

Concern for economic viability is matched by one of the social justice objectives of the Government related to the application of information technology:

"We need people capable of understanding, using and improving on these technologies. Equally, however, we need people who can identify the human problems associated with the introduction and application, and ensure that they work to our best advantage in both economic and social terms." (*Satech Consultancy 1 Report 1992, pp 1-7.*)

Recent initiatives demonstrate the Commonwealth Government's determination to change and improve education and training. After extensive research, the Australian Education Council announced in 1991 that the time was right to consider a national education framework that would benefit all sectors.

"The development of a national framework is now essential to support initiatives in curriculum collaboration and efforts at achieving more efficient and cost-effective course delivery, economies of scale and much improved utilisation of resources." (*Satech Consultancy 1 Report 1992, pp 1-7.*)

On 2 March, 1994, the Senate Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training called for an inquiry into the present and future role of open learning in education and training; in particular for the purposes of enhancing participation in higher education and post-secondary vocational education and training.

2.3.2 National Education and Training Reform Agenda

New developments and key policy issues are encapsulated in the National Education and Training Reform Agenda embarked on by the Commonwealth government in 1991. The aim of the agenda is:

... to make Australian industry more competitive internationally by increasing workers ability to 'think clever'. This will require workers to be better trained to meet the demands of industry. The national drive for economic reform, coupled with substantial changes in the workplace brought about by award, industry and enterprise restructuring, is leading to the restructuring of Australia's training system ... The aim of the new vocational education and training (VET) system is for existing workers skills to be better developed and improved and for school leavers to be better equipped for employment.