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Budget 2011

The key message of jobs and skills in last weeks budget was a reminder of the value work has in our society and our belief in its importance to our quality of life and identity.

The government has announced a large number of initiatives focused on supporting the transition of individuals to a range of work and learning opportunities as part of the Building Australia's Future Workforce. CICA welcomes these initiatives and looks forward to partnering with government to put in place higher quality and better resourced career services to achieve the outcomes required by government.

Apprenticeships and development of trade skills are high on the agenda and should be a priority area for development of more effective career development services. In total there were 440,600 apprentices and trainees in-training as at the end of June 2010, an increase of 3.2% from the previous year. However retention rates remain at around 50%. CICA believes that the funding of mentoring for 40,000 apprentices is a sound initiative but needs to be supplemented with access to career services delivered in person, by telephone and online and available to all apprentices.

In addition, the \$1.75 billion being spent on long term reform of the VET sector would be enhanced if some of this funding is targeted at improving the level and quality of career services available to students. In this sector career service staff are often poorly paid, inadequately qualified and lack the resources required to serve the needs of a complex client group. If Australia is to achieve workforce participation rates comparable to the rates in other OECD countries, VET needs to engage more students and provide quality career development services to support them through course exploration, initial enrolment, course completion and post completion.

Similarly, the strengthening of welfare to work programs for families, single parents, people with disabilities, mature age workers and long term unemployed require access to career services of the highest level to support effective and sustainable transitions to work and learning opportunities. But in doing so, these individuals need to be treated with dignity and respect and one way of doing that is to have access to first rate career services. For example, while we welcome career support for single parents returning to the workforce we believe it should be delivered by qualified professional career development practitioners.

As Treasurer, Wayne Swan said "we cannot afford to waste a single pair of capable hands". These hands should be supported by building the capacity of those involved in providing career and transition services to enable the individuals being targeted to develop the career self management skills required to more effectively manage satisfying work and learning transitions throughout their lives.

State and Territory Snapshot

Recently CICA completed a brief snapshot of how state and territory governments are addressing professional standards for career development practitioners. CICA member associations have been a major driver to improve the minimum qualifications of career development practitioners in Australia.

Generally, the introduction of professional standards has resulted in an improvement in career service delivery but in many jurisdictions it is mixed. An associate level Certificate IV level qualification is regarded as adequate by several jurisdictions despite the fact that this qualification is below what is required for tasks including career counselling and other related interventions. But there are good signs - the policy in NSW has been to have a qualified career practitioner in every school and Victoria is strengthening its pool of qualified career practitioners through its professional development study grants program.

CICA is also hopeful that the Commonwealth, while supporting the development of professional standards, will take a stronger leadership role in terms of encouraging jurisdictions to strengthen the qualifications of those tasked with the responsibility of delivering career services.

Young people in every state and territory in Australia should have access to career services from a qualified professional career development practitioner.

Professional Standards implementation - not long to go now

The full implementation of the Professional Standards on 1 January 2012 represent an important milestone in the history of the Australian career development industry. From this date, career development practitioners belonging to the CICA Member Associations will rightly be able to claim membership of the Profession of Career Development.

Following 1 January 2012 the Professional Standards will be reviewed periodically to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the profession.

To date all CICA Member Associations have:

- reviewed their policies and membership requirements and where necessary, made amendments with a view to compliance on 1 January 2012
- amended or introduced Codes of Ethics that include procedures for dealing with breaches of the Code
- adopted as the minimum entry level qualification for Professional Career Development Practitioners:
 - (a) an **endorsed**:
 - Graduate Certificate; or
 - Vocational Graduate Certificate
 - or
 - (b) an alternative pathway to Professional status as may be approved on a case by case basis by the CICA Member Associations in line with Policy and Procedures developed by the Council.
- agreed to the minimum entry level qualification for Associate Career Development Practitioners who work in the field of career development but not as Professional Career Development Practitioners
 - (a) an AQF accredited and NTIS registered Certificate IV in Career Development
 - or
 - (b) an alternative pathway to Associate status as may be approved on a case by case basis by the CICA Members in line with Policy and Procedures developed by the Council.
- require all members to engage in a minimum level of Continuing Professional Development in order to retain association membership.

In accordance with the Professional Standards, CICA:

- funded the development of an online method of recording Continuing Professional Development, Activ8
- developed policies related to the Entry-level qualifications
- developed procedures to guide endorsement of career development programs that provide entry-level qualifications to ensure that they adequately address the Competency Guidelines. A list of endorsed programs is provided on the CICA website.

- promoted the Professional Standards to a wide range of stakeholders including practitioners, policy makers, employers of career practitioners, training and service providers, business and industry
- funded the development of the Guiding Principles for Career Development Services and Career Information Products. These Guiding Principles complement the Professional Standards by detailing principles that guide best practice delivery of career development services and information.

What remains to be done in implementing the Professional Standards?

CICA will:

- continue to develop policy related to the Professional Standards and to promote the Professional Standards to stakeholder groups
- monitor and review the Professional Standards including association compliance and auditing strategies of association members
- promote the Professional Standards to stakeholders
- apply the Professional Standards and the Guiding Principles for Career Development Services and Career Information Products in the development of quality assurance strategies for career development service providers
- advocate for the employment of appropriately qualified Career Development Practitioners.

Training of Indigenous Careers Advisers

CICA in partnership with the Aboriginal Employment Service is continuing with its quest to seek funding to train indigenous careers advisers. Progress has been slow but support from Minister Arbib's office has been encouraging and funding is likely to be available under the Indigenous Employment Program.

The initiative is particularly important with the announcement in last week's budget to provide career services to enhance indigenous career pathways. There is substantial demand for trained indigenous careers advisers and to strengthen capacity of existing workers in the field.

Establishment of an Asia Pacific Career Development Network

On Friday 29 April a meeting was held in Cairns Australia to consider the formation of an Asia Pacific Career Development Network (APCDN).

The impetus for this meeting came out of discussions between CICA and the Korean Research Institute for Vocational education and Training (KRIVET) representatives in Seoul in July 2010 in which it was agreed in principle that an effective regional career development network could potentially make a substantial contribution to career development policy research and practice. It was noted that other formal and informal discussions across the region were reflective of a growing interest in forming an APCDN.

Twenty-three career development researchers, practitioners and policy makers attended the meeting from countries including South Korea, China, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Singapore, Japan, New Zealand and Australia. In addition there were several delegates who were unable to attend the meeting but are interested in the formation of an APCDN. These individuals came from India, Malaysia, Taiwan and Thailand.

Representatives from two international networks were invited speakers at the meeting. Dr Raimo Vuorinon, Coordinator of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network and based in Finland, provided an update on current progress and projects of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network. IAEVG President, Lester Oakes provided similar commentary on the Pacific Island Career Development Network.

The meeting was co-chaired by Mr Peter Tatham from the Career Industry Council of Australia and Dr Ji Yeon Lee from the Korean Research Institute for Vocational and Education and Training.

Key Outcomes

- Commitment to establish an Asia Pacific Career Development Network
- Agreement that KRIVET and CICA develop a Memorandum of Understanding to implement the APCDN over the initial three year development cycle of the network.
- Agreement that delegates at the meeting provide key contacts of policymakers, researchers and practitioners who may be interested in contributing to the further development of a network
- To undertake a scan/snapshot of current career development service programs and agreement by delegates to contribute information for a regional snapshot and potential policymaker, practitioner and researcher contacts
- CICA and KRIVET to prepare protocols for development of the APCDN for distribution and discussion with network members.
- To inform all countries in the region and invite participation.

National Career Development Week

We hope that during this week of celebration for National Career Development Week that you took the opportunity to promote the message that *to get the life you love* you need to remember the high five principles:

- Change is constant
- Learning is ongoing
- Focus on the journey
- Know yourself believe in yourself and follow your heart
- And access your allies.

About CICA

As the peak national body, the Career Industry Council of Australia's vision is to enhance participation and productivity by advocating the individual, social and economic benefits of quality career development for all Australians.

The Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA) Inc represents national, state and territory career practitioner organisations.

Forward this newsletter to your colleagues, stakeholders, students, clients, family and friends. You can subscribe to the CICA Newsletter Database by using the "Contact Us" Form on the CICA website www.cica.org.au

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