

Workforce Development Strategy

A 'Green Paper' for discussion





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Introduction

The Construction & Property Services Industry Skills Council (CPSISC) is in the process of preparing a Workforce Development Strategy to support those industries that fall within its coverage.

This 'Green Paper' has been prepared to elicit input and discussion by the construction and property services industries. The Workforce Development Strategy must be 'owned' by industry to be useful and authoritative.

A green paper does not represent policy and is prepared for consultation. The feedback received will be further informed by the results of survey data gathered as part of a separate but related process. This information will then be used to inform the development of the final paper.

The Implementation of the Strategy will also be supported by the development of a more detailed tactical or operational plan to support the work of the CPSISC and its Workforce Development team.

What is Workforce Development?

Workforce development extends beyond training and encompasses the full range of activities that industries and enterprises use to ensure they have access to the skilled workforce that is required to meet both current and future needs. Workforce development therefore embraces many of the tools of human resource management and includes ways to attract, retain and skill the workforce.

The all embracing nature of workforce development means that there are many stakeholders and an equally diverse range of perspectives. From a government viewpoint there is a need to understand major trends in workforce development needs so that plans and funding strategies can be put in place to meet growing or changing requirements. Skills Australia, for example, is in the process of developing an overarching workforce development strategy and states that this "encompasses three interrelated elements:

- the demand for future skills and what planning for the future entails
- improving the value from the skills investments being made in the existing and future workforce, through greater attention to how skills are used in a workplace setting
- joining up separate areas of government action on workforce participation, social inclusion and innovation so policies on skills connect with wider economic, employment and social strategies.

It is planned that this Workforce Development Strategy will be used by Skills Australia, amongst other stakeholders, to improve understanding of the needs of two of the nation's most significant industries.

Also at a national level, peak industry associations and unions too have a perspective and role to play in identifying and advocating major workforce development strategies that will ensure their industries have access to the appropriately skilled workforce required for future success.

Peak bodies have a particular commitment to ensuring the ‘skills infrastructure’ is in place to support their enterprises, grow their industries’ performance and position them for medium and long term success. At a national level this commitment focuses upon ensuring the adequacy of funding by government, and users, to purchase training and the advocacy of the adoption of Training Packages and delivery strategies that reflect enterprise needs. This high level and wide ranging focus also seeks to improve national apprenticeship and traineeship models to equip new entrants and support employers during the lengthy skill development processes that is required.

At a local level, individual enterprises are vitally concerned with the development of their individual workforces - indeed, it is critical to their success and sustainability. Ensuring access to skilled workers is essential and tactics to attract, retain and upskill workers are an ongoing focus for most businesses. While the success of local, enterprise based, workforce development planning is within the purview of the individual company there is a significant role that can be played at a national level.

The CPSISC is well placed to inform enterprises of trends and options open to them as they seek to ensure they have access to the skilled workforce they require. It is also the role of the national Industry Skills Council to advocate the needs of enterprises to government and the training systems and to support key industry stakeholders as they too seek to support the nation’s building, construction and property services enterprises.

This Workforce Development Strategy will also ‘sit’ amongst and support other key strategies and programs of the CPSISC identified at the CPSISC 2009 national conference Meeting the Challenges, as:

CPSISC	EMPLOYERS	RTOs
<p>Long term plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > To continue to use the <i>Environmental Scan 2009-10</i> and its strategic plan to outline the goals and strategies for workforce development within industry. 	<p>Workforce development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Creation and implementation of strategies that will ensure access to skills to meet the future challenges of each of the sectors. 	<p>Quality outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Working with the AQTF requirements and RTO networks to create quality assessment and training delivery practices.
<p>Engagement with industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Continue to plan and implement processes that will engage all sectors within industry. This will include developing specialised strategies for engagement with key groups such as employers, providers and learners. 	<p>Retention of apprentices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Develop and implement strategies that will target the retention of apprentices within the construction industry. 	<p>Flexible delivery:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Explore and develop assessment and delivery strategies that will meet learner and employer requirements.
<p>Research and information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Increase CPSISC’s capacity to undertake and communicate the latest research in workforce development practices throughout industry. 	<p>Career approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Embrace ‘a career approach’ which will require investment to meet individual’s aspirations within the industry. 	<p>Partnerships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Proactively seek partnerships with enterprises to develop customised work development strategies.
<p>Implementation strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > To build on the current training implementation strategy as the basis for developing an effective network of RTOs, partnered with available quality training assessment resources, 	<p>Engage Generation Y:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Research and implement strategies that will target the needs of Generation Y in the work environment. 	<p>Link training and licensing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Commence developing training and assessment strategies that will provide outcomes that are linked to licensing requirements.

CPSISC	EMPLOYERS	RTOs
<p>to assist effective implementation of training packages.</p>		
<p>Responsive training packages and products:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Continue to implement the continuous improvement strategy as an efficient means to adapt training packages to meet industry needs. 	<p>RTO partnerships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > To use key groups such as CPSISC and State IABs to assist in brokering relationships with RTOs in meeting workforce development requirements. 	<p>Links with higher education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Explore the capacity to develop articulation arrangements with higher education institutions.
<p>Professional development of RTOs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > To use CPSISC’s current implementation strategy to provide an effective means for RTO professional development. 	<p>Think sustainable work practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Understand and embrace the opportunities provided by the introduction of sustainable work practices. 	<p>Long term planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Engage in long term planning to ensure capacity to meet the challenge of future skill needs of the industry.
<p>Special needs (LLN/green skills):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > To explore and implement strategies, including WELL initiatives, to meet the special needs of all industry sectors. 		<p>Professional development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Proactively seek opportunities for professional development for trainers and assessors.

The Current Environment

The building, construction and property services industries are large, economically important and employ almost two million Australians. Based on 2008/09 data building and construction contributed approximately \$64 billion (5.4% of national output) while the property services industry added \$62 billion to the Australian economy¹.

The industries play a central role in underpinning the nation's economic performance. Activity within the building and construction industry has a significant 'multiplier effect' and stimulates output and employment across the economy in general - an attribute that was recognised by the federal government in 2008-09 when stimulation of the industry was used to shore up Australia's economy from the worst of the global financial crisis. This multiplier effect is estimated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as being 2.866 meaning that for every \$1 million increase in output by the construction industry there will be an additional \$2.9 million of output elsewhere in the community. An additional \$1 million dollars of construction expenditure also involves \$217,000 of employee earnings and generates 9 jobs².

The strength of the Property Services industry is also influenced by the performance of the building and construction industry by the flow-on in jobs in, for example, spatial information management, real estate, cleaning, waste management and security.

The GFC

The relatively modest growth in unemployment levels that has been experienced during the recent economic downturn has puzzled many economists but underscores businesses commitment to retaining their workers. Although across the economy the hours worked have declined it is clear that employers have sought to retain their staff and the skills and experience they bring. Employers are also aware that employing new staff, when the economy begins to grow, is expensive and dislocating with an impact on the productivity of the enterprise.

A study conducted by the Australian Industry Group and Deloitte³ found that in the recent downturn the main strategies that businesses adopted to minimise job losses were reducing non-labour costs (44.8% of respondents); reducing hours worked (39.6%); freezing salaries and bonuses (35.4%) and bring forward leave (32.2%).

The study also found that during the recent downturn businesses indicated an intention to reduce spending on skill development (by an average of 4.1% during the current financial year). This concern is accompanied by evidence that enterprises are keenly aware that problems related to skill shortages will grow as the economy gathers pace. This is also clear evidence that individual enterprises are practising a key aspect of Workforce Development, namely the retention of staff and skills.

¹ Drawn from CPSISC Environmental Scan

² HIA Economics Group Research Note: The multiplier effects of housing, January 2010

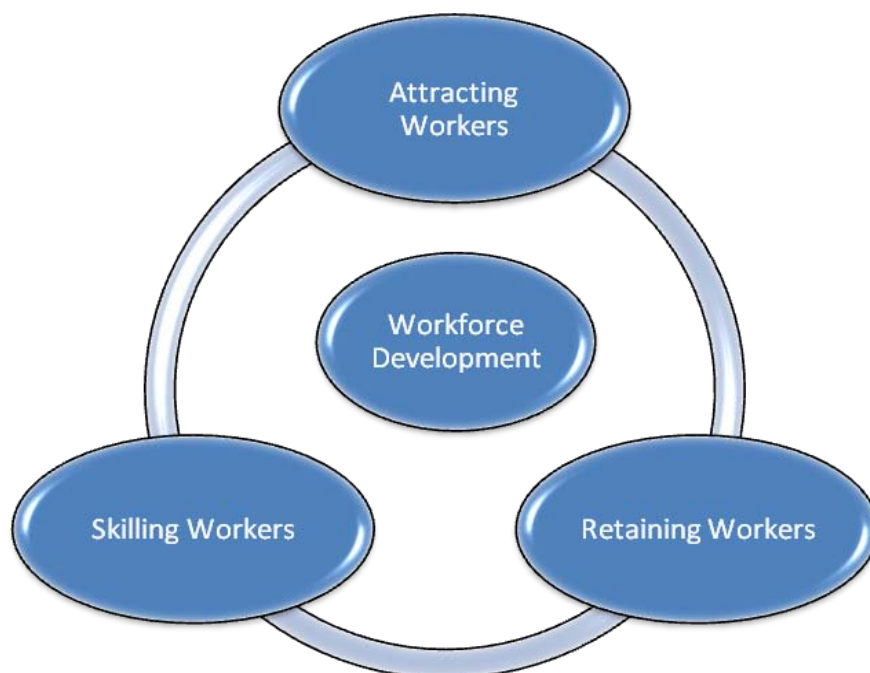
³ National CEO Survey: Skilling business in tough times, AIG, October 2009

Workforce Development Strategies

Individual enterprises and industry at large have a strong need and commitment to address the three major planks in the Workforce Development platform, namely the:

- Attraction of workers
- Retention of workers
- Skill development of workers

Successful implementation of a Workforce Development strategy requires that all three aspects are addressed and that the effort of local businesses and national industry leaders coalesce to drive a coordinated approach.



This strategy, per force, provides an overarching view from a national view point.

Strategy 1: Growing the Workforce

Attracting appropriately skilled workers has always been a major focus of businesses including those within the building, construction and property services industries.

This focus on the development of strong attraction or recruitment strategies will grow as increasing competition for workers makes the challenge of finding the 'right' and qualified worker more of a challenge for businesses. There is evidence that the recent economic downturn has done little to mask deep seated skill shortages and that the economic recovery that is gaining strength will see employers struggling to recruit appropriate employees, who represent a good 'fit' with the organisation, during 2010 and beyond.

Cyclical economic growth will also drive the need for additional workers in both the Construction and Property Services industries and this will be exacerbated by the nation's significant housing shortage. Australia's housing shortage currently stands at 190,000 dwellings, a situation that will remain a challenge for the foreseeable future as population grows, and which will in turn see an increasingly high demand for all workers in the construction trades.

It is also recognised that the attraction of a skilled workforce is not directly within the province of the CPSISC or industry associations and stakeholders - it is primarily the responsibility of enterprises. However, it is also believed that in order to provide a holistic Workforce Development approach that the issues must be addressed and the roles of national bodies and government in supporting the process should be articulated.

Priority 1.1 Enhancing enterprise attraction strategies

The CPSISC, through its Workforce Development program, has committed significant resources to support individual enterprises with the Workforce Planning processes including making available tools for skills gap analysis.

CPSISC also has a long history of resourcing its Careers program and provides access to careers advice for potential new entrants, parents and careers advisers.

There is also recognition that industry associations and state and federal governments contribute funding and support for a range of valuable information services including the 'My Future' website.

CPSISC is committed to extending the reach of these programs and to bringing a more holistic and coordinated approach to the dissemination of information. In recent years the provision of careers information, by the vocational education and training community, has sought to provide a 'supply' of potential new entrants to industry. With a maturing of these services it is now increasingly clear that effort has to focus on the 'demand side' of the equation.

Enterprises are aware of the difficulty of attracting new employees with the right blend of skills and who represent a ‘good fit’ with their business. Poor recruitment practices can lead to high levels of staff ‘churn’ and high costs as well as lost productivity.

CPSISC is looking forward to working with its industry partners to improve the planning processes of enterprises to ensure greater success in attracting the right employees.

Action		Program Outlines
1	Promote the industries as ‘destinations of choice’	CPSISC to develop further its ‘construct my career’ website Industry, supported by government, to develop further the careers website ‘www.bigplans.com.au’
2	Support enterprises to develop and implement strong ‘workforce development plans’	CPSISC to develop further and extend the reach of the ‘Workforce Skills Gap’ program CPSISC to partner with industry stakeholders to support enterprises to develop sound and appropriate Workforce Development Plans - including succession planning, enterprise skills needs analysis and recruitment processes.
3	Foster and promote government initiatives that make available career information and promote choice of construction & property services careers	CPSISC to extend its role in leveraging the investment of governments and industry in the promotion of workforce and careers development (eg the ‘My Futures’ program and website)

Priority 1.2 Seeking new workers for industry

The challenges that enterprises currently experience in accessing workers are set to increase. The ageing of the population is now a well understood construct and this will mean that there will be a proportionately smaller pool of workers from which to draw.

Forty years ago, the labour force was dominated by men who started work when they turned 15 or 16 and worked till they retired at 65 on the age pension. Many spent 50 years in the workforce⁴. The structure of the Australian labour market has changed and the participation rates for men of prime working age are, however, approximately 9% lower than they were in 1970, and are low compared to other OECD countries⁵.

A clear strategy that can be adopted to ensure the construction and property services industries have access to the workforce and skills that are required is to target actively the recruitment of people from groups who may currently be under-represented in the workforce.

A positive example of such a program is the Women into Building⁶ showcase project that seeks to:

- Elevate awareness and acceptance of women who choose to develop a career in the building and construction industries;
- Encourage women to consider the building industry as a career of choice;
- Provide mentoring, networking, promotional and learning opportunities for females crafting a career.
- Communicate [the] positive message with optimism, enthusiasm and conviction

This innovative project, sponsored by CPSISC supported by industry and operated by a creative employer, represents a grass-roots example of efforts to engage an under-represented group in the construction industry and to promote the industry as a positive career destination.

Other groups such as older workers and those from non English speaking backgrounds also afford a significant opportunity for the construction and property services industries to expand their workforce catchment groups.

While it is acknowledged not all occupations within the industries will suit all catchment groups it is also clear that necessity will have to drive all enterprises to seek new recruits from diverse sources - a process which will also strengthen the fabric and culture of enterprises.

⁴ Australian Government, *The Treasury: Australia's demographic challenges*
http://demographics.treasury.gov.au/content/_download/australias_demographic_challenges/html/adc-02.asp (February 2010)

⁵ *Workforce Futures: Papers to Promote Discussion Towards an Australian Workforce Development Strategy (2009)*, Skills Australia, page 10

⁶ www.womenintobuilding.com.au

Action		Program Outlines
1	Support and promote innovative 'engagement' programs to attract workers from diverse demographics	CPSISC to extend support and promotion for programs such as 'Women into Building' CPSISC to partner with industry stakeholders to identify and promote positive case studies of workers drawn from non traditional groups
2	Inform industries of the impact of demographic on future recruitment	CPSISC to conduct primary and secondary research investigating demographic changes in the workplace and the role of expanded and diverse groups in meeting industries' skill needs CPSISC to distribute information about workforce structure and demographics to industry stakeholders and enterprises

Priority 1.3 Valuing the traditional workforce

While it is critical for industry to be creative in seeking new workers to meet future skill demands it is also pivotal for the traditional sources of employees to be recognised. This is particularly true with regard to trade apprentices.

It is also true that the level of current take up of trades is declining and, if the current patterns persist, it is unlikely that industries' medium and long term needs for skilled workers will be met. Recent data from NCVER⁷ shows that for the 12 months ending 30 June 2009 the number of apprentices and trainees in-training was 424 000, a decrease of 2.4% from one year earlier. The commencement data is similarly sobering with the 12 months ending 30 June 2009 showing a decrease of 6.2% from the previous year to 271 200.

Of this aggregate figure trades commencements decreased by 18.7% while non trade commencements decreased by 0.5%.

There is clearly a need for increased effort by government and industry to ensure access to the required pool of skilled trades people in both the near and longer terms. As noted earlier, the building, construction and property services industries remain at the heart of the economy and are central to growth and social cohesion. The nation's housing shortage will see a steep demand for all construction trades and there is a commensurate flow on effect of increased building activity throughout the property services industry. It is recognised that it can be a challenge to recruit into these occupations, which is a workforce development challenge for all stakeholders, but that does not mean that the demand will not exist and grow.

⁷ NCVER, *Australian vocational education and training statistics: Apprentices and trainees, June quarter 2009*

The rate of employment of apprentices typically declines at times of economic cyclical downturn which can cause significant skill shortages when the economy grows and skilled workers are required in greater numbers. It must also be noted that highly technical and trade skills are not readily transferrable unlike more generic skills in other sectors. The development of needed technical and trade skills takes time and, as a result, the ability to meet skill shortages in a short time frame is limited.

Perhaps the most intractable issue facing the building, construction and property services industries is the development of strategies to stimulate the take up of more apprenticeships and traineeships and to retain these workers in employment during the economic cycle.

Action		Program Outlines
1	Form strategic industry partnerships to promote the strong 'culture of apprenticeships'	<p>CPSISC to promote the benefits of apprenticeships as a career</p> <p>CPSISC to work with industry partners to conduct primary and secondary research into medium and longer term enterprise requirements for skilled labour</p> <p>CPSISC to partner with industry stakeholders to strengthen enterprise awareness of the benefits of employing apprentices and of the incentives that are available</p>
2	Work with government to fine-tune employer incentives and other strategies to retain apprenticeship take up rates during the full economic cycle	<p>CPSISC to partner with industry and work with government to secure new incentive schemes aimed at supporting apprenticeship levels during time of economic downturn</p> <p>CPSISC on behalf of industry to work with NCVET and ABS to provide more highly granulated data of apprenticeship commencement and completion data.</p>

Priority 1.4 Meeting the challenges of a new generation of workers

Underpinning all strategies to attract new workers to the building, construction and property services industries is the need for industry leaders, employers and RTOs to engage with a new generation of workers.

Much has been written about the characteristics and traits of 'Generation Y' and of the challenges faced by their older employers and trainers in establishing rapport with them. A report prepared by the National Industry Skills Committee⁸ identifies some of the characteristics and preference of Gen Y found in national and international literature. These have profound impact on how current training and employment will have to be

⁸ *Generation Y and VET: The Implications for Business A Strategic Issues Paper (2008), National Industry Skills Committee*

structured to ensure positive engagement with the newest workforce cohort. The identified characteristics and preference include:

- the desire for instant recognition
- a tendency to question everything
- a resistance to rigidity and a preference for personal flexibility
- a dislike for old or outdated technology
- a distinctly utilitarian view of education and training
- willingness to change employers if they believe they will get a better deal elsewhere
- a preference for personal, one on one relationships
- a strong preference for variety and change.

Action		Program Outlines
1	Build employer awareness and skills in working with Gen Y	<p>CPSISC to develop and promote workforce development models for attracting, employing and managing Gen Y</p> <p>CPSISC to work with industry partners to identify and promote enterprise level case studies of success including the use of flexible employment models</p>

Strategy 2: Strengthening Careers and Retaining Skills

Skills Australia’s *Workforce Futures* paper found that *“almost half of the workforce changes their employer every three years, and many people change not just their employer but also their industry and occupation.”*⁹

The cost of recruiting a new worker is far greater than that of retaining an existing worker and the efforts that have been made during the 2008-2009 economic downturn to retain staff by reducing other costs and the hours worked is evidence that there is a growing awareness of this factor across the economy. An estimate cited in an Australian Human Resources Institute report¹⁰ claims that when recruitment, training, specialist knowledge and productivity loss are considered, it can cost up to 150 percent of an employee’s salary to replace a skilled position - factors that have real consequences for the financial bottom line of companies.

⁹ *Workforce Futures: Papers to Promote Discussion Towards an Australian Workforce Development Strategy (2009)*, Skills Australia, page 6

¹⁰ *‘Love ‘em don’t lose ‘em’: identifying retention strategies that work (2008)*, AHRI, page 1

Priority 2.1 Building enterprise capacity

The reasons for retaining workers and avoiding unproductive staff churn are clear and form an important part of any Workforce Development plan.

Key to achieving an effective retention strategy is understanding the forces that may cause a worker to move. While some workers may choose to leave for unavoidable reasons there is typically a complex web of factors that prompt the decision and these must be understood within workplaces to achieve the best outcomes. The factors that prompt an individual to leave work include¹¹:

Retention Factor	Description	Retention Strategy
Psychological Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal growth • Job Satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training & Development • Job redesign • Use of mentoring and coaching
Work Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature and strength of working relationships • Level of work satisfaction • Sense of well-being • Working conditions • Company ethics and fit with personal perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved supervisory and managerial approaches and style • Improved induction processes • Improved communications and involvement • Work design to promote a work-life balance
Conditions and Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salary & rewards • Work conditions • Loyalty • Career advancement opportunities • Confidence in the organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive pay and conditions • Opportunities for promotion/advancement • Career management support • Flexible working • Family-friendly provisions (above mandatory)

Working with industry and enterprises to improve grass-roots retention must be a major focus.

Action	Program Outlines
1 Build employer awareness and skills in implementing staff retention strategies	<p>CPSISC to develop and promote workforce retention models, tools and advice for retaining workers and ensuring access to required skills</p> <p>CPSISC to work with industry partners to identify and promote enterprise level case studies of the successful use of retention strategies across enterprises of all sizes and sectors.</p>

¹¹ Based on a model in *Recruitment without retention: HR suicide? (2003), Talent Drain, page 10*

Priority 2.2 Strengthening and extending career paths

Integral to retention strategies (both within enterprises and within the industry at large) is the ability to provide career pathways for individual workers.

This has long been a focus in the development of national Training Packages and is already a concept well represented within industries’ and CPSISC literature.

It is, however, recognised that on-the-ground opportunities are not always readily available particularly within smaller enterprises. This is a significant challenge for employers and is reflected elsewhere in this document when discussing retention strategies and meeting the ‘mind set’ of the new generation of employees.

The structural change that is occurring in many enterprises, particularly the ‘flattening’ of organisational structures, is removing traditional career pathways that see people progress in a linear manner from entry level positions through to supervisory and finally managerial roles. The current realisation facing the baby-boomer generation that they may have to work longer to secure their retirement will also limit career progression opportunities for young people.

Industry, enterprises and individuals will have to adjust expectations about what constitutes a ‘normal’ career path and enterprises have the opportunity, and need, to offer more creative solutions to young people that will maintain their engagement with, and commitment to, the workplace and the industry.

Satisfactory career pathways may be forged through lateral moves that would see workers, for example, moving from technical to administrative roles or vice versa. The opportunity to broaden skills or change career directions within an enterprise or to change work locations also represent career-changes, and growth, for younger workers. Similarly, the opportunity to study or take mini-career breaks to try other work experiences may retain valuable workers in the longer term and provide them with a sense of career development.

Action		Program Outlines
1	Develop deeper understanding of contemporary and realistic career pathways	CPSISC to work with industry partners to conduct research and case studies of the successful and alternate career pathways within and across industries. CPSISC and industry partners to advocate with government for a fresh and innovative approach to career pathway development and the provision of advice.
2	Promote and communicate career pathway advice	CPSISC has a major commitment to the provision of career advice and services and this will be continued. The outcomes of the research being conducted within this area will be integrated into ongoing program development and roll out.

Strategy 3: Creating World-Leading Skills

CPSISC recognises that the effective building of industry skills requires a partnership between industry, enterprises and training providers. It has long been believed that the role played by workplaces in building and extending skills is under-recognised and under-valued.

CPSISC also believes that the difficulties enterprises face in negotiating the recognised VET system result in too few workers having their skills formally recognised by the awarding of qualifications.

Addressing the system

Although there have been steps taken during the past decade to make recognised training more accessible, many employers, particularly small and medium sized enterprises, still find the VET system opaque, mysterious and inflexible. While addressing this challenge will require a multi-faceted response it is clear that lifting the industry experience and skill levels of trainers and streamlining information provision will lead to better and more engaged access with the formal VET system than is currently the case.

CPSISC on behalf of its industries seeks to work with governments to refine the VET system and see:

- a more holistic approach to skill and workforce development
 - recognition of the contribution and role played by workplaces in the growth of the nation's skills
 - greater flexibility and creativity in the provision of formalised skill development
 - greater accessibility to education and training through the use of a variety of delivery modes
 - better, more realistic and more flexible funding models
 - a focus on the continual improvement in the quality and relevance of formal education and training
 - a nuanced planning process that enables the diverse needs of industries and the requirements of niche as well as large sectors to be well supported
 - decision-making based on better data
 - skill development that is 'fleet of foot' and enables enterprises and individuals to respond to emerging skill development needs
 - opportunities for the life long building of skills (from a firm initial base)
- and
- the recognition of these skills irrespective of whether they are developed in the workplace, a VET provider's campus or a university.

Developing new skills for the future

While effort is required to continually refine and improve the delivery of recognised training and assessment, industries also require access to new and contemporary skills that will see them prosper into the future while providing relevant and stimulating learning for workers.

The upskilling of the existing workforce, in addition to entry level training, is essential to ensure access to the skills necessary in workplaces that face rapid and ongoing change including:

- technological change
- work practice change
- environmental change
- regulatory change
- competitive pressures and change

It is a truism to say that many of the jobs of the future may currently not exist, or may exist only in an embryonic form. Preparing for such change will require strong partnerships between industry, government and the training system.

Other change will be less radical and more incremental and will see the need for the workforce to build both new technical skills and skills that will equip them to manage and respond to change.

The construction and property services industries have long been in the forefront of responding to industries' changed skill needs. Recent examples have included work to develop qualification for the totally new career of 'green' or home sustainability assessors. Similarly, over many years, reviews to the CPSISC portfolio of Training Packages have seen ongoing development of qualifications and units of competency that reflect industries' need to work sustainably and in an environmentally friendly manner.

Under the Skilling Australia for the Future initiative, the Australian Government has funded the Productivity Places Program (PPP) which is designed to deliver 711,000 qualification commencements over 5 years. The intent is that the qualifications will grow skills within enterprises and by the program being industry-driven that training will be more responsive to the needs of businesses and workers.

CPSISC has committed significant resources to the roll-out of the PPP to its industries. In addition to facilitating access to training there is a parallel role to be played by CPSISC and industry to provide enterprises with information and advice that will help target the training they seek for workers under the PPP. It is too easy for training to be rolled out for 'immediate needs' and the opportunity exists in coming years to improve the provision of services to meet medium and longer term needs in order to strengthen enterprises' competitiveness.

The challenge of change will continue. There is an ongoing need to identify and support emerging skill needs and to ‘shorten the cycle’ between the identification of skill needs and the development of skill development responses.

Priority 3.1 Supporting new fields of work

Action		Program Outlines
1	Provide leadership in the identification of new fields and ways of work	<p>CPSISC to work with industry partners to maintain and grow current capacity to research and identify emerging job roles and skill needs.</p> <p>CPSISC and industry partners to communicate and advocate industry needs with government and the training sector.</p>
2	Build responsive national training tools	CPSISC is charged with the development and maintenance of national industry Training Packages and insightful and well researched identification of emerging job role and skill needs will be central to the continuous improvement process
3	Focus current funding initiatives to address emerging skill needs and the existing workforce	CPSISC to extend current roll-out of the Productivity Places Program and to provide targeted advice to enterprises about the effective use of PPP to target emerging skill needs
4	Promote and communicate emerging skill needs to enterprises	CPSISC and its industry partners to undertake a coordinated communication process to share industry intelligence with enterprises about emerging technological, work practice or other changes that will impact the need for workplace skills in the near and medium term

Priority 3.2 Providing flexible training and assessment

Further steps are required to align the provision of training delivery and assessment with enterprise needs.

A more detailed discussion of the need for change within the formal VET system is provided in the introduction to Strategy 3.

Industry requires and seeks an increase in the practical provision of flexible training and assessment services. Too often the rhetoric of flexibility is not met by the reality of provision which is frequently driven by the needs of training providers who cite that flexible off-campus delivery cannot be readily provided within restrictive funding models. Although strides are being made in this direction more work needs to be done and greater access to workplace and highly contextualised delivery is required.

Action		Program Outlines
1	Seek revision of funding models	<p>Ongoing and systematic work by CPSISC and industry to be conducted to advocate and refine current funding models to recognise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs and benefits of workplace and other forms of flexible delivery • The value of the financial contribution made by employers and employees to the training and assessment process
2	Seek greater flexibility and options in the provision of training and assessment services	<p>CPSISC has a major commitment to the provision of flexible training and assessment. This commitment will continue and through the promulgation of its Workforce Development strategy it will be expanded.</p> <p>CPSISC will take the lead in informing the VET system and government of industry needs in this area by conducting and promoting primary research to provide more finely granulated and 'grass roots' understanding of the issue to RTOs and policy makers.</p> <p>CPSISC through its web-based Resources Centre and projects to support the implementation of Training Packages will continue to extend provision of practical support to RTOs seeking to offer high quality and flexible training and assessment to industry</p>
3	Seek increased recognition of workers existing skills	<p>CPSISC will continue to advocate to RTOs the need for the proper application of recognition assessment processes and the use of 'accelerated assessment' to ensure the</p>

		existing skills of workers are recognised and rewarded
4	Focus on literacy, numeracy and employability skills	CPSISC will continue to seek and advocate the availability of federal funding to support an expanded roll out of literacy, numeracy and essential work skills for new entrants and existing members of the workforce
5	Support upskilling of the RTO workforce	CPSISC, on behalf of industry, will work with State Training systems to increase access to professional development for the teaching and assessment staff of RTOs including ensuring staff have appropriate and current workplace experience

Process for Validation

This Workforce Development strategy has been developed through a process of research and informed and validated by the input of the CPSISCs key industry partners.

The process entails :

- Preparation of a Green Paper for consultation
- Conduct of primary research with enterprises and other industry stakeholders
- Review and input by CPSISC staff
- Preparation and sign-off of the final Workforce Development strategy by the board of CPSISC

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