.

This Report is in three sections. Part A contains an analysis of the employment and education and training world that young people are experiencing and will experience in their 'transition years'. This world is changing rapidly, and it is important to understand the local and global forces at work, that influence the employment outcomes for young people and will shape them in the future. The Panel accepts that there is a link between education and training and economic security and prosperity, both at individual and societal levels.

Part B is an analysis of the recent outcomes of young people in Victoria within the post compulsory years. We have dwelt at some length on this analysis as we feel that the findings of the Review verify the argument in the Ministerial Statement that educational outcomes for young people in Victoria are less than optimal. In examining these outcomes it is important to locate the education


and training for young people in the context of broad economic and social
trends, including the patterns of transition from education and training to
employment.

Part C contains the findings of the Review and the recommendations of the
Panel against its terms of reference. The weight of evidence that we have
gathered and the strength of the needs and arguments for change have
influenced the emphasis of our recommendations. In some cases elements of
the post compulsory education system are clearly unsatisfactory, but alternative
and better approaches are not so apparent. In others, the opportunities for new
approaches are clear, and in some of these cases other enquiries and reviews
have reached similar conclusions. The Panel has also received a considerable
number of submissions on some areas that are outside or on the margins of our
terms of reference. This is particularly the case in the area of program provision
for the upper-secondary-age cohort. In this case we have made
recommendations that we believe will assist in relieving the substantial tensions
within this area, and hopefully broaden opportunities and improve outcomes for
young people.

What can be achieved?
The future prosperity and well-being of Victorians require high general levels of
education – higher than that attained at the end of compulsory schooling,
higher indeed than we have ever known. Furthermore, our traditions of fair play
expect that this future should be open to all Victorians.

This historic task challenges all levels of education and training. In particular, it
demands a powerful effort at the post compulsory level. This is the level that
caters for the 15–19–year age group and for adults returning to education.
Most of this age group is in senior classes in secondary colleges, but many are
provided for by TAFE institutes, adult education centres, universities and private
providers of training. In the post compulsory phase of their education young
people must complete the foundations of general education that will enable
them to renew their learning throughout their lives.

Our overriding purpose must be to engage all young people in education and
training of good quality, which will provide the individual with a successful
outcome. This will require courses and qualifications that are coherent,
comprehensive and flexible. It will require secondary colleges and TAFE institutes
to reorganise so that they welcome young learners and provide for them as
conveniently and as comprehensively as possible. It will require well-structured collaboration with and direct involvement by business and industry. It will require improved ways of advising young people and engaging them in activities and decisions about the pathways open to them.

The only valid approach to this vital task is to put the needs of young people above all other vested interests. Such an approach will require significant changes to the present arrangements for post compulsory education and training, but only by putting young people first will our common interests be served.

We hope that our recommendations will help to build on the strengths of post compulsory education and training pathways in Victoria so that the levels and patterns of participation in education and training, and the outcomes for young people will improve. In particular, we hope that those groups of young people who have had poor outcomes in the past, and those regions where young people have experienced poor outcomes, will gain from these reforms. Tangible elements of reforms that we believe will help to achieve these goals are:

- High-quality programs and qualifications in the post compulsory years, that allow for flexibility in teaching and learning approaches and contexts and that articulate with a broad range of tertiary education, training and employment destinations
- Better access for young people to providers delivering appropriate programs in appropriate environments
- A state-wide pattern of regional cross-sectoral planning networks of education and training providers, industry, local government and other stakeholders
- Significant elements of the planning and delivery of programs and services, including some finances, located within the networks
- Personnel involved in the delivery of programs and services for young people being better informed about the needs of young people, employment conditions, and the range of activities within their networks, and better connected with other providers, industry and community agencies
- A stronger collaborative spirit among these personnel towards the planning and provision of programs and services
- An education and training system that accepts accountability for the
education and destination outcomes of every young person, and for overall outcomes

- A ‘system’ of mentoring or individual support for young people in secondary schools and other providers to the cohort
- Finances that are more consolidated, consistent and transparent, and that facilitate better planning, collaboration and quality of delivery
- A seamless system, where the sectoral boundaries and the fragmentation of programs, services, regulations and finances are minimised
- Stronger linkages between post compulsory education and training and industry
- Administrative structures that allow local diversity, require and support greater accountability for outcomes, are strongly informed by research, make strong connections with the rest of government, industry and social and economic objectives, and that provide foresight and leadership
- An education and training system that is forward looking, and responsive to change and the needs of young people.

The primary responsibility for meeting this goal will rest upon teachers, lecturers and other professionals. In the absence of other measures, however, such a responsibility is an unfair and excessive burden. Governments, and the broader community need to take a realistic attitude towards sharing the responsibility for the future of young people.
Executive summary

Background

The Panel has been asked to review:

• The needs of young people entering, within and exiting from post compulsory education and training in Victoria

• The provision of educational programs and services for young people at the post compulsory level.

The Review Panel has addressed its task by undertaking extensive consultation, receiving written submissions, and commissioning research related to its terms of reference. Our findings have verified the core analysis of the Ministerial Statement issued in January 2000 by the Minister for Post Compulsory Education, Training and Employment. This statement made the case for reform, and the need for a more coherent and less fragmented post compulsory phase.

The Panel believes that there is an urgent need for action on the part of government, education and training systems and the broader community if the young people in Victoria are to realise better and more secure futures. The future of young people is linked to the future development of our economy, and our community.

Young people, education, training and work

The Review has noted the economic and social demands facing young Victorians in this new century. We have noted that the fruits of our economic growth have not been equally shared by young people or within them as a group. The linkages between education and training outcomes and employment, economic and social outcomes for young people are very strong. The pathways for young people are uncertain, unequal and poorly signposted. The transition process from education and training to employment has become more complex and unpredictable. Victoria’s and Australia’s education and training for young people is mediocre, by international standards. Our levels of participation are poor, and the patterns of outcomes are too strongly skewed against certain groups and geographical regions. The linkages between education and training, employment and industry, and other support and safety net resources are weak. There is a lack of coordination between the parts of the education and training system, and there is a need for stronger and clearer vision. The system lacks accountability for all young people: many ‘fall through the cracks.’
On the other hand, the Review Panel has been impressed with the commitment and inventiveness of schools and other providers, and other agencies to supporting young people in this State. There is a very large number of programs designed to provide education and training programs, link young people with industry and work, and provide guidance and support, including financial support. Most of these initiatives have been generated at the local level, where organisations also show a great capacity to work together to improve and extend programs and services. This is cause for optimism. There is a strong commitment for improvement, and high expectations for the opportunities provided through reforms.

The Review has taken the view that there are strong links between the economic future of the State and the country, the cohesion and values of the community, and the educational outcomes for young people. This extends to a view that it is important that the benefits of economic development and of education and training should be extended to all young people, and that a failure to broaden and strengthen the education and training outcomes for young people will weaken our economic future as well as weaken a social fabric that is based upon principles of social justice.

The findings of the Review endorse the Government's decision to move towards a consolidation, rather than a fragmentation of the post compulsory phase. This approach provides opportunities for more coherent and outwards-looking policy frameworks, greater collaboration and integration between providers, stronger linkages between education and training, industry, other government agencies and the community, and a more ‘seamless’ system for young people.

This report stresses the importance of accountability for outcomes. The Panel believes that the processes and the results of the Review provide an opportunity to strengthen the practices of monitoring outcomes, and of using this information to improve programs and services. Accountability should be at all levels.

The report also has taken an approach that collaboration and integration between providers and the integration of sectoral agencies should be welcomed. The focus of provision must be on the needs of young people, not the institutions. The key issues are access to programs and services, their quality, the outcomes, and the accountability of the provider for these outcomes. We would regard, therefore, greater collaboration and forms of integration between
schools, TAFE institutes and other providers, and between government and non-
government providers as a welcome advance.

This should extend to a more extensive whole-of-government and a whole-of-
community approach. The evidence gathered through the research and
consultations conducted by the Review is that young people have faced
difficulties over the past two decades not faced by previous generations. The
persistence and the comparative severity of these problems, frequently
concentrated in particular groups and regions, require a broader commitment
on the part of government, industry and the community, to reform.

Goals

The Panel believes that it is important that reforms proposed should achieve
measurable and beneficial outcomes. These outcomes should support the broad
objectives of better education, training and transition outcomes for young
people, a better-prepared workforce, and a cohesive and democratic society. This
will require a broadening of outcome measures, including transition outcomes.

The following outcomes are proposed:

• An increase in the levels of participation and successful completion of post
  compulsory education and training programs
• Improved and more broadly defined outcomes
• Outcomes that contribute towards a highly-skilled Victorian and Australian
  workforce for the global economy and facilitate the economic and social
  inclusion of those at risk in the changing economic environment
• Improved levels of participation for groups of young people that currently
  have poor levels of outcomes
• Greater systemic and local accountability for the outcomes and destination
  of young people
• Greater cross-sectoral integration of programs and services, and a greater
  capacity for systemic planning and leadership.

Provision

There is evidence that schools and other providers of programs at the
immediately post compulsory level are diversifying the style, timing and content
of courses. A large number of students are undertaking elements of VCE and
other ‘post compulsory’ programs at Year 10, indicating that upper-secondary
education can be regarded as a three-year phase. Within this phase, it is clear that the VCE has its limitations as a program suited to the entire cohort at the upper-secondary age. The common certificate, on the other hand, is a worthy ideal.

The Panel has approached this dilemma through a consideration of the needs of young people. Those who have difficulty with current arrangements will typically be unprepared for VCE studies, need different learning contexts and sequences, or need different provider contexts. Responses to these issues, therefore, should include a combination of improved preparation for upper-secondary education, greater flexibility built into the VCE, and greater flexibility in program provision.

The persistence of early school leaving leads to the issue of alternative locations for the school-age cohort. While the Panel believes that schools, in most cases, are the most appropriate providers for the school-age cohort, there is a need to acknowledge the limitations of this mainstream approach. There is evidence that the TAFE sector is playing a significant and expanded role in complementary and compensatory programs for the school-age cohort. The Adult and Community Education (ACE) sector also has taken up an important role in providing for the school-age cohort, and including some young people with the most negative formal learning experiences. A long-term aim should be to increase schools’ capacity to accommodate a larger percentage of the cohort. In the short term, the role of Vocational Education and Training (VET) and ACE as providers for the school-age cohort, including funding arrangements, needs to be clarified.

It is apparent that a number of secondary schools are delivering programs other than the VCE at the upper-secondary level. There has also been some demand from TAFE and ACE providers to deliver the VCE to the school-age cohort. The Panel believes that the rules for provision to the school-age cohort should be relaxed in order to allow schools to deliver other programs accredited by the Victorian Qualifications Authority (VQA), proposed in this Report. Non-school providers should be able to provide the VCE to the school-age cohort, but through collaborative agreement with neighbouring schools.

The Panel has observed that a variety of secondary school types exist in Victoria and that there will be pressure for change in post compulsory education and training provider structures in the future. There is a need for a clearer Government policy direction on these provider structures.
Networks

The Panel has been impressed by the range of collaborative local networks of education and training providers, industry and other organisations across Victoria. These networks have a variety of origins, but they are frequently cross sectoral and their main objective has been an improvement in the range and quality of programs and services for young people. This evolution should be encouraged and built upon. Local planning networks have the potential to meet some of the broad objectives that have underpinned the Government policy and this report. They are focused upon the needs of young people, are cross sectoral, and can support stronger links with industry and other agencies. An important goal should be their capacity to develop a corporate commitment to account for all young people in a region. In doing this, the needs of groups such as Koorie students should be incorporated.

The Government should aim to develop and nurture a state-wide pattern of local planning networks consisting of relevant education and training providers, industry and other agencies. This should be achieved through a phased development program. The full implementation of local planning networks will have implications for the evolving relationships between the Government and its administration and the providers of programs and services.

Guidance

Guidance and advisory services for the post compulsory years in Australia and Victoria are weak in comparison to those in many developed countries. In the context of the increased length and complexity of the transition process, it is unfortunate that these services have not been strengthened and possibly have been reduced over the past decade. There is a need for a broad range of advisory and information services to be better coordinated.

Guidance support needs to be linked to a greater responsibility on the part of education and training providers for the destinations of young people. This requires a strengthening of case management approaches for young people in the transition years. This might be done in a variety of ways, including the expansion of current initiatives such as the Pathways Plans that are currently being piloted in a number of secondary schools and other providers.

Professional development

Teachers, lecturers and other professionals in post compulsory education and training have been required to cope with enormous challenges and change in
recent years. Change will continue, and pre- and inservice training needs to assist professionals in dealing with this change. The recently established Institute of Teaching, together with the local planning networks proposed in this Report, provide opportunities for the planning and delivery of appropriate programs. The Panel urges the Institute to develop a cross-sectoral approach to its work and to provide leadership in the post compulsory area. Pre- and inservice professional development is needed for teachers and lecturers in the areas of mentoring and case management, outcomes and destination monitoring, and program evaluation.

**Finances**

It is clear that the financial arrangements for post compulsory education and training are unsatisfactory. They are overly fragmented, uncertain and in some cases restrictive, and are complicated by State–Commonwealth funding arrangements. This is especially the case for VET in Schools programs (VETIS), where the current model of financing is not sustainable in the long term. Solutions to these difficulties, however, are not so apparent. The Panel has proposed a series of measures that are designed to bring greater coherence and flexibility to funding in order to allow providers to plan with more certainty.

**Administrative structures**

Consistent with the cross-sectoral approach of the Review, the Government proposal for a single qualifications authority is supported. This has several advantages related to the concept of a seamless post compulsory qualifications system, and engages the need for quality assurance in the context of the diversification of the education and training market. The Panel has examined several models, and has decided to recommend the establishment of a Victorian Qualifications Authority (VQA) separate from the three current boards (the Victorian Board of Studies (VBOS), the State Training Board (STB), and the Adult, Community and Further Education Board (ACFEB). These three Boards should cede their accreditation, certification, and registration responsibilities to the VQA.

The Panel has proposed that the VBOS should become a curriculum and assessment body, and should undertake some of the curriculum development roles of the VET sector. The Panel has been impressed by the growth and contribution of the ACE sector, and proposes that the ACFEB should be retained with its current charter, apart from the certification and accreditation functions ceded to the VQA.
It is evident that the role of the STB has been limited in recent years. Furthermore, the incorporation of employment within the Post Compulsory Education, Training and Employment portfolio is not reflected in the role of the STB. The Panel has proposed, therefore, to elevate the Board into a Learning and Employment Skills Commission. This should be a high-profile body that incorporates the functions of the STB, apart from those ceded to the VQA. It should have a strong advisory role to Government in the broad area of post compulsory education, training and employment. It is also proposed to establish an Evaluation and Review body to provide data against benchmarks nominated by Government and recommended by the Learning and Employment Skills Commission, and to provide independent audits and reviews of post compulsory education and training when commissioned by authorities.
Recommendations

Recommendation 1

The Panel recommends that:

The Victorian Government adopts the following goals for post compulsory education and training pathways, based on a focus upon the needs of young people:

- Increased levels of participation and successful completion in post compulsory education and training programs
- Improved and more broadly defined outcomes for young people in education and training, including —
  - Outcomes that contribute towards a highly-skilled Victorian and Australian workforce for the global economy and facilitate the economic and social inclusion of those at risk in the changing economic environment
  - Improved levels of participation and quality of outcomes for groups of young people that currently have poor levels of outcomes
  - Greater systemic and local accountability for the outcomes and destinations of young people
  - Greater cross-sectoral integration of programs and services, and a greater capacity for systemic planning and leadership.

Recommendation 2

The Panel recommends that:

The Victorian Qualifications Authority (proposed in recommendation 27) in conjunction with the Curriculum and Assessment Authority (proposed in recommendation 28) should review the preparatory cycle with a view to:

- enhancing the cycle in order to strengthen its role in VCE preparation and in delivering key elements of learning that are appropriate for the stage
- establishing stronger links between the preparatory cycle and the VCE
- recognising a broader range of learning outcomes
- establishing a framework that will better support coherent programs of learning.
The outcome of this review should be supported through appropriate research and professional development for teachers.

Recommendation 3

The Panel recommends that:

The Victorian Qualifications Authority (proposed in recommendation 27) should:

- examine possible modifications to the VCE, including those identified in this report, and implement changes that will allow greater flexibility in program delivery and learning approaches and contexts
- negotiate with the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) over appropriate modifications and expansions to the Victorian ENTER system
- review the VCE enrolment information system
- develop and implement student programs, including combinations of VCE and other accredited programs that meet the objectives that are outlined in this report, and evaluate the impact of these programs
- establish an evaluation cycle to routinely monitor and analyse the outcomes of the VCE for different sub-groups of young people
- together with the Curriculum and Assessment Authority establish a reaccreditation cycle that examines the outcomes for each VCE study to ensure that study designs are sufficiently robust to meet a variety of providers and learning contexts
- examine and recognise programs that can lead to an award, but are appropriate for the preparatory cycle
- examine and recognise or accredit, where judged appropriate, courses and qualifications that are broadly equivalent to the VCE, and monitor the outcomes of these programs and the relationship between these qualifications and the VCE
- in conjunction with the Curriculum and Assessment Authority examine flexibilities that can be built into the VCE and its assessments that could make it more accessible for students who are disadvantaged in their learning
require the Curriculum and Assessment Authority, on a routine basis through the reaccreditation processes, to examine the capacity of studies to accommodate a broader range of students

review the requirements for the adult VCE.

Recommendation 4

The Panel recommends that:

The rules within DEET governing the delivery of post compulsory education and training programs should be relaxed in order to:

• allow schools to deliver qualifications judged by the Victorian Qualifications Authority as appropriate to the preparatory level or equivalent to the VCE level

• allow TAFE and ACE providers to deliver the VCE to school-age students, but on an agreed and planned basis through local planning processes, while encouraging cooperative arrangements between providers

• allow schools to deliver the VCE to adults where no suitable alternative is available, on an agreed and planned basis through local planning processes, while encouraging cooperative arrangements between providers.

Recommendation 5

The Panel recommends that:

The Government should adopt a policy framework on the structure of post compulsory education and training providers, including secondary schools, in order to inform local planning processes, and as a basis for negotiations between local stakeholders and the DEET for any provider reorganisations or developments. The policy framework should be based upon a set of principles, including those outlined in this Report, and should be developed through the advice of the Learning and Employment Skills Commission (proposed in recommendation 29). Planning processes should take account of the nature of existing provision in local areas and the needs of the communities. The policy framework and the advice of the Commission should also provide the basis for the development of a number of cross-sectoral lighthouse institutions in the future.
Recommendation 6

The Panel recommends that:

(a) The current review of the school bus service should, where places are available, provide access to young people, of school age, who need to travel to a range of public providers to pursue their education and training.

(b) The DEET should give priority to amalgamating the schools and TAFE organisations responsible for on-line delivery with a view to accelerating improvements to the content and reliability of the services they currently provide.

Recommendation 7

The Panel recommends that:

- The Curriculum and Assessment Authority (proposed in recommendation 27) be requested to work with ANTA and TAFE institutes in adapting courses and developing curriculum materials to conduct professional development programs to support the inclusion of students with disabilities in post compulsory education and training.

- Flexible programs and appropriate student support to meet the needs of Koorie students be implemented in schools, TAFE and other settings in all areas where these young people live.

- Mechanisms be set up to empower the Koorie community to negotiate with education and training providers on the kinds of programs offered.

- Strategies be developed at the local level to make closer connections between education, training and employment for Koorie young people.

- In areas where there are significant numbers of Koorie young people, local planning networks (proposed in section 7) include members of the Koorie community to ensure access to and support for culturally appropriate education and training programs for Koorie students.

- The Victorian Government continue to seek agreement from the Commonwealth Government to extend intensive English language tuition for refugees in appropriate circumstances.
Recommendation 8

The Panel recommends that:

(a) The role of TAFE as a public provider of further education and training programs, in conjunction with its roles in the training market and in support of industry, be restated by the Government.

(b) The Learning and Employment Skills Commission (proposed in recommendation 29) provide advice to the Government on:

- the role of TAFE as a public provider and its role as a regional provider of programs for the school-age cohort and the adult VCE
- the incorporation of these roles within TAFE profile funding and performance agreements
- the role of TAFE as a provider of middle- and advanced-level training
- the role of non-TAFE (private) VET providers for the teenage and young-adult cohorts
- the role of ACE as a provider of programs for the school-age cohort and the funding allocation for this role
- the potential role of the university sector as a community and regional provider for young people
- the strengthening of articulation arrangements from TAFE to universities
- the strengthening of part-time apprenticeships in schools and the work-based pathways.

Recommendation 9

The Panel recommends that:

In the medium term, support be given to TAFE providers and where appropriate non-TAFE Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), through the profiles process, and the ACE sector, through the regional funding allocations, to provide compensatory programs for the school-age cohort, as well as the VCE, based upon local planning outcomes. This support must be on a contractual basis between TAFE institutes (and non-TAFE RTOs) and DEET, and ACE providers and the regional ACFE boards.
Recommendation 10

The Panel recommends that:

The current reviews of the Prices Paid for Training Delivery and the fees and charges policy take account of the role of TAFE institutes and non-TAFE RTOs in the provision of vocational education and training proposed in this Report, and in the formulation of TAFE funding profiles.

Recommendation 11

The Panel recommends that:

As a first phase, between 10–15 local planning networks be supported in order to:

• develop collaborative approaches towards planning and improved delivery of post compulsory education and training programs and services

• investigate and trial key elements of regional coordination and delivery of programs as outlined in this report.

Each planning network in the first phase should be provided with sufficient funding over a three-year period to support the collaboration and planning processes, and to enhance program and service range and quality where this is an outcome of the collaborative-planning processes.

Recommendation 12

The Panel recommends that:

Over a three-year period the number of planning networks should be extended so that by 2003 all areas of the State will be covered by planning networks, and so that by 2005 post compulsory education and training across the State is planned, delivered, monitored and accountable for outcomes through a regional system of planning networks.

Recommendation 13

The Panel recommends that:

The Learning and Employment Skills Commission (proposed in recommendation 29) should provide advice on a broader range of outcomes benchmarks for young people in post compulsory education and training and on overall benchmarks for the performance of the system. The benchmarks should provide
Recommendation 14

The Panel recommends that:

DEET supports/facilitates the integration and improvement of careers information and guidance services relating to education, employment and training for young people and adults. This provision should incorporate the current range of products and complement the introduction of the Youth Employment Information Service. It should also include a coalition of current and new services working in collaboration with education and training providers, provide labour market information to providers, and be supported by training for relevant professionals and volunteers.

Recommendation 15

The Panel recommends that:

Within the local planning networks providers of education and training should be given the opportunity to commit to a youth options charter that is designed to maximise regional cooperation in the provision of information and guidance.

Recommendation 16

The Panel recommends that:

Tagged resources to provide guidance support for students be provided to secondary schools and other providers for the school-age cohort through allocations strongly weighted to reflect the guidance and transitional needs of young people. This support should be designed to provide a case management approach to services, including Pathways Planning, which should be gradually extended so that all young people are given the opportunity to participate. Pathways Planning should be informed by current initiatives and incorporate mentoring support for young people.
Recommendation 17

The Panel recommends that:

The capacity for tracking the destinations of young people in their post compulsory years be developed through the local planning networks. This capacity should be developed through a combination of technical support provided by the office of DEET and agreements with the networks and the providers within them, and should be provided for each individual until a successful outcome is recorded.

Recommendation 18

The Panel recommends that:

The Office of the Commission, working with the Employment Branch, and in consultation with the Office of Schools, be charged with developing a strategy for the achievement of comprehensive, high-quality information and advice services and managing its implementation.

Recommendation 19

The Panel recommends that:

The Institute of Teaching take the lead role in developing an appropriate cross-sectoral strategy for pre- and inservice training to support the implementation of this report.

That pre- and inservice training, emphasises:

- programs that link work and education
- understanding of and ability to interpret economic and labour market data
- a focus on the particular learning needs and aspirations of Koorie communities
- an appropriate focus on the special learning needs and aspirations of refugee communities
- a focus on the special learning needs and aspirations of people with disabilities
- the incorporation of, and techniques for, the establishment and use of outcomes monitoring and evaluation cycles in education and training programs and services.
Recommendation 20

The Panel recommends:

That professional development programs be incorporated into the phases of the regional planning networks, and that pre- and inservice programs emphasise the skills of case management, outcomes monitoring and the program evaluation cycle.

Recommendation 21

The Panel recommends that:

The State Government seeks new funding arrangements with the Commonwealth:

• for initiatives to improve levels of participation and successful transition from education and training. Commonwealth Government agreement should be sought to a three-year block-funding arrangement based upon agreed outcomes and accountability guidelines. This agreement would replace the current array of individual training, education and employment initiatives funded by the Commonwealth.

• to reduce the short-term and discretionary nature of Commonwealth-specific-purpose funding for those students with special needs, especially Koorie students, so as to allow for better long-term planning and linkages with mainstream programs.

Recommendation 22

The Panel recommends that

The DEET invite the Commonwealth to participate in the first and subsequent stages of the local planning networks by directing its Jobs Pathway Program funding through the networks.

Recommendation 23

The Panel recommends that:

The Victorian Government propose to the Commonwealth Government that it should provide funds for tertiary places in disciplines with the highest labour market demand in non-metropolitan regions of the greatest need.
Recommendation 24

The Panel recommends that:

The first phase of the local planning networks be used by DEET to investigate:

- the allocation of student/learner-based funding to the networks using weighted rolling enrolment averages and weighted needs indices
- discretion for the networks to determine the internal allocation of network funds for programs and services.

Recommendation 25

The Panel recommends that:

VET in Schools (VETIS) funding for 2001 be streamlined and linked to the School Global Budget, tagged as a priority program and that the flow of such funding be linked to indicative budgets for each school for 2001.

Recommendation 26

The Panel recommends that:

The allocation of the State Budget funds for the Youth Allowance be restructured to enable more effective targeting on areas of need and initiatives that support the outcomes of this Review.

Recommendation 27

The Panel recommends that:

A Victorian Qualifications Authority (VQA) be established to incorporate the accreditation, certification, and quality assurance functions of the VBOS, the STB, and the ACFEB. The Authority should have the responsibility to maintain the quality and public integrity of qualifications and their associated assessment arrangements, and the recognition of education and training outcomes.

Recommendation 28

The Panel recommends that:

The VBOS be restructured to form a cross-sectoral Curriculum and Assessment Authority. Its role will include the maintenance of the CSF, the administering of the VCE assessments, and the conduct of state-wide testing, as directed by
Government. It should also support and facilitate cross-sectoral curriculum and resource development, where appropriate and in collaboration with other national and State VET and ACE authorities. The Authority should undertake curriculum and resource development commissioned by education and training authorities.

**Recommendation 29**

The Panel recommends that:

*The STB should be restructured to form a Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission with a charter and functions outlined in this Report.*

**Recommendation 30**

The Panel recommends that:

*A small evaluation and review body, within DEET, be established to undertake overall evaluations of the outcomes of post compulsory education, training and employment in Victoria, and to undertake audits and reviews as commissioned by education and training authorities.*

**Recommendation 31**

The Panel recommends that:

*A high-level, cross-sectoral implementation committee, with membership from industry and other government departments, be appointed as soon as the Government responds to this Report, in preparation for implementation of the recommendations in 2001. This committee should be supported by a Cross-sectoral Team. This responsibility should be transferred to the Learning and Employment Skills Commission when it is fully established.*