



**Western Cape
Government**

Report on the Premier's Council on Skills

**Theme: Education and Business
Meet**

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List of Acronyms

| | |
|---------------|--|
| BPO | Business Process Outsourcing |
| CGD | Centre for Global Development |
| CTICC | Cape Town International Convention Centre |
| DBE | Department of Basic Education |
| DCAS | Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport |
| DEDAT | Department of Economic Development and Tourism |
| EWSETA | Energy & Water Sector Education Authority |
| GABS | Golden Arrow Bus Services |
| GTC | General Training Certificate |
| ICT | Information and Communication Technology |
| IOPSA | Institute of Plumbing South Africa |
| NRF | National Research Foundation |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| PCS | Premier's Council on Skills |
| PIRB | Plumbing Industry Registration Board |
| RESEP | Research on Socioeconomic Policy |
| STEM | Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics |
| SUN | Stellenbosch University |
| WCED | Western Cape Education Department |
| WCG | Western Cape Government |

1 Purpose of the Premier's Council on Skills

The Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDAT) is committed to the overall vision of the Human Resource Development Strategy 2030: "Nation at work for a better life for all", by maximising the potential of all South Africans. We believe this can be achieved through providing and acquiring viable knowledge and skills for citizens, especially the youth, which will allow them to work productively and competitively to improve their quality of life.

There is a need for a deeper and more holistic notion of relationships between training institutions and employers. There is a need for better systems and mechanisms for developing insight into existing labour market demand (in terms of what knowledge, skills, and qualifications are really in demand in the labour market) as well as in terms of where the COVID-induced changes are likely to be (Allais & Marock, 2020). This requires social dialogue with key partners, including all spheres of government, private sector, and other social partners to engage on key skills topics on a provincial level.

A mechanism in achieving the above is the Premiers Council on Skills (PCS), which is a Provincial engagement platform that drives key issues within the skills landscape. The PCS addresses different themes based on the priority areas of the Western Cape, with the current theme relating to: "*Education and Business meets*".

The convening of a PCS allows for a wide range of stakeholder participation to:

- Support the increased alignment between demand and supply and – in some cases, to enable supply to play a catalyst role for demand.
- Ensure that skills planning support and enable major initiatives for economic growth, which have been identified by the Western Cape Government. These include initiatives on major Infrastructure Plans; the Digital Economy; Green Economy; Saldanha Bay; the Special Economic Zones, etc.
- Improve integration and coordination across businesses within sectors, so that the relevant skills are consistently available within communities and that the necessary conditions for economic strategies are both addressed and stimulated.
- Establish a mechanism to address blockages that arises in this process (through engagement of the players as well as specific initiatives collaboratively undertaken where required).

This report summarises the proceedings of the day.

2 Premier's Council on Skills Agenda and Attendance

The first hybrid Premier's Council on Skills event took place at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) on Thursday, 28 October 2021. Invitations had been extended to five hundred and sixty-four (564) individuals, which was made up of government, industry, education, academia, and SETAs. Of these, two hundred and fifteen (215) RSVP'd and one hundred and seventy-nine (179) attended the session via the MS Teams virtual platform.

The below breakdown provides an overview of the entities invited and stakeholders attending:

| Entity | Number of organisations invited | Attendees on the day |
|---|--|-----------------------------|
| Industry | 140 | 80 |
| Economic Zones | 2 | 1 |
| Education (HEIs, TVETs, CETs, Other) | 50 | 20 |
| Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) | 20 | 12 |
| Consulate (Austrian, British, German, Switzerland) | 4 | 4 |
| National Government (DBE, DHET, NSA) | 9 | 5 |
| Provincial Government | 13 | 40 |
| Municipalities & Mayors | 29 | 2 |
| Unknown | | 15 |

Stakeholders present at the physical venue included the Premier of the Western Cape – Mr. Alan Winde; Minister of Education – Ms Debbie Schäfer; Minister of Economic Opportunities and Finance – Mr. David Maynier; Superintendent-General of Western Cape Education Department (WCED) – Mr. Brent Walters; Head of Department for Economic Development and Tourism (DEDAT) – Mr. Solly Fourie; Deputy Director-General for WCED – Mr. Haroon Mahomed and Deputy Director-General for DEDAT – Mr. Rashid Toefy and Presenters and Panelists from various sectors.

Superintendent-General Walters acted as the Programme Director for the event and the programme outline is delineated in the table below.

Premier's Council on Skills – 28 October 2021

Programme Director: Mr. Brent Walters: Head of Department: Western Cape Education Department

| Time | Agenda Item | Speaker/ Facilitator | Format | Order of the day |
|---------------|---|--|--------|--|
| 13:00 – 13:10 | Welcome and Opening Address | Minister Debbie Schäfer Minister of Western Cape Education | | Minister Schäfer to speak on WCED mandate and priorities. Strengthening of partnerships with public and private partners to support the skills talent pipeline from schools to facilitate youth employment. |
| 13:10 – 13:20 | Keynote Address | Premier Alan Winde Premier of the Western Cape | | Premier Winde to speak on PCS as a platform to develop a concrete plan to build strong industry and education partnerships. Determine how Basic Education can play a critical role in laying the foundations for competencies to be the talent pipeline for industry. |
| 13:20: 13:35 | Global view demonstrating benefits to basic educational outcomes meeting industry requirements | Professor Nicholas Spuull Associate Professor: Department of Economics: Stellenbosch University Dr. Matthias Forcher-Mayr Austrian Federal Ministry of Education | | Subject matter expert to speak on global models where basic education was used as a vehicle to prepare youth for the world of work. Reflection on the success of these models contributing to job creation and the growth in the economy. Speak on dual models of education in Austria. |
| 13:35 – 14:10 | WCED presenting their strategic intent to realise “Education and Skills Development- working better together” | Mr. Haroon Mahomed Deputy Director General: Curriculum and Assessments: Western Cape Education Department Mr. Lea Smith Plumbing Industry Registration Board (PIRB) | | WCED to present their strategic intent to create articulation paths through their curriculum band for school learners, challenges experienced, and opportunities sought for partnerships. Showcase case studies of partnerships established as well as propose new spaces for synergies and collaborations with industry. |
| 14:10 – 14:50 | Industry Engagement Session | Mr. Nezaam Joseph Chief Director: Skills Development and Innovation: Department of Economic Development and Tourism | | Robust discussion with industry to comment on what they need the WCED to consider when developing a talent pipeline at school level into industry, their commitment and how they plan to support the schools. Industry representatives from the following sectors will be invited to speak: BPO Industry |

Premier's Council on Skills – 28 October 2021

Programme Director: Mr. Brent Walters: Head of Department: Western Cape Education Department

| Time | Agenda Item | Speaker/ Facilitator | Format | Order of the day |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--------|---|
| | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wholesale & Retail • Financial Services • ICT Industry |
| 14:50 – 15:00 – Short Break | | | | |
| 15:00 – 15:40 | Industry Engagement Session | <p>Mr. Rashid Toefy</p> <p>Deputy Director General: Economic Operations: Department of Economic Development and Tourism</p> <p>Programme Director to close the session and request offers from participants to support WCED</p> | | <p>Robust discussion with the following industry representatives to continue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oceans & Maritime • Transport and Logistics Industry • Agriculture • Renewable Energy |
| 15:40 – 15:50 | Summary of key points of discussion | <p>Mr. Solly Fourie</p> <p>Head of Department: Department of Economic Development and Tourism</p> | | <p>Summary on how we plan to integrate the collective efforts from the PCS to develop the concrete plan that aims to strengthen joint partnerships between private sector, academia, and social partners to support skills initiatives that aim to increase youth employability and meet industry skills needs.</p> |
| 15:50 – 16:00 | Closure | <p>Minister David Maynier</p> <p>Minister of Finance and Economic Opportunities: Western Cape</p> | | <p>Expression of a vote of thanks to participants and encourage support from industry members to WCED.</p> <p>Reinforce the strengthening the skills talent pipeline from schools to promote youth employment by addressing industry skills needs.</p> |

3 Key outcomes from PCS event

3.1 Welcome and Opening address by Minister Schäfer

The Minister expressed that engagements like the PCS are valuable in delivering on the core mandate of the Education Department and provided an overview of the WCED's priorities. These engagements allow for strengthening partnerships between public and private partners, and supporting the skills talent pipeline from schools, to facilitate youth employment. The strategic priorities are to expand learning opportunities for learners and with the introduction of the new General Education Training Certificate (GETC), the Department aims to ensure that exiting learners have more useful qualifications aligned to the economy's needs. This is important in ensuring that Education generates the skills needed by business.

The introduction of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects 20-years earlier, was to address needs of the emerging economy and producing the relevant requirements needed by business. The strategic priority has been amended to include STEAMAC (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, Arts, Agriculture and Coding) subjects, to address the current economic needs. Despite financial constraints, schools have been provided with the necessary tools, machinery, and equipment and to address the needs of incorporating Agricultural subjects available at 29 schools.

With the introduction of a pilot project with the Two Ocean's Aquarium and Umalusi approved curriculum, the 2021 academic year will also see 12 Matriculants writing on Marine Sciences for the first time. They are the first group of learners from the Simons Town Lawhill Maritime Centre, which is one of the 5 schools in the Province piloting the programme and for South Africa. These specialised curriculums aim to better prepare learners for a career post-school and Industry opportunities and therefore, the focus needs to be on ensuring Matriculants pass Mathematics and Science subjects.

There are constraints on resources and a struggle to place learners at schools. Despite these challenges, consultations between the WCED and community of Bonnievale has seen the Technical School in the region addressing and responding to the needs of the community. However, despite these developments, curriculum changes are within the control of the Department of Basic Education requiring everything the WCED does to go through them. It is the hope that the model adopted by these 'miracle schools' is adopted throughout the province.

Due to many school leavers not being equipped for industry, the hope is to ensure they possess the required skills and capabilities as in the case of the German and Austrian models, where

businesses provide the necessary workplace experience during the schooling period. Equipping the learners for these post-school opportunities, would see a reduction in unemployment and poverty by 90% by 2035. Therefore, as changing the national curriculum is lengthy process, the collaboration between business and education would see the exit of relevant skills and competencies required.

Minister Schäfer concluded, there is a need to develop quality education and addressing the gap of qualified teachers within the specialty education fields of study. The current teacher age population is an area of concern, which requires engagements with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and Technical Vocation and Education and Training (TVET) Colleges and partnering in ensuring learners are prepared for the world of work.

3.2 Keynote Address by Premier Winde

The Premier shared that the PCS platform has been around for some time and has allowed for collaborations to develop between government and industry. These types of engagements allow for building better and stronger partnerships in developing the skills pipeline for industry. The focus of the current PCS is on the critical role that foundational education plays in developing the appropriate competencies and to develop a concrete plan that has become urgent.

South Africa has the highest youth unemployment rate in the world. The labour force¹ within the province is just above 3 million individuals, with 53% of the workforce not in possession of a matric qualification and approximately 1.748 million young people identified in the category of NEETS (not in employment, education, or training). In a recent debate it was indicated that only 4 out 100 matriculants are passing Mathematics with more than 50% in South Africa. Therefore, in avoiding the ticking time bomb, collaborations will allow for creating a different outcome and youth being provided with a competitive edge. Currently the skills being developed within the country is being absorbed globally and its time to turn around these opportunities.

Whilst walking the streets in preparing for the upcoming elections, it became evident how unemployment has affected communities, and reiterates the importance of politicians being grounded in understanding the needs of the communities they serve. Now is the

¹ OECD defines labour force as the active population comprising of all persons who fulfil the requirements for inclusion among the employed (individuals working for at least 1 hour a week) or the unemployed (individuals actively seeking employment).

time to talk about the skills pipeline for the future and although the answers might not be evident, collectively through collaborations systemic issues can be resolved to develop a winning recipe.

There is a need to align the pipelines and projects that involved collaborations between government and industry were cited and included 250 000 exiting graduates being absorbed within the workforce in a matching and skilling exercise; Project Khulisa focusing on certain growth sectors and in partnering with industry and TVET colleges were able to develop Chefs, Blockman; Artisans, etc.; how the transition of the BPO (Business Process Outsourcing) sector allowed competitors coming together and finding solutions to fit into the education system and developing a competitive edge for the future; and the Apprenticeship Game Changer (AGC) allowed for reviewing of Artisans and their importance in the recovery post-Covid-19. In terms of the Fintech sector, South Africa has become the hub between Cape Town and Stellenbosch and the degree offered at HEIs, listed as 50th in world and resultant applications developed rivalling that of 1st world economies.

It is therefore important that concerns around curriculum development is addressed with the National Government in making the necessary policy changes to allow the mainstream needs to prepare learners for the emerging economy. This will only be the beginning to change and getting the foundational phase right will allow learners in making appropriate subject choices and developing a competitive edge for them to pursue opportunities not only in the local economy but globally as well.

The Premier concluded that through platforms such as the PCS, partnerships developed will allow for guiding where the focus areas would be, and a supply chain of skills aligned to industry requirements. The skills pipeline would need to evolve in finding quick wins, whilst considering long-term investments.

3.3 Basic education outcomes meeting industry requirements by Professor Nicholas Spaull

Professor Spaull shared that his presentation was centred around global models where Basic Education was used as a vehicle to prepare youth for the World of Work. He reflected on the success of these models contributing to job creation and the growth in

the economy and therefore learning would be at the centre of the discussion. The presentation will focus on economic growth and how learning outcomes feed into the concept; how skills and technical skills contribute to addressing economic growth; and how the basic education system, with a focus on mathematics and science has an influence as well.

A strong relationship should exist between education and learning outcomes. When comparing the economic growth and years of schooling against that of economic growth and learning outcomes, it is evident that the latter has the biggest impact. As the South African economy was already suffering prior to the pandemic, the weak economic growth of -1% per annum led to a 29% unemployment rate within the Western Cape province during Q2 of 2021. Therefore, in answering the question “*what is industry to do?*”, the following was proposed:

1. Partnerships should be established before training takes place as these collaborators could anticipate industry demand.
2. Classroom and workplace learning is to be combined to allow for learning while earning.
3. Capable teachers with relevant industry experience are to be identified, in tailoring training that meets job requirements.
4. Relevant and shared certification frameworks are to be created to assist learners' progress through their career paths.

However, technical skills cannot be dealt with in isolation, requiring cognitive and socio-emotional skills to be considered as well. With cognitive skills being the critical pillar, the problem begins in learning outcomes during the foundational stage and critical for all areas of understanding.

In a recent tracking exercise to determine the number of students that make it to university, it was found that from every 100 learners entering the schooling system, only 60 learners will write matric from which 37 will pass, 12 learners will access universities and only 4 learners will exit with a completed degree within 6 years of matriculating. In determining where the problem begins, we would need to look at the basic education system. Illustrations of learners in public and private schools were compared to determine their analytical abilities and found that in public schools, only 25% of Gr5 learners could answer

basic numerical questions. The statistics on a national level was provided, however in terms of the province the following was indicated:

1. 65% of Grade 5 learners could add and subtract reliably, which higher than the national average.
2. 64% of Grade 9 learners had a basic understanding of numbers and graphs, which was higher than the national average.
3. 18% of Grade 12 learners took mathematics, which was lower than the national average. However, 10% of these learners passed at 40% or more and 4,3% at 60% or more, which is higher than the national average.

Therefore, when considering the importance of mathematics and science, it provides the basic understanding of using numbers which is the root of all the focus sectors such as Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Agricultural studies etc. An illustration was done to show how these subjects ties in with all qualifications at a HEI and FET level and therefore influences broad based economic growth (refer to presentation).

Furthermore, Prof Spaul raised concern that despite the notification in a May 2021 Government Gazette that Grades R to 7 are to return to school daily in terms of the traditional timetable, during October 2021, it is evident that 86% of Primary Schools are still using rotational timetables issued by the WCED. He cautioned that this should not continue into the 2022 academic year, as it is causing severe cognitive, nutritional, and psychosocial costs to learners.

The following recommendations were made:

1. Industry is to be actively involved in the training and certification of youth.
2. The WCED needs to ruthlessly prioritise that children acquire the requisite foundational skills.
3. Rotational timetables are to be suspended for 2022, as the consequence of radical learning losses will take decades to make up.

Superintendent-General Walters responded to Prof Spaul's concern regarding the rotational timetables and advised that the COGTA (Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs) Gazette states that a 1m distance needs to be adhered to and schools applying for the rotational schedules, are unable to adhere to these requirements. This is

important to note when referring to the 86% of schools still on rotational schedules. He also shared that in a recent strategic planning session with Minister Schäfer, foundational skills were indicated as a priority by the department in ensuring that learners are equipped with the necessary skills early on. Prof Spauld responded that currently the gazette is being contested.

Outcome 1: Premier Winde advised that a Provincial strategic team consisting of representatives from the Health and Education departments would need to be established, in addressing address the challenges of the rotational timetables.

3.4 Dual models of Education in Austria by Dr. Matthias Forcher-Mayr

Dr. Matthias shared that due to the popularity of the TVET system in Austria, 80% of youth participates in this model, which is the highest in both Europe and OECD² countries. This is a model that some time to form and required social partnerships to form between the Ministries of Education, Economics, Labour, and various economic chambers. These social partners have constant dialogue to determine the needs of the young people and streams are revised according to what the market needs.

The system consists of 2 streams, which relates to:

1. Dual system: Grade 10 learners enter for a period of 2-4 years on acceptance by an Apprentice at a company. Learners spend 4 days a week at the company, 1 day at a vocational school and concludes the programme with an Apprenticeship exam.
2. Vocational Colleges: Grade 9 learners enter for a period of 2-5 years, with vocational practise taught in workshops and internships being mandatory during holidays. This is the main route for young Austrians toward matric.

Training in both streams is based on occupational profiles and standards, with the curriculum being agreed upon by social partners and revised on labour market needs. Vocational teachers must have a minimum of 2 years industry experience and 50% of learners' time is dedicated to vocational practice and theory. General education is also strongly linked to the vocational curriculum and the success of the system can be attributed to:

- High levels of commitment by the various social partners.

² 38 Member countries spanning the globe, from North and South America to Europe and Asia-Pacific.

- Curricula is revised regularly to address the need of the labour market.
- Industry experience of TVET teachers has an emphasis on practical training.
- The system focuses on both employability and social inclusion known as the training guarantee, which ensures that all youth has a right to participate in a TVET system.

Based on a South African perspective, Dr. Forcher-Mayr recommended that:

1. It would be important to include the informal economy with its specific stakeholders and needs, as Apprenticeship's form part of this sector and knowing how support could be provided to build these arrangements, would be beneficial.
2. There are critical debates amongst TVET's that Apprenticeship skills contributes towards economic growth and within the SA landscape, focusing on only the formal labour market would have little impact on the poor or rural youth.
3. Having taught in public schools across various provinces in South Africa, he has determined that the curriculum leaves very little room for deep learning. Therefore, for quick wins, consideration should be given to school based NPOs (non-profit organisations) governed by representatives from the education and industry sectors to work on training programmes jointly developed by these stakeholders.

3.5 WCED presenting their strategic intent by Mr. Haroon Mahomed

Mr. Mahomed provided an overview of the strategic intent of the WCED to create articulation paths through their curriculum band for school learners, challenges experienced, and opportunities sought for partnerships. He introduced the concept of MOB (More, Other, Better) and indicated it as the phrase or concept to remember and mentality to adopt. Based on earlier remarks by Minister Schäfer around the urgency of the current skills issues and disruptions of the pandemic, he posed rhetorical questions of "what can we do more, what can we do other, what can we do better?" to explain the MOB concept. He indicated that MOB represents that all parties including the WCED need *More* partnerships to work in *Other* and *Better* ways to achieve the required objectives.

There is a mismatch between education and business and to strengthen the skills pipeline in moving from homelessness to supporting spaza shops, the WCED has adopted the womb to tomb 3-pronged approach to strengthen the formation. Working with industry to expose young people to work will assist the 3-stream approach to strengthen the skills foundation and this would help them deliver on their Annual Performance Plan (APP) targets, which has conservatively been set

at 12% over the next 5 years. He provided more information in respect of the 3-streams policy development and implementation, indicating the new subjects proposed for Grades 8 and 9. Currently, there are 26 Schools of Skills within the province providing the learning pathway that equips learners aged 14-18yrs, with some having enrolled with TVET Colleges in the region.

The pandemic has provided opportunities, and it was highlighted that the WCED will give expression of commitment to expand skills opportunities. An overview of the sectors identified for this to occur was shared i.e., ICT, Agriculture, Manufacturing, Tourism, Textiles and apparel, Wholesale and Retail, Real estate, finance and business services and Green jobs. Learning needs to be adapted to quickly from school to work, as the vision of WCED is that they want all citizens to participate meaningfully and equitably in the economy and social activities.

Stakeholders along with government should have a shared goal to reduce unemployment and some of the partnerships with companies such as Oracle Java, Food gardens, MerSETA and FESTO was shared. A Provincial Skills Competition had been launched during 2018, however was suspended considering the pandemic but there are plans to resume during the 2022 period. Video clips of these events have been included in the attached presentation.

An overview was given of the 27 focus schools and the number of enrolments within the speciality subjects during the 2021 period, with 391 for Civil Technology, 473 for Electrical Technology and 513 for Mechanical Technology. The partnerships that WCED has secured was also shared to indicate the nature of the partnership and the number of institutions or beneficiaries affected.

Information around the WCED Entrepreneurship vision for 2030 was shared and indicated that there has been enrolment in 89 schools. Some of the recommendations stemming from this report refers to:

- Businesses encouraged to be actively engaged with local education institutions.
- Innovative methods and protocols would need to be developed in schools by geographical area.
- SMMEs should partner with local schools to help expose learners and teachers to industry "real world".
- Business should be more visible and be invited to speak at school events.
- Local businesses should offer hands-on experience to learners through mini-internships and activities during school holidays.
- Standardising agreements developed with relevant stakeholders.

- Using informal businesses as learning examples within schools to stimulate Entrepreneurship.

In conclusion, Mr Mahomed shared the flexibility of the WCED is receptive to innovation and discussions, provided some of the curriculum at national level and these possibilities and suggestions has already been tabled with relevant stakeholders. The way forward should include spatial planning discussion within the districts and each school having a curriculum repositioning plan. Some thoughts on collaborations needed was also shared how industry could assist the WCED with:

- Teachers needing to be upskilled in technical subjects to meet industry standards, such as mathematics and science.
- The recognition of practical training in various specialisations for technical and vocational subjects.
- Attracting more unemployed Artisans to teach.
- Enhancing curriculum through multiple certifications.
- Enhancing support for workplace skills development after school to access learnership programmes.
- Closer collaboration between HEIs/TVET Colleges and focused schools.
- Schools to have a dedicated industry partner.
- SETAS to start recognising that schooling system is a pipeline for skills development.

The concrete follow-throughs will include the DEDAT and WCED having discussions with respective partners post-PCS for any support with the +/-300 schools, as this will allow to jointly support matrix for school and industry to develop requisite skills.

3.6 Showcasing of Case Study partnering with WCED by Lea Smith

Mr. Smith as the Chairman of the Plumbing Board shared the collaboration with the WCED in proposing new spaces for building synergies with industry. The objectives were to ensure alignment in the skills pipeline by looking at exiting scholars entering the workplace with the requisite competencies. This entailed mapping a career path from school to obtaining a plumbing qualification.

The project objectives included 1) strengthening the skills and capabilities of learners; 2) strengthening the skills and capabilities of teachers; 3) addressing employability and economical potential; and 4) promoting professionalism in the industry. The aim was to develop a subject for Plumbing, and this required determining whether there was existing curriculum or a need to still be developed. Feedback from the WCED indicated that elements of the Plumbing subject was incorporated in a subject called Civil Services, which allowed the PMB industry to ask how they could assist in meeting the objectives without reinventing the wheel.

The board clarified that they would only drive and create something sustainable, nationally recognized and has bang for the buck. It was then decided to take the best curriculum and place it in a Learner Management System (LMS) which would be available to any interested learner in the country for free, giving rise to a hybrid learning model. Therefore, allowing the focus on achieving the objectives set and determining how mapping from the school pathway, will give rise to dual certification. This would allow exiting learners to go through a RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) process when applying to industry, as they possess the necessary formal qualification provided through industry.

Some of the challenges encountered when mapping the curriculum against the qualification, was the uniqueness thereof and the qualification would consist of theory, simulated practical and workplace experience. The theory and practical was mapped for the 1st phase, with workplace experience being considered in the 2nd phase when industry came on board. When reviewing the statistics of the curriculum, 70% of the theory could be aligned which would tick a box. However, with simulation there would be capitalization and ongoing costs in respect of set-up. There's ongoing deliberation to find a balance between these two aspects.

In conclusion, he mentioned that mathematics and science remain a challenge as it's a requirement when taking the plumbing subject. There is also a need to make the trades more attractive. However, in the main, it is important to continue making a difference no matter how small it is.

Industry Engagement facilitated by Mr. Nezaam

Joseph

Mr. Joseph indicated that this part of the programme would consist of four Panelists in the sectors of BPO, Wholesale and Retail, Financial Services, and ICT industries. These industries combined contribute 25% towards the GDP (Gross Domestic Product). The BPO sector is an example of

getting the pipeline right, as the sector has grown at 1400% in 10 years. During the 2020 period the sector added 20% more jobs, with 55% of these jobs being in the WC province.

In respect of the Wholesale and Retail sector, Pepkor is the largest employer within the province, employing 250 000 individuals, the Financial Services sector is the single largest sector within the GDP, and in terms of the ICT sector, Clickatell is responsible for servicing 220 countries in different geographies and provides support to 15,000 clients globally.

3.7 BPO Industry by Brandon Aitken

Mr. Aitken indicated that the BPO forum of competitors mentioned earlier by the Premier is still collaborating to ensure the pipeline can facilitate economic growth and as a board member of the Cape BPO, is representing them at the forum engagement. His main responsibility is generating growth, and this is done by instilling confidence with investors regarding the skills and standard of education for South Africa. He will therefore provide insight into the BPO sector and provide an overview of how working together could achieve the required objectives.

The successes experienced to date would not have been without the collaboration and assistance from government and currently the sector countrywide has 80 000 young people serving international clients. He shared that a Fintech contract was signed with a Canadian company, which will create 100 new jobs for the province over the next 6 months. This also introduces the need for new skills and of the 5 000 individuals with Webhelp at least 1 000 individuals were introduced to the sector through work readiness interventions. In closing the education standards of matric to the minimum standards of the industry, the focus is on soft skills, basic numeracy, language comprehension, problem-solving abilities, and simple use of digital applications.

In conclusion he indicated that there is a demand for more complex digital skills such as coding, for data labelling which South Africa is currently unable to provide evidence of competency existing and the aspect of data analytics, which the country is losing to India. Computer literacy has therefore advanced and these need to be incorporated in the basic education phase to provide the foundational skills required by the youth. This would provide them with confidence to pursue opportunities in a vibrant sector which aims to create 500 000 jobs over the next 10 years.

3.8 Wholesale and Retail Industry by Simone Felix

Ms. Felix indicated that she's happy to form part of the narrative and Pepkor being afforded the opportunity to share their purpose. The group's brands include Pep, Ackermans, Refinery, Captain,

Flash, amongst others and although she's representing Pepkor, all the brands are invested in upskilling the youth. With the purpose being to create a difference in people's lives, the Pepkor Skills Academy was established during 2020 as an enabler for the group of brands and as an implementation partner for collaboration such as the PCS.

Pepkor's 3 main pillars for focus are on SMME development, which is high on their priority list; a disability strategy, called the era of enablement; and focusing on job creation and youth development. Annually, the group onboards learners, graduates, and interns. Some observations from these intakes are that individuals are not retail or work ready and still need some moulding to become capable in performing their tasks and that retail might not be their first choice of occupation.

Therefore, the model being proposed is called Access Retail and the model is flexible enough to adapt to both technical and vocational skills. Essentially, Pepkor would like to start engaging learners at Grade 11 to introduce them to career guidance and career opportunities within the retail industry. This would also include the skills needed to work within the retail industry such as digital and fintech skills, which can be incorporated into the model. She advised that opportunities are available to those interested in job shadowing within the stores and head office environments.

At Grade 12 level, the academy would focus on work readiness which is an accredited programme and learners would be introduced to EQ skills, to address the gap between the expectations in the World of Work versus that of the learner not being on par. Therefore, at the end of that year, the learner would be both work and retail ready and have the requisite skills and better grounded.

In conclusion, she indicated that these learners would be offered 3 opportunities 1) Bursaries for top performers; 2) online qualifications or learning vouchers for those unable to afford HEIs or TVET opportunities; and 3) being absorbed within the company on a Learnership. The aim is to ensure there's a pool of candidates that are employable for the South African industry at large.

3.9 Financial Services Industry by Caroline Marwisa

Ms. Marwisa shared that it's a privilege for Old Mutual to be part of the deliberations on skills. With the technological and macro environment changes being experienced, skills are a topical subject for the organisation as it affects how work is being done. Research indicates that more jobs are being created through these technological changes and therefore the question should be how skills and the pipeline are developed to keep up with the changes.

With the shelf-life of skills becoming shorter, it is important as an employee to determine how flexible the workforce is to adapt to the changing landscape. The skills required within the sector

relates to cognitive skills and the ability to problem solve. It is then important how individuals approach different scenarios and how they problem solve an issue, as the work environment does not remain static.

There is also the aspect of agility and having a mindset of learning on the job. Concern therefore arises in what this means for the education sector, as we'd like to have the current curriculum taught remaining relevant and not becoming obsolete as individuals exit. It is therefore important to build on capacity for resilience and emotional intelligence as this will assist individuals to help in adapting the changing environment.

It is also important to become customer centred in ensuring that individuals know how to engage with clients making customer engagement management and social skills part of the required skillset. Design skills are also becoming very important, with companies having to focus on customer experiences and responding to their needs.

Finally, it has become apparent that young people are unaware of opportunities and potential career paths that, as this not necessarily aligned to the curriculum. From a technical perspective it is difficult to find skills in fields such as underwriters. With the evolvement of machine and technology, there is also skills such as data science, cloud computing, etc and the move towards digital platforms.

In conclusion, these are the emerging skills that have been noted within the sector, so it's important to plant the seeds of a growth mindset within learners. Old Mutual's robust strategy allows for investment at grass roots level, with bursaries and learnerships being made available to learners to participate in training programmes and absorbing within the industry. However, more collaboration is required on the career awareness front.

3.10 ICT Industry by Pieter De Villiers

Mr. De Villiers indicated that the youth is both the future of the economy and the country's biggest opportunity. All the focus areas identified encapsulates a component of digital skills, however the current systemic failures are detracting from the necessary skills being developed.

Companies are outsourcing the required skills, with Clickatell contracting more Software Engineers in Toronto than in Cape Town, which is becoming expensive. This is not due to a lack of trying from either the government or other social partners present, but due to skills continuing being built on a framework belonging to the apartheid era.

Therefore, the focus needs to revert to skills being provided at a foundational phase to ensure competencies are built early on. He shared some learnings observed over the past 2 years,

engaging 110 organisations, which ranged from NGOs and NPOs at school-level, running Robotics clubs and companies such as Cape IT Initiative (CITI), Harambee and Codex who provides training to learners directly out of school. Plausible and successful interventions have been undertaken by organisations such as DEDAT, WCED and others, who can affect the necessary change. However, these programmes are short-lived, whether this is due to funding or administrative constraints is unclear.

There needs to be a focus on the 63% of learners that are not matriculating and the supply issue that is developing despite best efforts. He shared that the biggest growth limitation in the country is the lack of Entrepreneurship, which is not related to funding concerns, but rather skills. This is creating a bigger divide with learners dropping out still not being able to sustain themselves and certain services needing to be outsourced to countries such as India, Eastern Europe and elsewhere. This is the single biggest opportunity.

Interventions is required to address policy and curriculum changes, however due to bureaucratic processes, industry is not expecting this be the responsibility of government alone. What is needed is the platform and access government can provide social partners to collaborate and find mechanisms to address the pipeline and skills issues. Government therefore needs to duplicate best practise programmes for implementation.

These interventions need to start at school-level, by industry adopting a school. This would require a clear framework by all stakeholders in terms of the action to explore new pathways and journeys to work. It is recommended that the current NGOs and NPOs already working with schools collect efforts, standardise a programme with certification and government providing the airtime to serve at scale.

In conclusion, further conversations should include the setting-up of digital apprenticeship centres in every major town of the province. Ensure they are uniformed and capacitated by stakeholders with know-how and partners to scale.

Industry Engagement facilitated by Mr. Rashid Toefy

3.11 Oceans & Maritime Sector by Debbie Owen

Ms. Owen provided a brief overview of the establishment of the Simon's Town Maritime School during 1995, with funding obtained from Safmarine. This is a partnership between industry specialists and educationalist and 26 years later its sports alumni from mostly disadvantaged communities across South Africa. These individuals working in the maritime and related industries

consists of Master Mariners and Marine Engineers, both male and female, licensed to command ships of any shape or size in the world.

The programme has won a lot of awards; however, the real rewards has been seeing the positive impact this has made on deserving youth. The programme serves as a feeder for industry, with learners leaving school with a qualification and into entry-level positions with local and international companies such as MAERSK, MSC Star, Green Rod, Oceana Fisheries, etc.

The programme was initiated to address youth unemployment and poverty and providing individuals opportunities to create better lives. It was to prepare them for careers in the maritime and related sectors whilst still at school and in support of transforming the sector. The programme also acted as a feeder into industry and provide high quality entrants.

Starting at school level, the classroom teaching is supplemented with activities and interventions beyond the classroom. The hard and soft skills taught aims to boost individuals and the hostels have proved to be beneficial, as the environment teaches them life skills such as EQ, conflict resolution, teamwork, decision-making and problem solving.

The programme is 100% donor funded including a building provided by the TK Foundation, which during the lockdown, provided video lessons to learners. These relationships are leveraged, as they are partners, mentors, and future employers. Learners are exposed to local and international opportunities through conferences which provides them with a broader perspective of the industry.

The school has an advanced simulation facility which is PC-based and acts in the same way if learners were working on a ship. The support to learners allows them to adequately prepare for the workplace, as the aim is to get them into industry or provide necessary tools for self-employment. The pipeline and pathway have been successful, as the learners are not just education but prepared for employment opportunities. The industry support has also been very important to the success of the model, with high-level engagement with a broad range of stakeholders relevant within the industry.

In conclusion, she added that partners should ensure that an appropriate framework of expectations is developed to attract industry support, incentivising educators to spend time within industry is encouraged to ensure you remain relevant and create opportunities for learners to engage with industry professionals. The model works, even though it's not perfect, can also be adapted to fit various sectors to scale. Further engagement is encouraged to continue the partnership and broaden the impact beyond the Simon's Town school.

3.12 Transport and Logistics Sector by Gideon Neethling

Mr. Neethling indicated that Golden Arrow Bus Services (GABS) runs a fleet of over 2,200 buses and employs 2500 people. Training is a fundamental element of the organisation, with 2019 having seen 17,000 training days within the company. There are operational changes coming and a budget for 50 apprentices.

GABS is currently testing 2 electrical buses with a third available on the roads of Cape Town in 2022. With the world going electric and vehicles following suit, it might be crazy when saying that is what South Africa needs to do. However, a wild prediction is that in less than 10 years, South Africa will be generating more electricity. This might not be generated at appropriate times, but there is a need to prepare for the next step when oversupply occurs.

GABS has started a 2-star apprenticeship training programme that has a group of 20 individuals in occupations such as Diesel Mechanics or Automotive Electricians being trained in other trades and therefore completes with 2 qualifications. The next batch will consist of Vehicle Bodybuilders and Spray Painters, as that's the type of flexibility required in the future.

Some of the challenges experienced on programmes to date has related to school leavers not ticking the boxes of the MerSETA and therefore unable to write the Trade Test. Specific numeric requirements are obstructing their progress. Other challenges included administrative issues for funding. GABS have the capacity to train 450 artisans over 3-4yr period if taken on in staggered onboarding processes at 10 individuals a month. Those unable to be placed in industry will be offered a job as a bus driver in the interim.

In conclusion, the biggest challenge is providing matriculants with a bridging course to allow them to tick the required boxes for MerSETA as GABS is able to get them trade test ready.

3.13 Renewable Energy Sector by Ms. Mpo Mookapele

Ms. Mookapele shared that whilst listening to the other Panelists and speakers many of the same issues resonated, and based on challenges highlighted by the GABS representative, indicated that obtaining the 2-stars from the TVET Colleges is problematic for the SETAs as well. EWSETA has experienced similar challenges with low-level requirements for someone to trade test and in conversations with NAMB is hoping that roll-out of exemption is successful.

However, on building the skills pipeline, she realised it is not a conversation that can be had without talking about the TVET Colleges or talking about the existing systems that is not functioning as it should. The intention is to fix the system, but the question is for how long and what investment efforts will be required for success to be reached. Based on the current trends for scaling and

reviewing the rapidly changing world of work to ensure access to proper and adequate talent at the right time, the current South African processes will never allow us to match.

When reviewing the registered qualification needed within South Africa, there isn't even curriculum to support the supply. International short courses are available, however only select few are trained on these funded by industry. This means that TVET Colleges are offering courses that are no longer relevant to industry needs, causing a mismatch and contributing to graduates being unable to secure employment.

There is a new world of work, however, has the foundational requirements been identified to feed into this. We are developing the skills for the country and at school level, HEIs are promoted and the 35% of matriculants unable to pass maths are the ones that most probably enrols with a TVET College. These enrolments are in lead occupations and occupational directed qualifications are a not a choice. This means, that this is not the learner's first choice, and that needs to be revisited.

This means that training needs to be led by industry, not the TVET Colleges or SETAs. The latter along with relevant qualification authorities can assist with curriculum development, however this needs to be led by industry based on their requirements. In the absence thereof, there'll be pockets of investment by different players created within the pipeline.

In conclusion, the main stakeholder previously identified was the learner, but it should be industry. It is also important to develop a consolidated picture of the demand for the country as this will assist with economic participation.

4 Way forward

4.1 Summary of key points of discussion by Mr. Solly Fourie

Mr. Fourie shared what's evident is the importance of the coalition between the WCED, DEDAT and industry partners. Throughout the event the need for collaborations were highlighted for these coalitions to be formed and based on Minister Schäfer's encouragement for business and education to form strategic partnership in addressing concerns. The Premier had followed with raising the skills issue as a ticking time bomb and turning it into a competitive edge so that South Africa no longer only focuses on a competitive workforce for the country, but a competitive workforce for the global economy.

Based on Prof Spaul's presentation, there is a need to focus on the foundational skills along with the socio-emotional and cognitive skills to complement the technical skills being developed. He indicated that an 'ah-ha' moment was experienced during the presentation by Lea Smith in respect of a highly technical skill easily incorporated into a curriculum system, in identifying how the curriculum works. A need to continue driving models of school collaboration exist to get that.

The feedback from the various presenters and Panelists on their commitment was encouraging, and these partnerships need to be built on between business and government. As a collective and for industry coalitions to be formed. This long-term focus will allow government to address the conundrum of working from plan to plan and requires a different set in fixing the skills challenge within South Africa as the global space is complex and multifaceted.

In conclusion he indicated that from Ms Marwisa's indications that the workforce needs to become adaptable to the tsunami of changes experienced, and Mr. Neethling referring to the requirements for the electrical vehicles being developed by GABS, there is a conditional need to drive a coalition more effectively, as the SETA and TVET College models are currently not providing solutions. This requires the WCG to work on an industry model.

4.2 Closing by Minister David Maynier

Minister Maynier indicated in the Premier's opening remarks he referred to disruption and a recent article within the Financial Times spoke to disruption and in sketching the future, indicated how the skills of today will no longer be relevant by 2030 with changes in the skills landscape.

This change will come and will require working with stakeholders including business, to prepare for the future employees of the new world. The WCG is committed to building these coalitions referred to by Prof Spaul and to do more, do better and work from womb to tomb as indicate by Mr. Mahomed.

In closing, the Minister indicated that in the cross hairs of change, there needs to be collaboration to cooperate, as the tsunami of change that is coming can be dealt with by workers to adapt to the opportunities. As highlighted by Minister Schäfer, we need to ensure that education delivers the skills business needs within the Western Cape.

Stakeholders were thanked for their participation and contribution towards deliberations to the blended Premier's Council on Skills.

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APPENDICES

Annexure 1 – Presentation by Professor Nic Spaul from SUN

Annexure 2 – Presentation by Mr. Haroon Mahomed from WCED

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