

Evaluation of Career Chain – Phase 1 Report

A report prepared for *emda*

Ekosgen Consulting (UK) Ltd

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Evaluation of Career Chain

Phase 1 Report

May 2010

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Date: May 2010

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1 Executive Summary

Overview

1.1 In June 2009 *ekosgen* was commissioned by the East Midlands Development Agency (*emda*) to conduct a longitudinal evaluation of the Career Chain project to March 2011.

1.2 Building upon the Pan Business Redeployment model and the Midlands Engineering Industries Redeployment Project (MEIRG), the objective of Career Chain is to support the retention and development of engineering and construction skills and people across the East Midlands. The project has target outputs in three core areas:

- Employment Support (T2): 2,058 people assisted to get a job;
- Business Support (T4): 400 businesses assisted to improve their performance;
- Skills Support (T6): 250 people assisted in their skills development.

1.3 The objectives of the study are to develop an evaluation framework, produce an interim and final evaluation to review the operation of the project and its impacts, and to develop a strategy for Career Chain detailing when and how it should be taken forward in the future.

1.4 The evaluation methodology consists of the following:

- A review of spend and output data to assess the performance of Career Chain against its three core output targets;
- Consultation with stakeholders to discuss the effectiveness, impact, Strategic Added Value and future direction of Career Chain;
- Telephone consultations with businesses and beneficiaries to discuss themes including the Career Chain engagement and delivery process, its impacts and recommendations for its future direction;
- Case life histories to bring qualitative insights of the beneficiary experience of Career Chain;
- An assessment of the net economic impacts of Career Chain to illustrate the scale of benefits/ return for £2.15m of investment.

Career Chain Performance

1.5 Activity levels against two of the three output targets have been high. Career Chain is on track to meet its T2 (employment) and T6 (skills) targets for March 2011. To date the project has delivered 1,165 T2 employment support assists (86% pro-rata), and 177 T6 skills support assists (108% pro-rata).

1.6 Business assists (T4) are currently behind profile, despite high activity levels in terms of contacting senior managers of companies and partnership work with organisations such as

ConstructionSkills. However, the evaluation has highlighted a number of circumstances such as the expansion of the project into the construction sector and the impact of the economic downturn (leading to a higher number of redundancies per employer, and therefore Career Chain working with fewer employers but more employees than anticipated), that have called into question the appropriateness of this target (see *Recommendation 7*).

Stakeholder Views

1.7 There is a general consensus amongst stakeholders that Career Chain is a valuable project that is fulfilling an important regional role and responding to customer demands. In terms of its governance, stakeholders felt that Career Chain is led effectively by the Steering Group and that members brought an appropriate blend of skills and capacity to successfully guide the project. Although no major risks to the successful governance of the project were highlighted, ensuring continued consistency and alignment between front-line staff will be important to mitigate the development of a fragmented approach.

1.8 Stakeholders noted the high level of partnership working and information sharing between Career Chain and other organisations, which adds value to existing redundancy support programmes such as the work of Jobcentre Plus. However, in order to provide further clarity to the partnership it was suggested that a review of the current structure should be undertaken to clearly set out the roles and responsibilities assigned to each member.

1.9 One of the strengths of the project was perceived to be the degree of openness and communication between partners and organisations, supporting cross-referrals and the sharing of business intelligence. Further, the NE Group was perceived to have engaged effectively with employers, and stakeholders viewed their marketing materials as being of a high quality.

Business Benefits

1.10 Businesses reported high levels of satisfaction with Career Chain, especially with the flexibility of the service, the speed of response and the quality and relevance of the information provided. Business involvement in Career Chain had also led to reported benefits such as an increased awareness of workforce development provision, improvements in company culture and morale, and the retention of good relations between employees and managers.

1.11 One in three businesses would be willing to pay a fee for Career Chain, indicating that it would be difficult in the current climate for it to become self-sustaining. However, three-quarters of the businesses surveyed have had to make redundancies since April 2008, and it is therefore unlikely that they would be in a position to take on additional cost.

1.12 In the absence of Career Chain, the majority of businesses would have provided some outplacement support for their employees, although a third stated that this support would have been of a lower quality.

Beneficiary Perspective

1.13 Individuals supported through the project were largely positive about Career Chain, highlighting the approachability of project advisors, the personalised nature of support and an

understanding of their individual needs as being particular strengths. Most had been made aware of the project through their employer or an agency such as Jobcentre Plus.

1.14 All three core types of support (advice and guidance, C-web Vacancy database and top-up skills) have been well received by beneficiaries. In terms of the end user experience, with the exception of C-web (the effectiveness of which to an extent is out of the control of Career Chain), no major modifications to the delivery model are required.

Impact

1.15 Based on a series of gross to net adjustments undertaken for the evaluation, it is estimated that Career Chain has generated considerable net cumulative GVA impact (£4.1m). This is almost entirely due to the project's success in supporting beneficiaries who had been made redundant, or who were at notice of redundancy into new employment. At 1:2.7, the project's net return on investment (to date and anticipated) also compares favourably against national benchmarks¹ for matching beneficiaries to jobs (1:0.8) and skills and workforce development (1:1). The assessment of Career Chain's impact may be found in Section 9.

Recommendations

1.16 The report makes the following recommendations for the future development of the Career Chain project that stakeholders may wish to consider. These have been presented through three broad themes: strategy, delivery and performance.

Strategy

1.17 **Recommendation 1 Strategic Direction:** Given the changing economic climate, the Steering Group and evaluation team will need to ensure a continued focus on the strategic direction of Career Chain. We recommend a workshop is convened following the election to consider the future direction and sustainability of the project and so that foundations for the forward strategy are developed.

1.18 **Recommendation 2 Dissemination and Marketing:** The evaluation findings should be disseminated to, and discussed with, Steering Group members and marketing messages communicated to wider stakeholders where appropriate in suitable formats.

Delivery

1.19 **Recommendation 3 Governance:** In light of stakeholder comments the governance arrangements are fit for purpose but would benefit from a review of membership and attendance and the clarification of roles, responsibilities and expectations.

1.20 **Recommendation 4 Partnership:** Stakeholders could consider how they can further strengthen and deepen regional partnerships with agencies such as Business Link and Jobcentre Plus and initiatives such as Train to Gain to maximise alignment and cross referral.

¹ BIS (2009) Research to improve the assessment of additionality
<http://www.berr.gov.uk/files/file53196.pdf>.

1.21 **Recommendation 5 Employer Engagement:** Successful employer engagement is at the heart of Career Chain. Stakeholders may wish to consider measures to continue to extend its reach and boost the number of businesses assisted (within the grain of recommendation 7). This should include measures to reach more difficult segments (micro construction employers for instance) perhaps through specialist intermediaries.

1.22 **Recommendation 6 Targeting:** Consideration should be given to whether Career Chain can help to bolster the prospects of high technology/low carbon businesses in particular - meeting the government's New Industry New Jobs agenda.

Performance

1.23 **Recommendation 7 Targets:** Consideration should be given to revising the T4 business support target for the remainder of the project in order to reflect the climate under which Career Chain has been operating. This should be a realistic, achievable figure against which sensible measures can be considered. In a similar vein there may be scope to stretch the employment (T2) and skills (T6) supports targets slightly.

1.24 **Recommendation 8 Service Delivery:** Feedback from stakeholders suggested that Steering Group members could consider how to address the current time lag experienced by some beneficiaries between customer referral and service delivery, through ensuring a rapid response across all delivery agents. Our survey did not corroborate this but response times may be worth recording to ensure the beneficiary experience is a positive one (and perhaps a minimum response time set if it is not already).

1.25 **Recommendation 9:** To provide a more accurate assessment of project performance, it is recommended that the number of beneficiaries securing new employment as a direct result of using the C-web Vacancy Database could be tracked more effectively.

2 Introduction

Background to the Report

2.1 In June 2009 *ekosgen* was commissioned by the East Midlands Development Agency (*emda*) to conduct a longitudinal evaluation of the Career Chain project to March 2011. The purpose of the evaluation is three-fold:

- To develop and establish an evaluation framework for the project to ensure that sufficient data is being collected to support a robust evaluation;
- To produce an interim and final evaluation to review the operation of the project and to assess what the impacts have been;
- To develop a strategy for the project detailing when and how Career Chain should be taken forward in the future.

2.2 Building upon the Pan Business Redeployment model and the Midlands Engineering Industries Redeployment Project (MEIRG), the objective of Career Chain is to support the retention and development of engineering and construction skills and people across the East Midlands.

2.3 Managed by the NE Group and funded by *emda*, the services offered through Career Chain can be grouped into three categories:

- **Career Management and Redeployment Services:** providing early intervention pre-redundancy support to beneficiaries through the provision of career advice and guidance, assistance with job searches and job matching, CV advice and interview skills;
- **C-Web Vacancy Database:** a web based recruitment database designed to facilitate redeployment and to address recruitment issues. The database promotes individuals' skills and experience to prospective employers, provides a pool of live vacancies in engineering and construction companies, and provides online resources such as CV writing and links to other support organisations;
- **Top-up Skills:** Career Chain provides a training budget for the provision of top-up skills that cannot be funded elsewhere but which are essential for redeployment. This may incorporate, for example vocationally specific short courses that are not available through publicly funded routes such as Train to Gain. The outcome of this strand is to support trained personnel to stay in the sector. In output terms, this element of the project represents the smallest of the three strands.

2.4 This document is the Phase 1 interim evaluation report.

3 Methodology

Introduction

3.1 The evaluation is taking place through two phases: Phase 1 runs from June 2009 to March 2010 while Phase 2 runs from April 2010 to March 2011. The key elements of the method across both phases are described in brief below.

Reviewing the Policy Context and Sectoral Performance

Timing: June-July 2009 (Updated March 2010).

Method: Review of secondary sources of information such as NOMIS data, and reports published by Sector Skills Councils such as SEMTA and sector specific organisations such as the EEF.

3.2 The evaluators have reviewed the unfolding context for engineering and construction against the East Midlands skills landscape in light of the changing economic climate. Headline sectoral performance has been explored in light of unfolding sub-sectoral employment and skills trends following the economic downturn.

Reviewing of Project Spend and Output Data

Timing: June 2009-March 2010.

Method: Review of Grant Claim and Monitoring Forms submitted by the NE Group to emda.

3.3 The review of Career Chain project spend and output data provides an assessment of the suitability of management information and monitoring data (and the realism of project targets). This element of the methodology also includes a value for money assessment and an assessment of performance against targets.

Logic Model and Evaluation Framework

Timing: June-August 2009.

Method: Discussions have been held with the NE Group to discuss the availability of Management Information, the types of data currently being collected, and the frequency of collection, which informed the development of the framework.

3.4 This evaluation framework explains how, when and through what means the views of stakeholders, businesses and beneficiaries will be captured. It has been structured to ensure that appropriate data is collected in relation the projects three core output targets of

employment (T2), business assists (T4), and skills support (T6)²; evaluation questions and net impact.

Stakeholder Perceptions

Timing: August 2009-March 2010.

Method: One-to-one consultations.

Scale: 17 stakeholder consultations.

3.5 The evaluation has captured stakeholder views on the effectiveness, impact, Strategic Added Value and future direction of Career Chain. Organisations represented through the consultations include *emda*, Construction Skills, the East Midlands Centre for Constructing the Built Environment (EMCBE) and Jobcentre Plus. A full list of consultees has been included at Appendix A.

3.6 Stakeholder consultations were used to explore at depth the key observations on the project and to illuminate some of the management information and survey data (see next section).

Business and Beneficiary Surveys

Timing: Six waves of survey across the lifetime of the evaluation (2009: August and November. 2010: February, May, August, and November).

Method: One-to-one telephone consultations.

Scale: Targets: 100 businesses and 375 beneficiaries (conducted to date: 18 businesses, 187 beneficiaries).

3.7 Telephone surveys have been undertaken with businesses and individual beneficiaries on a rolling basis throughout the evaluation. There are six waves of survey – three in Phase 1 and three in Phase 2. All three waves of Phase 1 consultation have now been completed.

3.8 To date *ekosgen* have conducted telephone consultations with 18 different businesses (15 engineering and 3 construction firms). The consultations discussed themes including the Career Chain process, the perceived impacts of the project and suggestions on its future direction. *ekosgen* plan to consult with a total of 100 businesses by March 2011.

3.9 In terms of the beneficiary perspective, 187 individuals were consulted. The consultations explored beneficiary satisfaction with the project and the nature of the assistance they received. *ekosgen* plan to consult with a total of 375 beneficiaries by March 2011.

² Career Chain's core output targets have been explained in more detail in Section 5.

Case Life Histories

Timing: February-March 2010.

Method: Consultation with six beneficiaries identified through waves 1 and 2 of the survey.

Scale: 6 case life histories.

3.10 The aim of the case life histories is to bring qualitative beneficiary insights of the experience of Career Chain. Beneficiary survey respondents were asked if they would like to participate in a follow-up depth consultation to support the development of the case life histories. Six individuals from across waves 1 and 2 of the beneficiary survey were chosen at random sample from those who agreed to participate.

3.11 The case life histories enable the evaluation to explore the experience of project in more depth such as the impact of Career Chain in reducing the stress of redundancy notices, on individuals' confidence levels and on their work and personal lives. In short they are designed to bring some of the findings to life. The case life histories are presented in Appendix C, although four have been summarised in Section 8 to illustrate examples of advice and guidance and top-up skills support.

Impact Assessment

Timing: February-March 2010.

Method: Review of project information collected to date, according to the adjustment factors identified in the Impact Evaluation Framework (IEF).

3.12 The impact assessment illustrates the scale of benefits/ return for £2.15m of investment. The approach is governed by the UK Department for Business, Innovation and Skills' Impact Evaluation Framework (IEF) - national guidance governing the evaluation of the impacts of RDAs.

3.13 The IEF provides guidance on establishing the net impacts of Career Chain (through consideration of the principal adjustment factors of deadweight, leakage, displacement and multiplier effects). The recent *emda* evaluation toolkit provides even more precise advice on how to apply the guidance locally (whilst this was produced after the study was commissioned its parameters have informed the net impact assessment for this report). Examples of these have been outlined below:

Table 1

Principal Adjustment Factors Used for Gross to Net Calculation	
Adjustments	Considerations
Deadweight	What proportion of beneficiaries would have received equivalent assistance/ advice?
Leakage	Have any of the economic benefits created by Career Chain leaked outside of the region? To what extent are the companies assisted using suppliers and serving a customer base from within the East Midlands? Do all beneficiaries live in the East Midlands or do some travel to work from outside of the region?
Displacement	<p>In this instance, displacement refers to the proportion of employer related outcomes from Career Chain that will be at the expense of other businesses in the region that have not been assisted by the project.</p> <p>NB: <i>In a recession scenario, displacement is expected to be negligible given the nature of the operating environment and that many companies are facing difficulties and having to make redundancies.</i></p> <p><i>We will review displacement levels as part of the Phase 2 inception, by which point the economic climate may have changed.</i></p>
Multiplier Effects	How much increased employer and employee spend has been generated as a result of Career Chain and how much can be expected in the future?

4 Understanding the Environment

Summary of Key Points

- **Strategic Importance of Sectors:** The engineering and construction sectors are of high strategic importance to the East Midlands and comprise a substantial proportion of regional employment and productivity. In short the longer term health of the sector is an important consideration for the region given the significance placed upon it in strategic terms.
- **Mitigating the Effects of the Downturn:** Technology, training and resource efficiency is the heart of many regional engineering and construction support initiatives and programmes. Career Chain provides an important means of mitigating the effects of the downturn on the engineering and construction sectors and ensuring the region is well placed for the upturn, aligning well with the national recovery strategy (and the New Industry New Jobs Agenda) and other regional responses.
- **GVA:** In GVA terms the performance of the region has slightly improved in the decade up to the downturn compared to the English picture. It will be interesting to see in both employment and workplace terms whether the East Midlands position retains this stronger comparative position (though clearly the South East and London will benefit from the 'Olympic effects' in the build up to 2012).
- **Employment:** In all reality employment as an indicator tends to lag behind GVA performance following a downturn and the sectors may take some years to recover (ConstructionSkills predicts a slow recovery).

Introduction

4.1 This section outlines the regional significance of the construction and engineering sectors through an analysis of policy documents and official statistics.

4.2 Both sectors are particularly vulnerable to economic cycles (and especially the recent downturn which was largely driven from the fallout from the US sub-prime market). In January 2009 it was announced that, based on the commonly accepted definition of two successive quarters of negative economic growth, the UK had officially entered into recession following a 0.6% and 1.5% drop in GDP in the last two quarters of 2008³.

4.3 The construction and engineering sectors have been some of the worst hit nationally in the run up to the downturn and the period of recession that followed⁴. Regionally, construction is no longer viewed as a short term growth sector and engineering is likely to face challenges well into 2010.

Engineering and Construction in the East Midlands

4.4 Notwithstanding the negative impacts of the recession, engineering and construction are still of great importance to the East Midlands and are expected to make a large

³ Quotation from Alastair Darling's budget speech of 12th March 2008 (see http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/budget/budget_08/bud_bud08_speech.cfm).

⁴ Impact of the recession on the labour market, ONS, 2009.

contribution to the economy between 2006 and 2020. The construction sector alone had a regional output of £5.9bn in 2007, accounting for 9% of total UK construction outputs⁵.

4.5 With specific regard to engineering, the Regional Technology Framework (RTF) was produced to identify and prioritise investment in technology and places design, engineering and manufacturing as one of the priority technology areas for the East Midlands⁶. The Framework's strategic priorities to *'improve the focus and impact of technology education and skills in the region'* has a good degree of fit with the Career Chain project.

4.6 The construction sector has a high degree of strategic prominence and is recognised as a priority sector for the region. It features heavily in the current Regional Economic Strategy (RES), *A Flourishing Region*, and is one of the four sectors (together with transport equipment, food and drink, and healthcare) that had been expected to make the greatest contribution to the East Midlands economy between 2006 and 2020.

4.7 The Strategy suggests that priority sectors, such as construction, should be considered in the implementation of RES actions to support growth, address skills needs and improve efficiency and excellence. Subsequently, a construction Sector Implementation Plan was published in 2008, adopting BERR's wide definition of the construction sector, which encompasses civil and structural engineering and engineering construction. The plan parallels Career Chain activities at a strategic level through its focus on workforce retention, skills and recruitment. In short the longer term health of the sector is an important consideration for the region given the significance placed upon it in strategic terms.

National and Regional Support

4.8 Career Chain brings a unique regional support offer to the East Midland's engineering and construction sectors, which aligns with similar activity both nationally and in other regions.

4.9 At a national level, the New Industry, New Jobs (NINJ) agenda was launched in 2009 to prepare the UK economy for the upturn. The agenda identifies advanced manufacturing and construction as specific growth markets, and focuses on innovation, skills, finance, infrastructure and trade. It has been gaining some currency in recent months and the support of the new technologies in particular is one area of broad cross party consensus.

4.10 The New Industry, New Jobs Agenda is a key part of the Building Britain's Future strategy, addressing the aspirations for the economy in the upturn. Career Chain also has relevance to other parts of the strategy also; for instance, plans to target investment worth £1.5bn over the next two years to create 45,000 jobs in construction and related sectors by delivering 20,000 new affordable homes.

4.11 In common with *emda*, a number of other Regional Development Agencies have outlined programmes of support for the engineering and construction sectors. These sectors often feature highly in their respective strategic priorities, redundancy support measures, and investment in training and skills infrastructure.

⁵ ONS 2010.

⁶ A Technology Framework for the East Midlands 2008-2011, East Midlands Innovation.

4.12 For instance Advantage West Midlands (AWM), who have cited building technologies as one of their business clusters, have launched a construction management training centre to coincide with a new trust set up to promote lifelong learning in the construction industry. AWM is contributing £6.6 million (levering a further £2.1m) towards the centre in partnership with Coventry University and Advanced Construction Technologies UK (ACT-UK). Industry leaders are currently working in partnership with ACT-UK Ltd to develop training, ensuring that programmes are relevant and needs-led.

4.13 There are further examples of support for the engineering and construction sectors in the form of regional training infrastructure; for example, the South East Centre for the Built Environment (SECBE) which is a SEEDA led Sector Consortia response for the construction industry.

4.14 The consortia exists to improve the business performance of the built environment sector and to create market opportunities for sustainable economic growth. Members of the consortia include businesses, public bodies and trade associations. The five key areas of activity that SECBE have prioritised include developing management and leadership training networks; driving resource efficiency; and raising awareness and adoption of innovative business strategies.

4.15 Other programmes of support include the ESF 2007-2013 programme Train to Gain Enhancement Fund, established to deliver training and skills support in Yorkshire and Humber. This £50m resource funds training not covered under mainstream Train to Gain eligibility criteria and included provision for businesses operating in the engineering, manufacturing, and construction and the built environment sectors, amongst others. To summarise technology, training and resource efficiency is the heart of many regional engineering and construction support initiatives and programmes and the government is currently supporting activity in these sectors through its New Industry, New Jobs agenda.

Regional Employment and Workplaces

4.16 The East Midlands region has a higher proportion of its working age population employed in both the engineering and construction sectors when compared with national levels. As displayed in Figure 1:

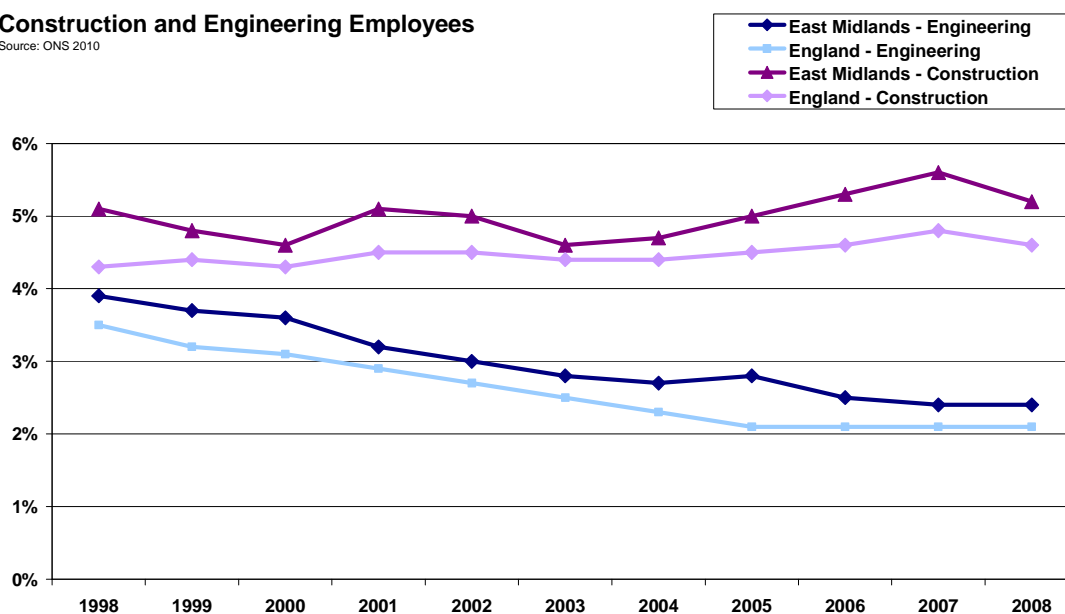
- Regional employment in the engineering sector⁷ has steadily declined over the last decade, reflecting national trends; Over the ten year period from 1998, engineering employment fell by 33% in the East Midlands (compared to a 37% fall nationally);
- In contrast, regional employment in construction has grown over the last decade outstripping the national rate of growth. However, the impact of the downturn on employment in the sector is evident, with a regional decline of 7.5% from 2007 to 2008, compared with 2.7% at a national level.

⁷ Defined as SIC codes 29: Manufacture of machinery and equipment not elsewhere classified, 30: Manufacture of office machinery and computers, 31: Manufacture of electrical machinery and apparatus not elsewhere classified, 32: Manufacture of radio, television and communication equipment and apparatus and 33 : Manufacture of medical, precision and optical instruments, watches and clocks <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=326>.

Figure 1

Construction and Engineering Employees

Source: ONS 2010



4.17 Employment data is currently only available to 2008, and as such does not show the full extent of the downturn. Phase 2 of the evaluation of Career Chain will be able to capture the full impact of the recession on the engineering and construction sectors and the extent to which the economic conditions may have accelerated their decline (before the recovery).

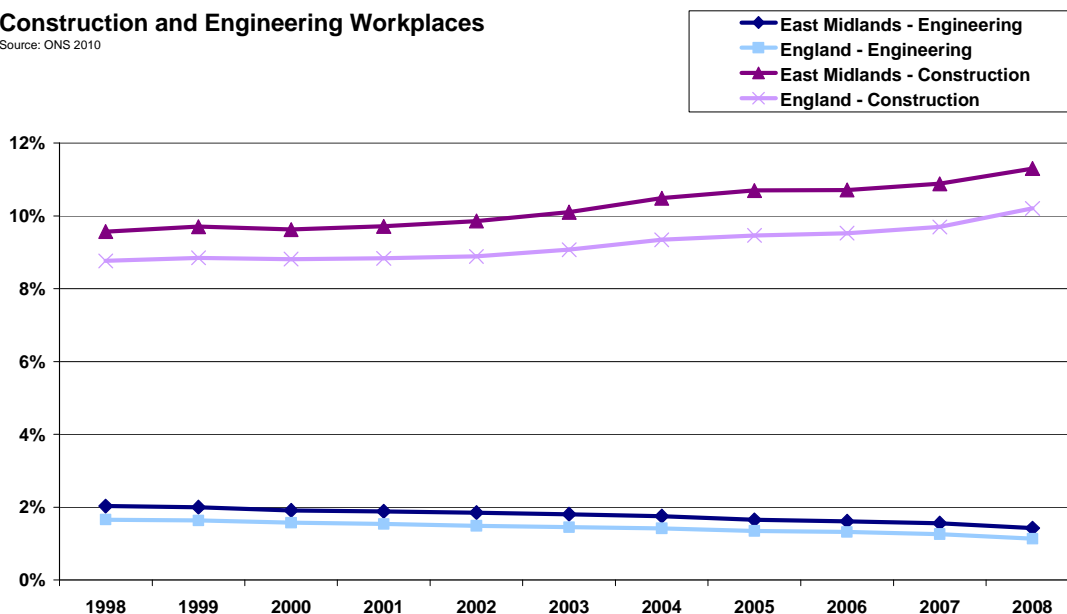
4.18 The number of workplaces in the construction sector has steadily increased over the 10 year period from 1998. The construction sector now accounts for more than 1 in 10 of all regional workplaces. This is in contrast to engineering workplace numbers which, in line with national trends, have gradually declined over the same period. As demonstrated by Figure 2:

- The number of construction workplaces (as a proportion of all workplaces) has increased by 30% between 1998 and 2008, marginally outstripping national growth trends (28%);
- Conversely, the proportion of engineering sector workplaces decreased at both regional and national level (by 17% and 23% respectively). In 2008, the engineering sector accounted for just 1.4% of all regional workplaces.

Figure 2

Construction and Engineering Workplaces

Source: ONS 2010



4.19 As was the case with the employment data, the full effect of the downturn is not yet evident from current workplace data releases. This will be captured in Phase 2 of the evaluation. It will be interesting to see in both employment and workplace terms whether the East Midlands position retains its stronger comparative position against the English level (though clearly the South East and London will benefit from the ‘Olympic effects’ in the build up to 2012).

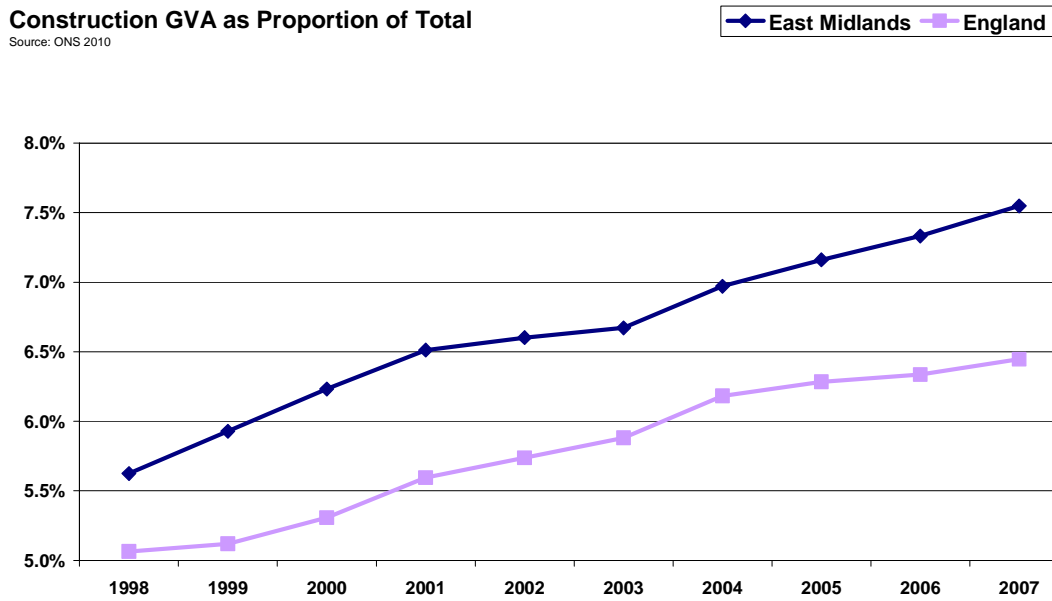
Gross Value Added (GVA)

4.20 Gross Value Added is used to quantify the contribution made to the economy by each individual industry or sector and is therefore an important indicator of economic performance. Figure 3 shows the contribution of the construction⁸ sector to the regional economy.

- The regional construction sector accounts for a higher proportion of productivity in comparison to national trends. The latest data shows that construction made a regional contribution of 7.5% in 2007, compared to a national contribution of 6.4%;
- Construction GVA as a proportion of total GVA increased by 1.9% from 1998 to 2008, compared with a national growth level of 1.4% points. In other words its relative performance slightly improved in the decade up to the downturn compared to the English picture.

⁸ GVA data for is only available for broad sectoral at a regional level, and therefore engineering GVA contributions are not available.

Figure 3



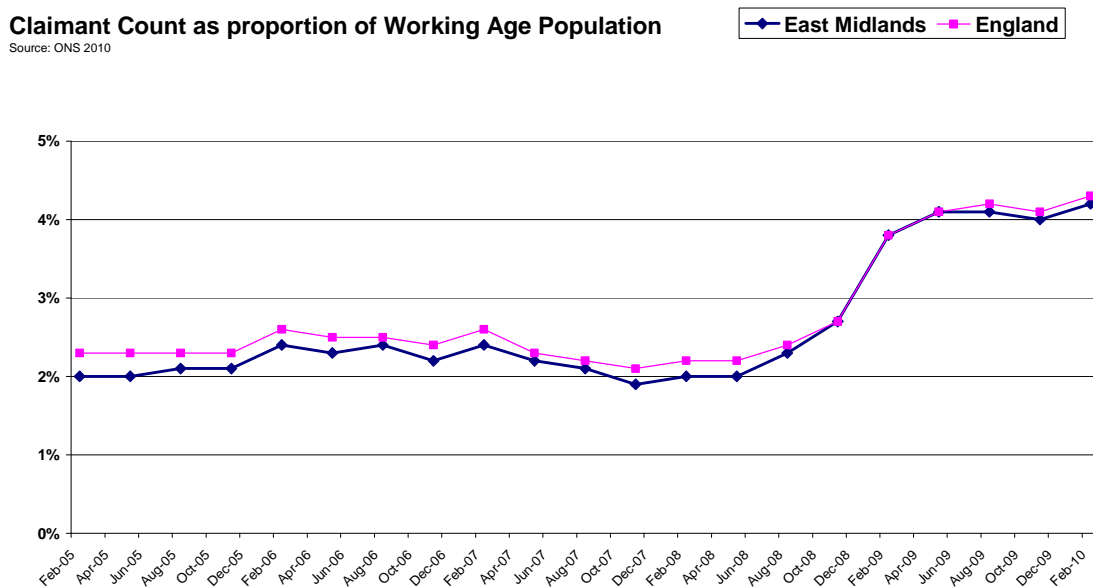
4.21 Regional GVA data is currently available up until 2007 and therefore will not demonstrate the effect of the downturn on productivity.

Unemployment and Future Projections

4.22 Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimant count figures for the past five years show the impact of the recession on unemployment in the region and nationally. As indicated in Figure 4:

- Regional claimant counts have risen steadily between June 2008 and February 2010, to almost twice the level prior to the downturn. In February 2010, 4.2% of working age residents in the region claimed JSA.

Figure 4



4.23 An EEF survey of engineering and manufacturing businesses shows that regional job losses have started to level off following a high at the start of 2009. In Q1 and Q2 of 2009, 37% and 40% of companies reported job losses respectively⁹. East Midlands engineering business also reported further employment reductions in the period March to June 2010.

4.24 Looking forward, ConstructionSkills have published their expectations for future employment in the sector¹⁰, which further demonstrates the severity of the recession. The Sector Skills Council (SSC) reported rapidly rising job losses risking huge skills deficits in the long term. Consistent recovery is not forecasted until 2011 when it is likely to be a slow and steady return to moderate levels of growth as confidence returns to the market.

4.25 The recovery forecast for the period 2011 to 2014 is predicted to create 125,000 jobs. In light of this slow recovery, the SSC has advocated that the sector needs to attract and retain as many skilled workers as possible so as not to hinder the recovery further.

⁹ EEF, Manufacturing Outlook, March 2010.

¹⁰ <http://www.cskills.org/newsandevents/news/csn-update.aspx>.

5 Performance

Summary of Key Points

- **Employment and Skills Support:** Career Chain is on track to meet its employment (T2) and skills support (T6) targets for March 2011. The project has already exceeded its pro-rata T6 targets and has shown strong delivery against T2.
- **Business Support:** The project has not met its pro-rata business assists (T4) targets. The reasons for this include the expansion of the project into the construction sector and the impact of the economic downturn.

Introduction

5.1 This section assesses the performance of Career Chain against its three core output targets of employment (T2), business assists (T4) and skills support (T6).

5.2 Data relating to the three core output targets has been drawn from Grant Claim and Monitoring Forms submitted on a monthly basis from the NE Group to *emda*. This section relates to cumulative data submitted in the period from June 2009 to March 2010.

Performance Against Key Outputs

5.3 In May 2008, Career Chain was awarded £1.5m of funding to support the retention and development of engineering skills and people across the region. Since this point, there have been two variations to the contract:

- In December 2008 the project received an additional £400k to expand activity into the construction sector. On account of the aims of the project, the construction expansion maintained a focus on construction professionals (Level 3 qualified and above).

5.4 Due to the continued impact of the economic downturn on the engineering and construction sectors in the East Midlands, the scale of support required at project inception vastly understated the current scale of need. This led to a second variation in the contract:

- In November 2009, the project was awarded a further £250k to support an additional 848 T2 employment support assists. Of the total T2 target, 1,358 are expected by March 2010 and the remaining 690 by March 2011.

Table 2

	Date	Additional Funding	Total Project Value (Cuml)	Cumulative output target		
				T2	T4	T6
Original Contract	May 2008		£1.5m	900	300	180
Variation 1	Dec 2008	£400k	£1.9m	1200	400	250
Variation 2	Nov 2009	£250k	£2.15	2048	400	250

Source: *ekosgen 2010*

5.5 Progress against the three core output targets is outlined in Table 3. The pro-rata percentage assumes an even distribution of outputs across the length of the project (35 months), and calculates achievement to date against this (23 months: May 2008-March 2010).

5.6 In practice an even distribution of outputs by month would not be expected due to variables such as the unpredictability of business redundancies, the lead time for developing relationships in the construction sector, and adjustments to the output targets. However, the pro-rata total does provide *emda* with a view of overall project performance.

5.7 Key performance indicators for the project, such as the number of people assisted through IAG and the number of people receiving a training needs analysis, are discussed in Sections 7 and 8, and reported in Section 9.

5.8 The main messages from Table 3 are as follows:

- Career Chain is on track to meet its T2 and T6 targets for March 2011. The project has exceeded its pro-rata T6 targets (108%) and has shown strong performance against T2 output targets (86%), which were revised in November 2009;
- At present, Career Chain is not on course to meet its T4 targets (28%). The reasons for this are varied and include the time taken to develop relationships with businesses in the construction sector and the higher number of redundancies per employer than expected. The challenges in meeting T4 targets are discussed later in this section.

Table 3

Review of Key Outputs June 2009 – March 2010							
Type of Impact	KPI	Output Target by End of Project	Cumulative Progress to Date				
			Engineering	Construction	Total	% of total output target	% pro-rata
Employment Support	T2. Number of people assisted to get a job	2058	864	301	1165	57%	86%
Business Support	T4. Number of businesses assisted to improve their performance	400	63	10	73	18%	28%
Skills Support	T6. Number of people assisted in their skills development	250	160	17	177	71%	108%

Source: *ekosgen 2010*

T2 Employment Support

5.9 The T2 target refers to the number of beneficiaries who have been assisted to find employment, regardless of their success. The output does not include redeployment (although this is captured by a beneficiary tracking system at 3 and 5 months after engagement).

5.10 The Career Chain project has an output target of 2,058 T2 employment support assists. As the project has progressed, achieving the prescribed profile of T2 assists per sector has decreased in importance. T2 targets are now treated as non-sector specific, allowing the project to provide support where it is most needed.

5.11 By March 2010, the project had delivered 1,165 employment assists against a revised target of 2,058. Figure 1 presents the monthly progress made toward the T2 output targets from June 2009 to January 2010:

- Of particular note in terms of the engineering sector is the marked growth in T2 supports between June and September 2009. In part this may be attributed to a number of large scale new redundancies and an effective partnership approach with members of the Business Support Group¹¹;
- In contrast, the construction sector has seen a more steady growth in T2 outputs. The increased rate of growth from November 2009 is in part down to a Service Level Agreement with Construction Skills to support engagement with businesses, through the training of all Construction Skills Company Development Advisor staff.

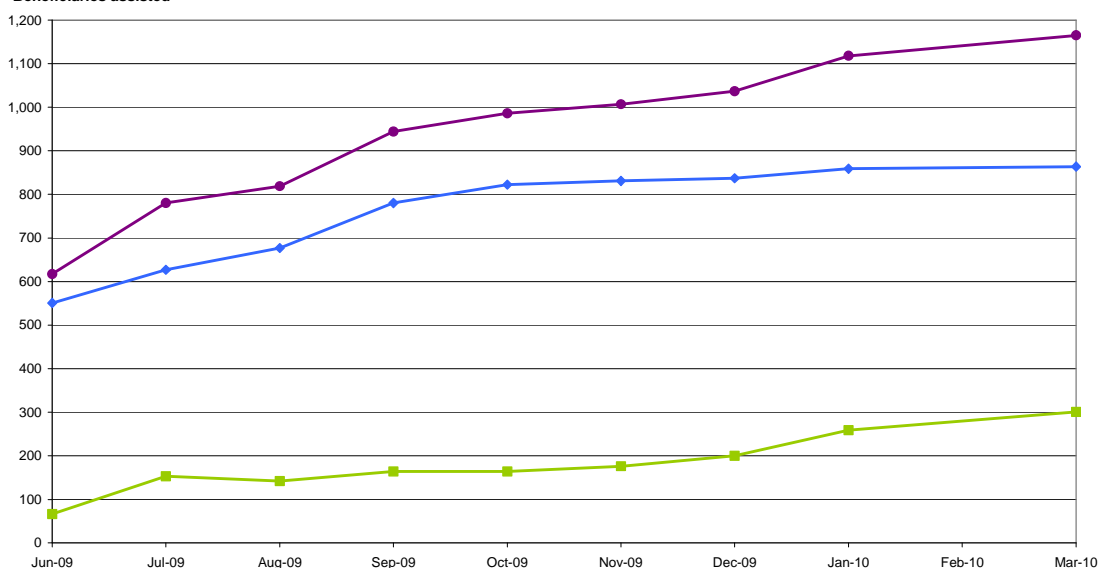
¹¹ The Business Support Group (previously the Large Business Support Group) is designed to support effective delivery of strategic services to businesses across the East Midlands region. It is chaired by Jobcentre Plus and attended by organisations such as Business Link, the Learning and Skills Council, Trades Union Congress and the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS).

Figure 5

T2 Outputs: June 2009 - March 2010

Source: NE Group Grant Claim and Monitoring Form Submission

Beneficiaries assisted



NB: 1. Output data relating to February and March 2010 was submitted as one aggregated claim form. Therefore, Figure 5 does not show a data point for February 2010.

5.12 Based upon performance to date and discussion with the NE Group, the project looks set to comfortably exceed its T2 output targets by March 2011.

T4 Business Support

5.13 The Career Chain project has an output target of 400 T4 employment support assists. Despite the high activity levels in terms of contacting senior managers of companies and partnership work with organisations such as ConstructionSkills, by March 2010 the project had achieved a total of 73 business assists (18% of target). A number of circumstances that call into question the appropriateness of this target have been experienced – these are summarised below and are discussed in more detail in Section 4:

- **Expansion of the project into the construction sector:** The Career Chain project was able to capitalise on existing links with engineering businesses developed through the MEIRG project. When the project expanded, however, new relationships with businesses in the construction sector had to be formed, which took time to develop;
- **Impact of the economic downturn:** The NE Group have found over the period of the project to date that the number of redundancies per employer was far higher than expected. This means that the project has worked with fewer employers but more employees per employer than anticipated.

5.14 Looking forward, a number of positive activities are taking place to promote the T4 business support available through Career Chain. For example, Winchester Consulting are contacting 30 of the region's large businesses to discuss their needs, with a view to offering them, and their supply chain, T4 support if deemed appropriate.

5.15 Looking toward Phase 2, NE Group staff have a meeting in April 2010 with all Business Link's regional advisors to provide an understanding of the Career Chain offer and to encourage the promotion of the project to other Business Link staff.

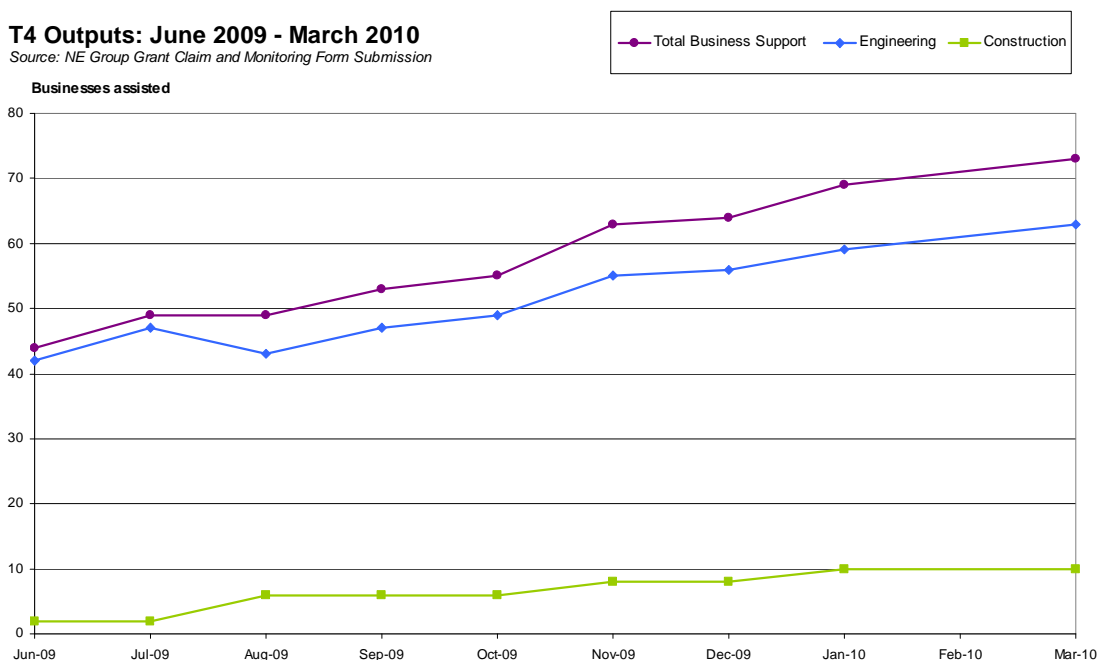
5.16 Figure 5 presents the monthly progress made toward T4 output targets from June 2009 to January 2010:

- Fewer businesses have been assisted against the target profile, although more individuals per business have been supported;
- Of particular note over this period is the increase in the level of recruitment activity. From September 2009, the NE Group worked with Winchester Consulting to identify a number of employers who were looking to recruit skilled workers, and matched these to potential applicants on the C-web Vacancy Database. This contributed to an increase in the number of T4 assists in the proceeding months.

Figure 6

T4 Outputs: June 2009 - March 2010

Source: NE Group Grant Claim and Monitoring Form Submission



NB: 1. Output data relating to February and March 2010 was submitted as one aggregated claim form. Therefore, Figure 6 does not show a data point for February 2010; 2. The reduction in engineering assists between July and August 2009 is attributed to the transferral of four projects from engineering to construction project support.

5.17 Based upon performance to date, the evaluators are cautious about the Career Chain project meeting its core output targets for T4 support. However, given that the targets for business support were set at a very different time economically, and the prevalence of large-scale redundancies, the evaluators propose that this target should be revisited for the remainder of the project in order to reflect the climate under which the project has been operating.

5.18 Moving into Phase 2 of the evaluation, it will be important to review the impact of current promotional activity on this output.

T6 Business Support

5.19 T6 skills support refers to the number of beneficiaries attending vocational training or a general education course which *emda* funds to improve the regional skills base. Although the course does not have to lead to a formal qualification to count as an output, it should last at least six hours, either cumulatively or in a single block.

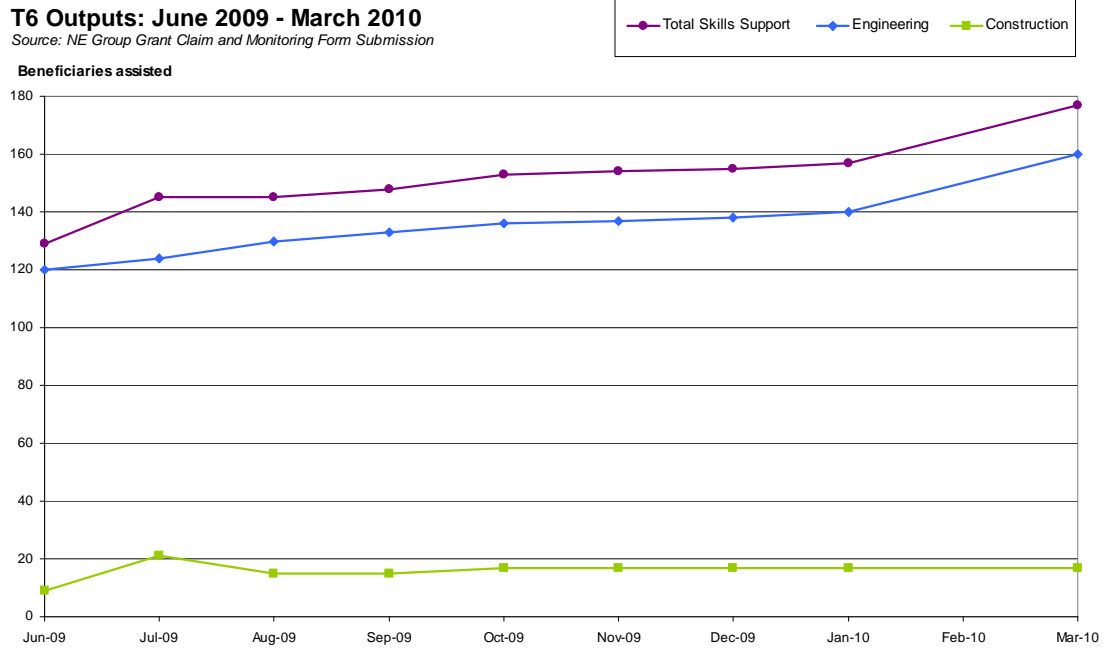
5.20 T6 business support may only be used toward the provision of top-up skills that cannot be funded elsewhere, but are essential for redeployment. Outputs do not include any referrals made from the Career Chain project to alternative sources of support, such as Jobcentre Plus.

5.21 The March 2010 Grant Claim and Monitoring Form indicated that the project had assisted a total of 177 beneficiaries in their skills development against a total project target of 250 (71%).

5.22 Figure 7 presents the monthly progress made toward the T6 business support output targets from June 2009 to March 2010.

5.23 The Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) Construction, and Engineering and Work Safety courses have proved popular amongst beneficiaries seeking T6 assists, and further training courses are planned to take place in the first quarter of 2010 due to the high level of interest from others.

Figure 7



NB: 1. Output data relating to February and March 2010 was submitted as one aggregated claim form. Therefore, Figure 7 does not show a data point for February 2010;

5.24 Based upon performance to date, the project look set to meet its T6 output targets by March 2011.

6 Stakeholder Views

Summary of Key Points

- **Delivery:** Stakeholders believe that Career Chain is being delivered effectively and highlight the high-level of partnership working, which adds value to other redundancy support programmes.
- **Engagement:** Notwithstanding the effects of the recession, Career Chain was perceived to have engaged effectively with employers and has been successful in supporting employees facing redundancy to secure new employment.
- **Looking Forward:** Looking to the future, stakeholders identified the need to further integrate the project with the construction sector, and suggested that the success of the C-web Vacancy database could be tracked more effectively.

Introduction

6.1 This section presents the key findings from consultations held with 17 stakeholders that were identified as being of strategic importance to the Career Chain project by *emda's* Skills Development Manager. A full list of consultees has been presented in Appendix A.

The Aims and Objectives of Career Chain

6.2 There is a consensus amongst stakeholders that Career Chain is a valuable project and is fulfilling an important regional role. The objectives of the project were identified as two-fold:

- **Provision of support to employers and employees under threat of redundancy.** In the first instance, Career Chain will work with employers to assess whether employees can be redeployed elsewhere in the organisation. Should this not be possible, the project provides tailored support to employees to help them find alternative employment;
- **Supporting workforce development.** This objective was perceived to be more long-term in nature, through the retention and development of sector specific skills within the region. One respondent noted the importance of this objective highlighting that the engineering sector needs an additional 3,500 workers a year to replace those entering retirement.

6.3 One respondent noted that the focus of the project had changed recently. As the number of employers considering redundancies has declined, the project was perceived to be becoming more of a recruitment consultancy, led by the C-web Vacancy database which provides a sector specific site for employment opportunities.

6.4 Most stakeholders felt unable to comment on the responsiveness of the project to changing economic circumstances¹². There was, however, general consensus that the project is responsive to customer demands, although it was not clear whether this translates into the project responding to changing economic circumstances in a strategic sense.

6.5 Highlighting the projects responsiveness, stakeholders perceived that the NE Group: (i) often finds out about redundancies before Jobcentre Plus; and (ii) is proactive and responds quickly to partner requests and cross referrals.

Governance and Management

6.6 In general, members of the Project Steering Group believe that current arrangements are fit for purpose. One of the strengths of the Steering Group is that all members are encouraged to contribute to an open discussion at each meeting. This is informed by the information contained within the key papers that are circulated in advance of meetings.

6.7 Jobcentre Plus sub-regional partners, not represented on the Steering Group, reported that they are also given appropriate opportunity to discuss and inform strategic decisions about the project. Their views are articulated to the Project Steering Group by the Regional Employer Engagement Manager for Jobcentre Plus.

6.8 As the Group comprises senior representation from a wide range of organisations, it was felt that it had the skills and capacity to steer the project successfully. However, it was noted that attendance at meetings can be inconsistent.

6.9 There were few comments regarding how the current governance and management arrangements could be enhanced. Of the stakeholders that did highlight an element for improvement:

- One respondent stated that a review should be undertaken of current partnership arrangements with the roles assigned to each member to be clearly set out;
- A second respondent felt that it would be helpful to understand in more detail the role of Winchester Consulting and the organisation's relationship with Career Chain;
- One respondent highlighted that the Steering Group would be enhanced through further representation from Jobcentre Plus (there is certainly scope to enhance the awareness of Jobcentre Plus staff regarding the operation of Career Chain); whilst another suggested that business users of the service should also be represented on the Steering Group to provide views on the project's effectiveness.

6.10 In the main, respondents did not highlight any major risks associated with the successful management of the Career Chain project. However, one area was highlighted, that could be reviewed to strengthen future delivery. Two stakeholders were concerned that the

¹² Some stakeholders were reluctant to answer questions of a more strategic nature as they did not hold a strategic role and therefore had limited engagement with, or opinions on the overall breadth of the project. As such, this feedback does not imply that Career Chain has been unresponsive, rather that stakeholders felt unable to comment.

number of front-line staff involved in project delivery risks the development of a fragmented approach. To mitigate this, there is a continuous need to ensure consistency and alignment between front-line staff across the separate delivery organisations. The role of the Steering Group and the regional Business Support Group is to ensure the alignment of services, so this may simply be a case of enhanced communication.

Partnership Working

6.11 With the exception of two individuals, stakeholders felt that the level of information sharing and intelligence between Career Chain and other organisations is good. For example, one respondent noted they find out about redundancies from Career Chain staff before information is circulated from Jobcentre Plus. One stakeholder, however, highlighted that the profile of Career Chain and level of partnership working would have been enhanced had partners been aligned with the project prior to its launch¹³.

6.12 Stakeholders were in agreement that the NE Group is effective in managing the project. The organisation was perceived as being professional, good at engaging with employers, and that their marketing materials are of a high quality. In particular, the Career Chain bus was cited by several stakeholders as evidence of a good approach to marketing the project, especially in hard to reach areas.

6.13 There is a general consensus that Career Chain has improved the region's response to redundancies and is adding value to other programmes. However, there is less agreement as to the speed at which this occurs, with some stakeholders stating that cross-referrals should be made sooner than they are at present, in order to ensure customers receive support as quickly as possible.

6.14 On balance, Career Chain was perceived to have complemented and added value to other redundancy support programmes, particularly the work of Jobcentre Plus through the provision of a fast, integrated service to customers. As one respondent noted:

"We have worked with Career Chain on lots of sizeable redundancy cases. We provide a quick response to redundancies and they are able to work with us at short notice".

6.15 Although there was consensus that Career Chain has the *potential* to duplicate the support offered by other organisations such as nextstep, in *practice* stakeholders identified few incidences of duplication due to the high level of communication between partners and the focus of the project on discrete sectors. Indeed, the focus of Career Chain on engineering and construction is seen as one of its key strengths, setting it apart from other services, and providing the basis for other organisations to make cross-referrals.

6.16 Where duplication was identified, this was mainly in the area of initial skills analysis. Accordingly, it was suggested by one stakeholder that there needs to be an agreement between all partner organisations regarding who should focus on skills analysis and who should concentrate on the delivery of services.

¹³ The evaluators are aware that the Business Support Group (BSG) has a remit to ensure the alignment and effective delivery of strategic services and that Steering Group meetings also provide an opportunity for strategic stakeholders to discuss issues relating to alignment. Both the BSG and the Steering Group were established to coincide with Career Chain's launch.

Performance and Impact

6.17 In the main, Career Chain is perceived to be meeting its aims and objectives and supporting partner organisations, such as Jobcentre Plus, to meet theirs. Similarly, stakeholders viewed the project as effective in providing support to employers and employees facing redundancy.

6.18 However, stakeholders are uncertain about the success of the project in expanding into the construction sector. Some stakeholders were disappointed regarding the number of beneficiaries from the construction sector that have engaged with the project to date, although acknowledge that this is attributable to the economic challenges currently facing the sector, as opposed to any intrinsic weaknesses associated with the project or its delivery structures.

6.19 General feedback on the C-web Vacancy database suggests that it is viewed positively by beneficiaries. Representatives of Jobcentre Plus also highlighted that they regarded it as a valuable source of information that they could direct customers to.

6.20 Overall, stakeholders were positive about the performance and impact of the Career Chain project to date. Three broad areas were identified which demonstrate the project's success:

- Stakeholders reported that they have received positive feedback from employers who regard the project as providing valuable support during difficult times. Employer endorsement is regarded as one of the highest indicators of success;
- Stakeholders view the project as being successful in securing employment for a high number of people with a few respondents prefixing this sentiment with surprise, given the scale of the recession;
- Stakeholders highlighted the level of joint working and the way in which Career Chain has complimented other redundancy programmes as the third indicator of success.

Looking Forward

6.21 There is a fair level of consensus amongst stakeholders regarding how the future success of the Career Chain project should be judged. This includes continued engagement with employers (particularly SMEs); maintaining and increasing levels of partnership working; ensuring that support is delivered rapidly; and ensuring that both the engineering and construction sectors have the key skills to support future growth.

6.22 At present, stakeholders do not have firm ideas about a forward strategy for Career Chain, although all wish it to continue in some form beyond the current funding period. There is some disagreement as to the extent to which Career Chain can sit within Jobcentre Plus support. For example, whilst one respondent believed that it should become part of mainstream delivery, another thought that Jobcentre Plus would be unable to deliver the specialist highly tailored sectoral support currently offered by the project.

6.23 Looking forward, stakeholders suggested that the Career Chain project:

- Could address the current time lag experienced by some between customer referral and service delivery, through ensuring a rapid response across all delivery agents;
- Could further strengthen regional alignment by continuing to work and build partnerships with agencies such as Business Link;
- Should continue to raise awareness of the project amongst both employers and individuals, (especially in the construction sector which has a high prevalence of micro-businesses);
- More effectively track the number of beneficiaries securing new employment as a direct result of using the C-web Vacancy database.

7 Business Attitudes towards Career Chain

Summary of Key Points

- **Satisfaction Levels:** The Career Chain project is held in high regard by businesses: 95% of employers (17) were either very satisfied or satisfied with the overall service received.
- **Business Benefits:** The most commonly cited business benefit of the Career Chain intervention was increased awareness of workforce development provision. Perceived impact in company culture and morale and the retention of good working relations were also commonplace.
- **Additionality:** The majority of businesses (61%) would have provided some support for their employees in the absence of Career Chain, although a third stated that this support would have been of a lower quality.

Introduction

7.1 This section presents the key findings from the business surveys undertaken for the purposes of the evaluation to date. The results are derived from a low business base of 18 respondents and therefore should be interpreted with caution. The reasons for the small sample are two-fold:

- As described in Section 5, the number of redundancies per employer has in some cases been far higher than expected. The effect of this is that the project has worked with fewer employers than originally anticipated but, on average, has worked with more employees in each;
- Since accessing support through Career Chain, some businesses have either closed, or staff members who had been the point of contact with Career Chain have left. These businesses had to be removed from the survey sample.

7.2 Whilst the survey findings are insightful, the volume of responses does not enable any sub-group analysis by employer characteristic. If feasible, this will be included in future analysis and reporting exercises¹⁴.

Employer Profile

7.3 Appendix B provides an overview of the businesses responding to the survey. The key points to note are as follows:

- Respondents to the survey are fairly evenly spread across Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire. However, none are based in

¹⁴ Should the number of employers supported by Career Chain not increase significantly, the overall evaluation target of 100 business surveys may prove unrealistic. ekosgen will remain in regular contact with the NE Group to ensure an up to date view on activity levels and will inform *emda* should the target become unrealistic. One alternative for the remainder of the evaluation would be to increase the number of beneficiary surveys to take account of the shortfall in business surveys, although this would require further discussion with *emda*'s Skills Development Manager.

Rutland - to some extent, this reflects the relatively low business base surveyed through Phase 1;

- The NE Group have historically experienced challenges in engaging with employers in Rutland, attributed to the relatively small size of the county and its geographical location on the boarder of the region, enabling it to benefit from fringe support offered through the East of England Development Agency (EEDA);
- Most businesses (15) were from the engineering sector and 3 were from construction. With the exception of one business, all had been trading for over 10 years;
- Of the 18 businesses surveyed, 14 have had to make one or more employees redundant since April 2008.

Engagement

7.4 Businesses primarily engage with Career Chain because they want to provide support to employees being made redundant. This accounts for 14 of the 18 companies in the sample. One company became involved to meet legal requirements, whilst another became involved as they did not know how best to provide employee support.

7.5 The remaining two companies highlighted their motive for engaging with the project as 'other'. In both instances, this related to support to find potential job applicants.

Satisfaction Levels

7.6 Businesses reported high levels of overall satisfaction with Career Chain. Seventeen of the 18 were either very satisfied (12) or satisfied (5), whilst one business was neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Throughout the survey it was rare for businesses to express any discontent with the project and it is evident that its services are extremely well regarded.

7.7 The business survey asked employers to rate their satisfaction levels against eight different elements of support. As shown in Figure 8:

- Overall, businesses were most satisfied with the flexibility of the service they received from Career Chain. Thirteen out of the 18 were very satisfied with this element;
- The speed of response and quality and relevance of the information provided were also highlighted by businesses as areas of particular strength. Twelve businesses and 11 businesses respectively were very satisfied with these elements;
- Just two businesses were dissatisfied with an element of the support they received. This was in the speed of response from initial engagement, and the usefulness of advice given to the employer.

7.8 The early signs would appear to suggest that Career Chain would struggle to become a self-sustaining service, given that only one in three businesses would be willing to pay a fee for the service received. However, this is probably to be expected given that over three-

quarters of businesses surveyed have had to make redundancies since April 2008, and therefore are unlikely to take on additional cost.

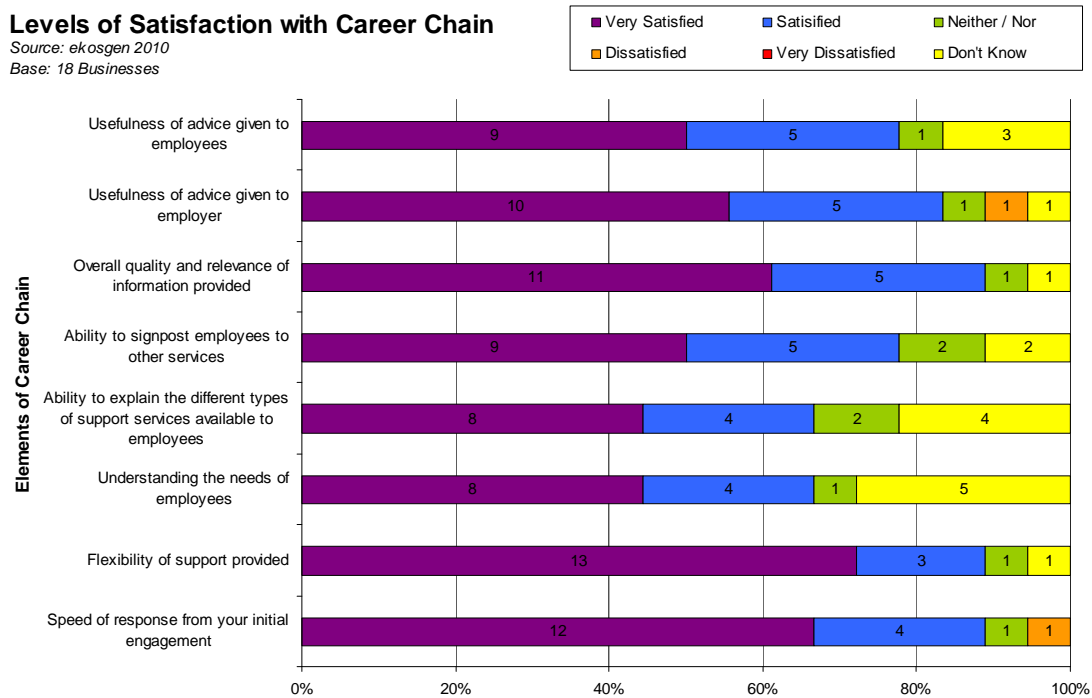
7.9 Of those willing to pay, 4 businesses would pay a maximum of £500 for the service received, whilst 2 businesses would pay between £500 and £1,000.

Figure 8

Levels of Satisfaction with Career Chain

Source: ekosgen 2010

Base: 18 Businesses



Business Benefit

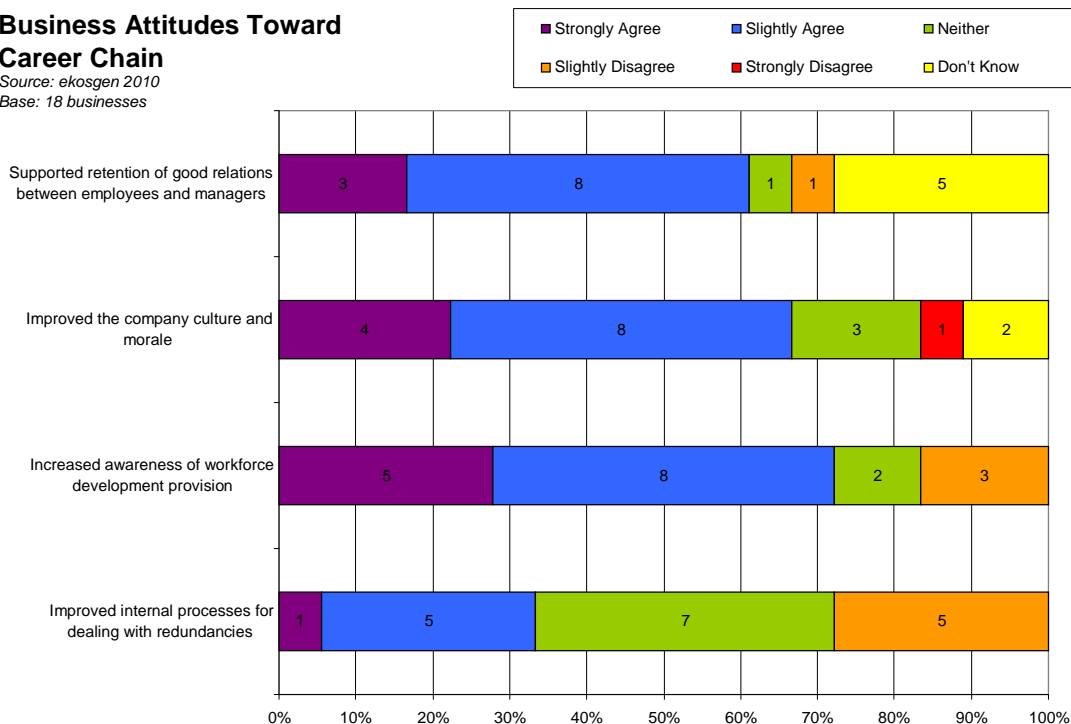
7.10 Involvement in the Career Chain project has led to tangible benefits for businesses. As displayed in Figure 9:

- The most frequently stated benefit of Career Chain was an increased awareness of workforce development provision. This was cited by 13 of the 18 responding businesses;
- Career Chain appears to be having a positive influence on company culture and staff morale, which is important given the uncertainties that redundancies can generate in the workforce. Improvements in company culture and morale were cited as a benefit by 12 businesses and the retention of good relations between employees and managers by 11.

Figure 9

Business Attitudes Toward Career Chain

Source: *ekosgen 2010*
Base: 18 businesses



Additionality

7.11 The business survey findings suggest a mixed picture on the additionality of Career Chain. A third of businesses (6) reported that they would definitely not have been able to access a similar level of support elsewhere, two thought they probably could have, whilst 10 didn't know.

7.12 Figure 10 shows that 11 businesses would either definitely or probably have provided some outplacement or other support to their employees had the project not been available. This is in contrast to 3 businesses that would probably not, or definitely not have done so.

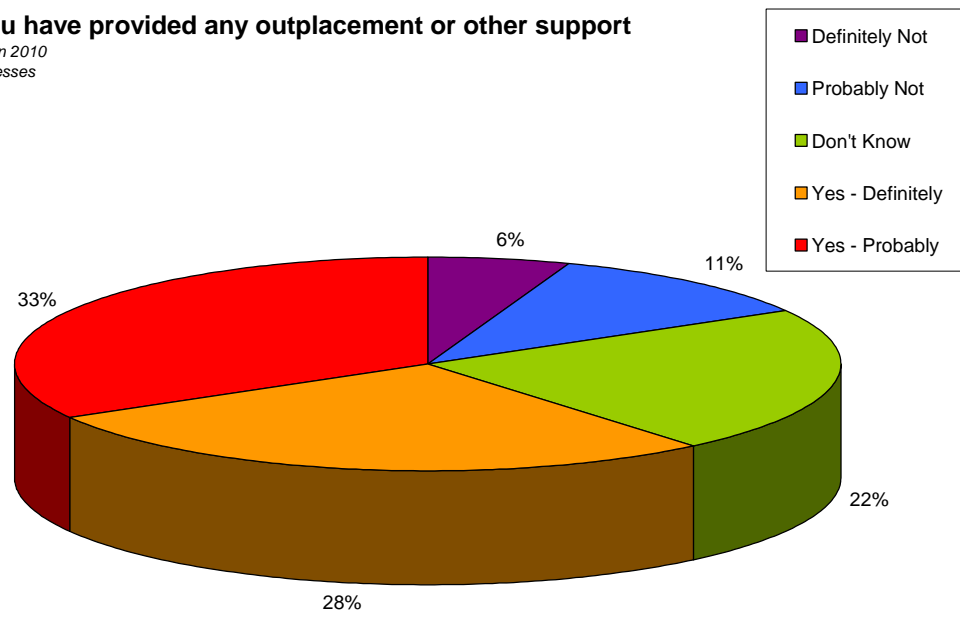
7.13 Of the 11 businesses that would have provided some support to their employees, 5 would have delivered this in-house, 1 through using external support, 3 would have used a combination of approaches and 2 didn't know.

7.14 Overall levels of additionality appear low, however, it cannot be assumed that employers would or could have provided the same quality or degree of personalisation in any self-arranged support. When questioned, a third of businesses stated that the support they provided would have been of a lower quality to Career Chain, and half didn't know. Career Chain can provide long-term, tailored support that is distinct from and does not duplicate the mainstream provision offered through Jobcentre Plus and nextstep.

Figure 10

Would you have provided any outplacement or other support

Source: *ekosgen 2010*
Base: 18 Businesses



7.15 Section 8 expands upon the findings from this section by providing an analysis of the project's impact on businesses through a review of GVA and additionality.

8 Beneficiary Perspective

Summary of Key Points

- **Satisfaction:** The consultations to date indicate a high level of satisfaction with the advice and guidance received, with beneficiaries particularly valuing the frequency of the support and the appropriateness of delivery to their needs.
- **Understanding:** Beneficiaries displayed a strong understanding of the project offer, and found Career Chain advisors to be approachable.
- **Refinements to the Career Chain Model:** In terms of the end user experience, and with the exception of C-web (the effectiveness of which to an extent is out of the control of Career Chain), it does not appear that any major refinements to the model are required.

Introduction

8.1 Getting a first hand perspective of those benefitting from the project is a key part of the evaluation. This section presents the key findings from the beneficiary surveys to date. Unless otherwise specified, the base number of beneficiary survey respondents is 187. At this stage we can be more confident of this survey (as opposed to the business survey) given the high number of responses achieved.

8.2 Appendix B provides an overview of the beneficiaries responding to the survey. The key points to note are as follows:

- Respondents to the survey were predominantly from the engineering sector. This sector accounted for approximately two thirds of survey respondents (69%), whilst a third (31%) were from the construction sector;
- At the point they first engaged with Career Chain, the majority of beneficiaries had either been made redundant from their previous employment (48%) or were under notice of redundancy (44%). Eleven beneficiaries (6%) reported the situation as being 'other', which included long-term unemployment, one individual who was self-employed, and one respondent who was on probation from prison;
- Beneficiaries had most commonly been assisted through advice and guidance - over two-thirds of beneficiaries were supported to develop a professional CV;
- In terms of advice and guidance support, a fifth of beneficiaries were made aware of alternative sources of training support, and a fifth received training support through Career Chain. Less prevalent was assistance through the C-web Vacancy Database - fewer than one in ten beneficiaries had received support through this route.

Awareness of Career Chain and Starting Position

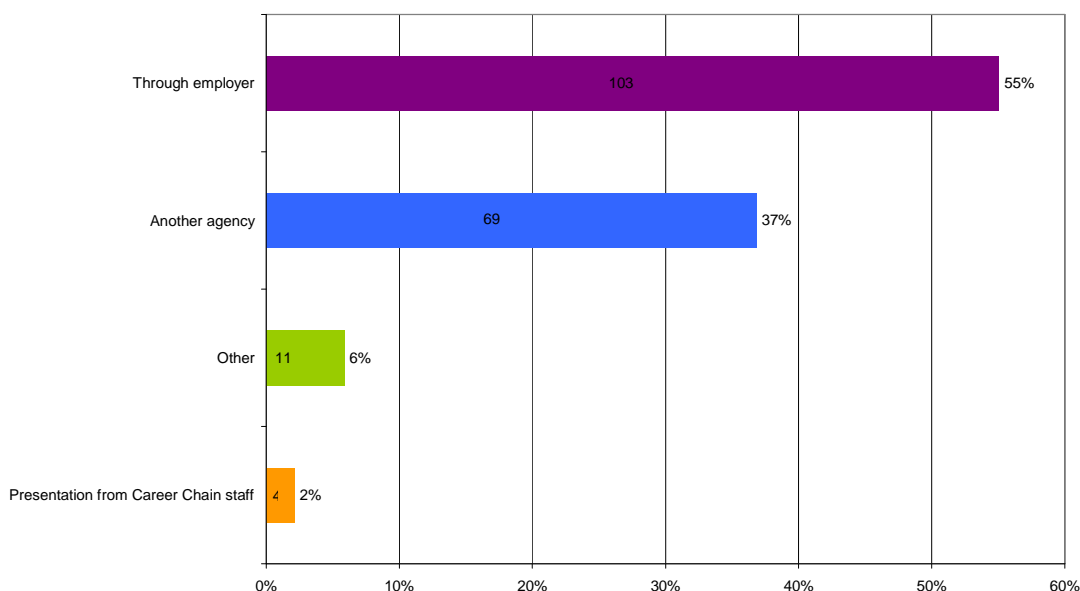
8.3 Employers were found to be strong advocates of the Career Chain project to their employees. As indicated in Figure 11:

- Just over half of the beneficiaries consulted with (55%) became aware of Career Chain through their employer (this highlights the importance of successful employer engagement);
- This is in contrast to 37% (69) of beneficiaries who became aware of the project through information from Jobcentre Plus or another agency and four individuals who found out through a presentation from Career Chain staff.

Figure 11

How Beneficiaries Became Aware of Career Chain

Source: ekosgen 2010, (Base = 187)



Attitudes toward Career Chain

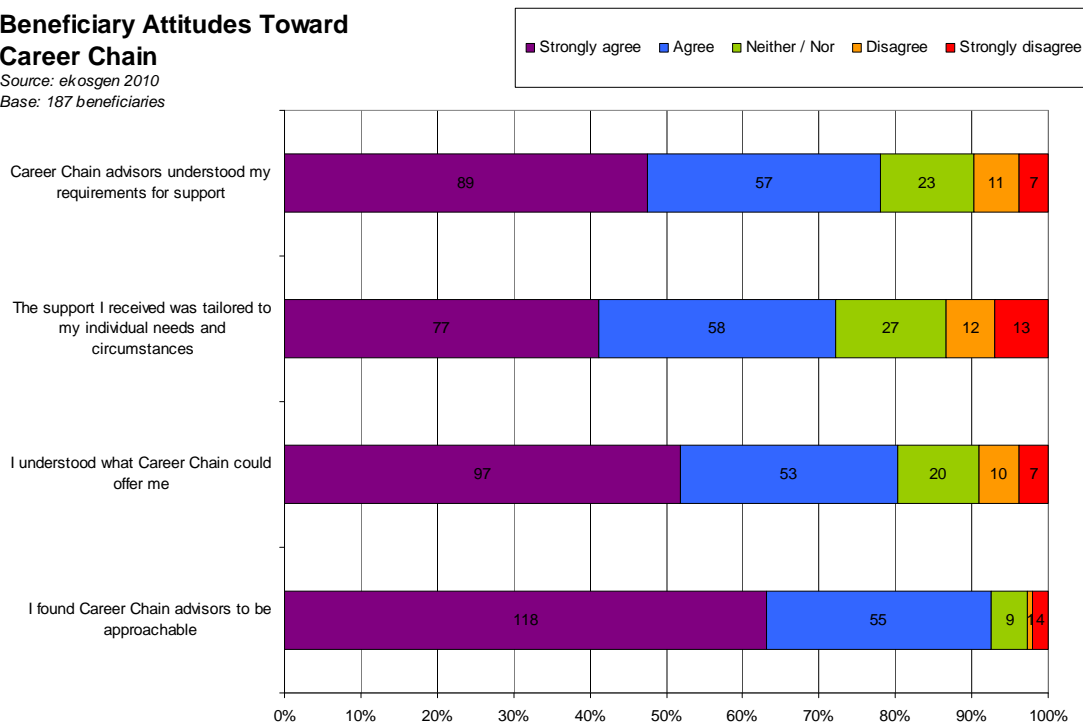
8.4 Beneficiaries are generally very positive about Career Chain. Almost all of them (92%) agreed that advisors were approachable and 80% clearly understood the Career Chain offer.

8.5 Career Chain staff, and the personalised nature of the support they can provide, is highly regarded. More than three quarters (78%) of the beneficiaries reported that Career Chain advisors had a good understanding of their individual support needs. A similar proportion (72%) felt that the advice and guidance they received was tailored to their individual needs and circumstances.

Figure 12

Beneficiary Attitudes Toward Career Chain

Source: ekosgen 2010
Base: 187 beneficiaries



8.6 As highlighted by Figure 12, relatively few beneficiaries were critical in their attitudes toward Career Chain. To summarise, a highly tailored approach is a key success factor of the project.

Advice and Guidance

8.7 Advice and guidance is a key component of the Career Chain offer. The following table provides a breakdown of the type of career advice and guidance support received by beneficiaries from waves 1-3 of the survey. As shown:

- The most frequently received advice and guidance was support to develop a CV. This was the most common form of support by some distance, and was received by 70% of beneficiaries;
- The second most common (career advice and guidance received through a one-to-one session) had been delivered to just over one in four beneficiaries.

Table 4

Advice and Guidance Support Received through Career Chain		
Type of Support	Frequency of Support (where applicable)	Beneficiaries receiving support
Support to develop a CV		70% (131)
Interview skills training		21% (39)
Career advice and guidance through a one-to-one session	Once	25% (47)
	More than once	9% (17)
Career advice and guidance through a group session	Once	17% (32)
	More than once	7% (14)
Telephone support from an advisor	Once	5% (10)
	More than once	1% (1)
Source: <i>Beneficiary Survey, ekosgen 2010 (n=187)</i>		

8.8 Beneficiary feedback suggests that advice and guidance support has generally been well received, as the following statements show. In each case, the numbers quoted are those that either strongly agreed or agreed.

- I found the frequency of careers advice and guidance support that I received appropriate for my needs: 69% (123);
- I found that the careers advice and guidance support that I received was pitched at the right level for my needs: 69% (122);
- I feel that I am more aware of the future options available to me: 60% (108);
- Following the interview skills training, I now feel more confident about attending future interviews: 21% (38). N.B.: 53% (95) stated that this was not applicable to them.

8.9 Tables 5 and 6 provide a summary of two of the case life histories (Appendix C) to exemplify the advice and guidance received through Career Chain from a beneficiary perspective. Both beneficiaries had positive experiences of the project, highlighting the importance of the support they received in finding new employment¹⁵.

¹⁵ The case life histories presented in Appendix C were based upon six individuals randomly chosen from across Waves 1 and 2 of the beneficiary survey. As such, they display negative as well as positive experiences of Career Chain.

Table 5

Beneficiary Case Study 1: Advice and Guidance Support

Gender/ Age: Female, 35

Date support was accessed: March 2009

Sector (engineering/ construction): Engineering

Beneficiary Background: The beneficiary is a 35 year old female who was put under notice of redundancy from her employer in March 2009. She had been employed for eight and a half years as a Design Engineer for a manufacturer of construction and mining equipment, within the engineering sector.

Method of Support: The beneficiary first accessed support from Career Chain in March 2009 at a workshop event organised by her employer. Career Chain provided the beneficiary with interview skills training and support to develop her CV, delivered through four one to one sessions. The sessions focused on the content and presentation of her CV and the Career Chain Advisor went through her skills and strengths in order to identify the different employment options available to her. The beneficiary had a very positive experience of the Career Chain project.

"It [Career Chain] gives you the support to look at jobs with fresh eyes and to target skills to jobs I would not have thought of".

Following her engagement with Career Chain, the beneficiary found new full-time employment in the engineering sector as a Vehicle Engineer, with a supplier of rail equipment and services. Since starting in post six months ago, she has progressed into the management team and now has responsibility for the design engineers.

Table 6

Beneficiary Case Study 3: Advice and Guidance Support
<p>Gender/ Age: Male, 58 Date support was accessed: April 2009 Sector (engineering/ construction): Construction</p>
<p>Beneficiary Background: The beneficiary is a 58 year old male who had been employed for 16 years as a Store Supervisor for an International Construction Company. He was put under notice of redundancy in April 2009. The beneficiary found out about Career Chain through his employer, and following a phone call, was invited to meet with an Advisor.</p>
<p>Method of Support: The beneficiary received one to one support from a Career Chain Advisor to develop a professional CV and to undertake a computerised interview simulation. Although he found the process to be initially quite probing, by the end of the sessions his confidence had increased. The beneficiary particularly valued the personalised nature of the support provided by Career Chain.</p>
<p><i>“Career Chain was very important to me and certainly contributed to me finding new employment”.</i></p>
<p>Following his involvement in the Career Chain project, the beneficiary has gained new employment as a Driver/ Store Worker with a company specialising in logistics management in the retail sector. He has been working there on a temporary contract basis since November 2009.</p>

8.10 Table 7 provides more general beneficiary feedback on the key benefits received through advice and guidance support. As highlighted, for some beneficiaries advice and guidance was particularly valued.

Table 7

Beneficiary feedback on the key benefits received through advice and guidance support

- *“The CV and interview techniques really helped as I had no idea how to go about it”.*
- *“I thought the help with building my CV and interview skills was very helpful as I hadn’t been out of work for 21 years”.*
- *“The CV help was good. It means that you can go and start looking for a job straight away”.*
- *“The support helped me get back into work fast. I could not have done without it”.*
- *“They [Career Chain staff] made it quite personal, and built up a relationship. I found it very easy to contact and talk to them”.*
- *“It is good to have someone to talk to who is knowledge about the sector”.*
- *“The CV support was helpful as it has been years since I did one, so it gave me a head start”.*
- *“It [the advice and guidance support] keeps you motivated and makes you aware of options”.*

C-web Vacancy Database

8.11 Relatively few beneficiaries had received support through this route when compared with support through advice and guidance. This reflects the challenges in sourcing an appropriate number of job vacancies from the construction and engineering sectors, due to the relatively low levels of recruitment by employers.

8.12 The most common form of C-web Vacancy support received was access to the C-web Vacancy Database, although this accounts for fewer than one in ten beneficiaries.

Table 8

C-Web Support Received through Career Chain		
Type of Support	Frequency of Support (where applicable)	Beneficiaries receiving support
Workshop on job search and job matching	Once	5% (9)
	More than once	4% (8)
One-to-one support to access and use the database	Once	6% (11)
	More than once	3% (5)
Access to the C-web Vacancy Database		9% (16)

Source: *Beneficiary Survey, ekosgen 2010 (n=187)*

8.13 Feedback from beneficiaries suggests that C-web is easy to register with and easy to use. However, the perceived relevance of the vacancies was less well received, although this is perhaps to be expected given the extremely difficult job market in both the construction and engineering sectors.

8.14 The following statements illustrate the above points. As before, the numbers quoted refer to those beneficiaries that either strongly agreed or agreed and are taken from a base of 32 responses.

- The database was easy to register with: 88% (28);
- I found the database to be user friendly: 78% (25);
- The database was effective for providing new job opportunities: 44% (14);
- I found there to be enough relevant opportunities for me on the database: 34% (11).

Table 9

Beneficiary feedback on the key benefits received through the C-web Vacancy Database

- *“All jobs are in one place, which has saved time searching many different sources”.*
- *“It gets you online so employers can see your details”.*
- *“C-web provides access to jobs in one place. It’s also easy to use”.*

However, some beneficiaries were less positive:

- *“Other databases have very similar information - it’s not really any different to them and therefore of no real benefit”.*
- *“I don’t have a computer so accessing it is hard”.*
- *“Although it’s easy to use, it’s too focused on engineering and not on surrounding activities”.*

8.15 To summarise C-web seems to work well enough provided a sufficient number of relevant vacancies can be secured. An increased number and quality of opportunities would help it to gain more currency amongst beneficiaries. As cited in Section 5, a number of activities are taking place to promote T4 business support, which is likely to improve this situation.

Top-up Skills

8.16 The following table provides a summary of the type of top-up skills support received by beneficiaries surveyed to date. As displayed, a fifth of beneficiaries received support through advice and guidance for training needs, and a fifth had training provided for them through Career Chain.

Table 10

Skills support received through Career Chain	
Type of Support	Beneficiaries receiving support
I was given advice regarding who I could approach for the training I needed	20% (37)
The training I needed was provided for me	20% (38)
Top-up skills - other	1% (2)
<i>Source: Beneficiary Survey, ekosgen 2010 (n=187)</i>	

8.17 Beneficiary feedback from those who received skills support is largely positive. The speed in which the training was organised, the location of the training and the relevance of the training to anticipated future job roles were all highlighted as particular strengths.

8.18 The following statements illustrate the above points and are drawn from a base of 45. The statements relate to those beneficiaries that either strongly agreed or agreed.

- The training was organised quickly: 82% (37);
- The training/ skills I received are highly relevant to my anticipated future job roles: 80% (36);
- The training was held at a location and time that suited me: 80% (36);
- The training/ skills I received will have a positive impact upon my employment and longer terms prospects: 60% (27).

8.19 Tables 11 and 12 provide a summary of two of the case life histories (Appendix C) to exemplify the top-up skills support received through Career Chain from a beneficiary perspective. Although beneficiary case study 2 presents a positive experience of the project, beneficiary case study 5 highlights a more negative experience on account of delays in receiving skills support.

Table 11

Beneficiary Case Study 2: Top-up Skills Support
<p>Gender/ Age: Male, 45 Date support was accessed: August 2009 Sector (engineering/ construction): Construction</p>
<p>Beneficiary Background: The beneficiary is a 45 year old male who was employed in the construction sector. In July 2009 he was made redundant from his job at an organisation that specialises in fire safety, where he had been employed for one year as a Fire Proofing Specialist.</p> <p>Method of Support: The beneficiary first contacted Career Chain in August 2009 following a recommendation from a friend. Through the Top-up Skills support offered by Career Chain the beneficiary undertook and completed a 360⁰ Mini Digger Course. The training was arranged quickly and at a time and location that suited him. The support received was appropriate for his needs and increased his awareness of the training opportunities available.</p> <p><i>“They [Career Chain] were very good and very helpful. Career Chain pushed and I got on a course”.</i></p>

Table 12

Beneficiary Case Study 5: Top-up Skills Support
<p>Gender/ Age: Male, 48 Date support was accessed: September 2008 Sector (engineering/ construction): Construction</p>
<p>Beneficiary Background: The beneficiary is a 48 year old male, who was made redundant from his post as a Joiner from a company specialising in plumbing, building and maintenance work. The beneficiary found out about Career Chain through a referral from Jobcentre Plus and first accessed their services in September 2008.</p> <p>Method of Support: The beneficiary met with a Career Chain Advisor to develop a professional CV and to enquire about financial support to undertake a Part P Electrical Training Course. The beneficiary was optimistic following his meeting with Career Chain. However, after three weeks of not hearing anything he phoned Career Chain, and was informed that his request for training support was 'in the system'. After several months the beneficiary received a call from Career Chain advising him new funding was available and suggesting he apply again, which he did. Once again the beneficiary felt optimistic, however to date he has not heard anything from Career Chain or attended the Part P Electrical Course.</p> <p><i>“They [Career Chain staff] are lovely people. They are great at the set up stage and for people who get training – brilliant, but they didn't deliver in my case so I would give them a 0/10 score”.</i></p>

8.20 Table 13 provides more general beneficiary feedback on the key benefits received through top-up skills support.

Table 13

Beneficiary feedback on the key benefits received through top-up skills

- *“It has made me more marketable”*
- *“I needed the CSCS [Construction Skills Certification Scheme] card to be able to work on building sites. The training received enables me to apply for more jobs than before”.*
- *“I can go back to construction sector with a refreshed health and safety certificate”.*
- *“The training helped me get a job, and made me more confident to apply for the job”.*
- *Brought up to speed with legislation.*
- *Career Chain got me the latest information regarding regulations which is very important to impress future potential employers”.*
- *“I think it [training] gives you more chance of a job. It shows you're not just waiting for one, that you're actively trying to get one”.*
- *“Gaining a three year forklift licence got me back in employment”.*

8.21 To summarise top-up skills were well received and for some they were perceived as a fundamental component to improving their employment prospects.

9 Project Impact

Summary of Key Points

- **Net GVA to Date:** Career Chain is estimated to have generated net GVA of £4,071,715. This is almost entirely due to supporting beneficiaries who had been made redundant, or who were at notice of redundancy into new employment.
- **Future Impact:** If anticipated future impacts are included, total cumulative GVA for the project is estimated to be £5,736,944 by March 2011, based on additional emda investment of £624,000.
- **Return on Investment:** The net GVA generated by Career Chain is derived from an investment by emda (to date) of £1,525,766. This equates to a return on investment of 1:2.7 (cumulative impact to date and anticipated), comparing favourably against national benchmarks of 1:0.8 for matching people to jobs and 1:1 for skills and workforce development.
- **Additional Impact:** The project has generated noticeable wider effects. It is estimated the project has helped a net total of 27 beneficiaries to achieve qualifications (predominantly at NVQ Levels 2 to 3).

Introduction

9.1 The gross and net economic impacts of Career Chain have been informed by the performance of the project (Section 5) and business and beneficiary benefits (Sections 7 and 8) to estimate both.

9.2 The net impact assessment is consistent with the approach outlined in the Logic Chain and Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Career Chain (Appendix D) and follows the guidance in the emda Evaluation Toolkit and the BIS Impact Evaluation Framework (IEF) for RDAs.

9.3 The section focuses on three key areas:

- **Gross Impacts:** A review of the gross impacts generated by the project;
- **Gross to Net Adjustments:** The application of adjustment factors to the gross impacts in order to calculate net economic impacts, including GVA (in effect isolating the true effects of the project)¹⁶;
- **Return on Investment:** Providing a comparison of net impacts and the scale of benefits/ public return for £2.15m of investment (a now standard impact measure amongst RDAs).

¹⁶ NB: In contrast to preceding Sections, 'don't know' responses from the business and beneficiary surveys have been omitted from the analysis, and proportions have been adjusted accordingly. This provides emda with a more accurate analysis of project performance.

Gross Impacts

9.4 The project has a remit to deliver a number of broad outcomes that, whilst similar, all offer varying degrees of impact. Referring to Step 4 of the project's Logic Chain (Appendix D), the following outcomes all feature prominently:

- **Redeployment** (people assisted to get a job);
- **Jobs safeguarded** (minimising the number of people out of employment);
- **Improved business competitiveness** (number of businesses that have been assisted to improve their performance);
- **Enhanced redeployment prospects** (improvements in beneficiaries confidence and employability skills); and,
- **Improved skills and qualifications** (the provision of top-up skills that cannot be funded elsewhere).

9.5 Of these outcomes, redeployment and improved business competitiveness have a direct measurable impact on the region's productivity and it is these measures we have focused on to calculate GVA. We have not directly sought to quantify improved skills and qualifications (though we have measured improved business competitiveness which will include some improved skills performance as a result of skills up lifts). We do look at the gross and net position however. The remaining two outcomes (enhanced redeployment prospects and jobs safeguarded) both have direct impacts on GVA but cannot be estimated within the scope of this evaluation, due to limitations in the survey data.

9.6 Table 14 illustrates the Logic Chain for the five strands (reading left to right), and uses project performance data from Section 5 to provide an indication of the gross outputs achieved to date. The approach is described in the proceeding sections.

Table 14

Project Performance to Date Mapped Against the Logic Chain				
Gross Outputs	→	Gross Outcomes	→	Gross Impacts
T2: Employment Support		Redeployment - 486 beneficiaries finding work		£18.3m GVA
		Enhanced Redeployment Prospects - 461 beneficiaries with a more positive outlook on job prospects		-
T4: Business Support		Improved Business Competitiveness - 16 businesses reducing costs		£53,383 GVA
		Jobs Safeguarded - Safeguarded employment		-
T6: Skills Support		Improved Skills and Qualifications - 27 people gaining qualifications		-

Redeployment

9.7 Redeployment relates directly to the T2 employment support output; the number of people who have been *assisted* to get a job (regardless of their success in actually getting a job).

9.8 By March 2010, the project had assisted 1,165 beneficiaries. The survey of Career Chain beneficiaries found that of the 187 consulted with, 45% (84) had found employment (either inside or outside of the engineering and construction sectors) following their engagement with the project.

9.9 Of the project beneficiaries that had (re)entered employment, 85% were in full-time employment at the time of completing the survey and 15% were in part-time employment. These proportions affect the gross number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions that the project has helped to fill.

9.10 The process of calculating the gross impact of redeployment is shown in Table 15. As displayed, the output of 1,165 T2 employment assists translates into a project level outcome of 486 people successfully into work.

Table 15

Gross Impacts				
		Survey Sample	Extrapolated to Population	
		FTE jobs	FTE jobs	GVA (£)
All Assisted		187	1,165	43,925,272
<i>% not finding employment</i>	<i>55%</i>	<i>103</i>	<i>639</i>	<i>24,088,053</i>
Sub Total		84	526	19,837,220
<i>% Part Time</i>	<i>15%</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>80</i>	<i>3,013,249</i>
<i>Part Time adjustment (50% FTE)</i>		<i>6</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>1,506,624</i>
Sub Total		78	486	18,330,596

9.11 In 2007, average GVA per worker in the East Midlands was £37,704¹⁷. Assuming all of the 486 FTE jobs were fully attributable to the Career Chain project, this would produce a gross GVA impact of £18.3m. The following sub-sections assess the proportion of this GVA that can be considered as 'net' impact.

Jobs Safeguarded

9.12 There is very little evidence available to assess whether Career Chain has had an impact on safeguarding jobs. Of the 18 businesses surveyed, 13 (72%) first approached the project when they had employees either at risk of redundancy or under notice of redundancy. Of these, 2 (15%) noted that they had managed to avoid making any employees redundant.

9.13 This does not provide a scale of the number of jobs safeguarded, nor does it cover those businesses that have found it unavoidable to make redundancies. Rather, it is indicative of instances where the project may have helped reduce the number of redundancies. No estimate of impact on jobs safeguarded is made under this strand.

Improved Business Competitiveness

9.14 Improved business competitiveness relates most closely to the T4 business support output: the number of businesses that have been assisted to improve their performance. To date, the project has assisted 73 businesses. The evaluators explored the relationship between Career Chain intervention and improved business competitiveness using information from the business survey.

9.15 Eighty-five per cent of businesses reported that Career Chain had helped retain good relations between employees and managers; 75% stated that the support received had helped improve company culture, and 72% perceived that Career Chain had increased their awareness of workforce development provision.

9.16 Although these variables represent gross outcomes relating to company performance, when asked more explicitly about Career Chain's contribution to enhanced productivity, the proportion of businesses reporting an impact reduced significantly.

9.17 As shown in Table 16, only a small proportion (6%) of survey respondents stated that Career Chain has improved their long-term competitiveness, whilst 22% thought that it had helped them to reduce costs. None of the businesses surveyed perceived that the Career Chain project had helped them to improve the day-to-day running of their company.

¹⁷ ONS, 2010.

Table 16

Proportion of Respondents reporting improvements due to Career Chain	
	Proportion of respondents
Maintained good relations between employees and managers	85%
Improved company culture and morale	75%
Greater awareness of workforce development	72%
Improved internal redundancy processes	33%
Reduced costs	22%
Improved long-term competitiveness	6%
Improved day to day running of the company	0%

9.18 Businesses highlighting that Career Chain had helped them to reduce costs estimated the value of this cost saving as between £1k and £20k. This provides a mid-point average of £10k (albeit based on a very small sample of respondents).

9.19 If applied at the project level, the 22% of businesses that highlighted a cost reduction in the survey may be aggregated to 16.2 out of the 73 businesses who have received T4 support. The gross impact on reduced costs can therefore be calculated as: 16.2 businesses reducing costs multiplied by an average reduction in costs of £10,000.

9.20 To develop this further, published research¹⁸ into the relationship between turnover and GVA enables an estimate of GVA impact to be made. A ratio between turnover and GVA of 3:1 means that gross reduced costs¹⁹ of £162,222 is broadly equivalent to £53,383 gross GVA attributable to the project.

Enhanced Redeployment Prospects

9.21 Enhanced redeployment prospects refer to those beneficiaries that highlighted improvements in their confidence and employability skills as a result of the T2 support they received through Career Chain. The measure is not restricted to those that have achieved a qualification through the project.

9.22 Of the 187 beneficiaries surveyed, 40% have a more positive outlook on their job prospects, whilst 37% feel more confident in finding work, and feel they now have more opportunities to progress. Table 17 presents the gross impacts of enhanced redeployment prospects, when aggregated up to the project total of 1,165 T2 assists to date.

Table 17

Proportion of Respondents reporting improvements due to Career Chain		
	Proportion of respondents*	Aggregated to Project T2 Output to date (1,165)
More confident in finding work	37%	430
More opportunities to progress	37%	430
More positive outlook on job prospects	40%	461

* Based on sample of 187 responses

¹⁸ ABI (2007).

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/abi/2007-archive/downloads/Whole_Economy_by_Region.xls

¹⁹ Assuming that the reduction in costs has a direct impact on turnover.

Improved Skills and Qualifications

9.23 Of the 187 beneficiaries surveyed, 49% strongly agreed or agreed that the intervention of Career Chain had helped to improve their skills. Of this 49%, just under a third (31%) participated in top-up skills training and could point to new skills or qualifications that they had gained through support from Career Chain. Courses typically ranged from NVQ Level 2 to Level 3.

9.24 Applying these factors to the 177 beneficiaries who had received T6 skills support at a project level, approximately 27 people could reasonably be expected to have gained qualifications through the intervention of Career Chain.

Gross to Net Adjustments

9.25 The process of applying gross to net adjustments to project impacts is summarised in Figure 6.1 of the *emda* Evaluation Toolkit and is used as the model approach for this sub-section. This includes estimates of employment deadweight based on survey results, plus other standard adjustments of leakage, displacement, substitution and multipliers.

9.26 As noted earlier, redeployment and improved business competitiveness have a direct measurable impact on the regions GVA. The gross to net adjustments for these outcomes is presented below.

Redeployment

9.27 As indicated, redeployment indicates an aggregated gross impact of 486 FTE jobs. In terms of added value, 8% of respondents to the beneficiary survey who had found employment since their engagement with Career Chain, thought that this was wholly attributable to the support received from the project, whilst 57% felt that it was not at all attributable.

9.28 From these results, added value is calculated as follows: (gross jobs FTE x proportion of respondents) x deadweight factor. Deadweight (where beneficiaries would have found a job even without support from the project) is calculated by deducting added value (21 jobs) from the gross impact (77 jobs). This process is illustrated in Table 18 and shows **deadweight of 72%**.

Table 18

Extent that new employment is attributable to Career Chain support			
Response scale 1-5 (and deadweight factor)	Proportion of respondents*	Gross Jobs (FTE)	Gross GVA (£)
		486	18,330,596
1 Wholly attributable (100%)	8%	38	1,428,358
2 (75%)	17%	62	2,321,082
3 (50%)	10%	25	952,239
4 (25%)	8%	9	357,090
5 Not at all (0%)	57%	0	0
		134	5,058,768
Deadweight		352	13,271,827
Deadweight (%)		72%	72%
* Based on sample of 78 responses			

9.29 Survey evidence is not available to estimate other adjustments and, in place of this, national benchmarks²⁰ (for matching people to jobs) are used where appropriate²¹. These are summarised below:

- **Leakage:** The extent to which the economic benefits, in terms of employment, created by Career Chain have leaked outside of the region. The regional average for leakage is 10-14%, and a **leakage of 12%** is assumed for this gross to net process;
- **Displacement:** Refers to the proportion of beneficiary related outcomes from Career Chain that will be at the expense of other beneficiaries in the region that have not been assisted by the project. Based on the regional average of 26-28%, a **displacement of 27%** is assumed;
- **Substitution:** Whereby businesses or beneficiaries change their behaviour to explicitly take advantage of support available – also known as in-firm displacement. In this context, the extent to which recruiting employers (for those people assisted into employment) would have filled their vacancies from the general labour pool if Career Chain was not in existence. BIS benchmarks range from 0-8% and an average **substitution of 4%** is applied for Career Chain;
- **Multipliers:** The level of increased employer and employee spend generated as a result of Career Chain, and the level expected in the future. The regional multiplier would typically be calculated by taking a standard multiplier at the national level (for job matching interventions) but adjusted for regional leakage (in this case, 12%). The latest BIS guidance suggests an average **regional multiplier of 1.3** (for matching people to jobs).

9.30 The application of the above adjustments is highlighted in Table 19 below:

²⁰ BIS (2009) Research to improve the assessment of additionality
<http://www.berr.gov.uk/files/file53196.pdf>.

²¹ The work was commissioned before IEF+ but subsequent phases will follow the emda toolkit and IEF+ guidance.

Table 19

Gross to Net Impact Adjustments			
		Gross Jobs (FTE)	Gross GVA (£)
Gross Impact		486	18,330,596
<i>Deadweight</i>	72%	352	13,271,827
Sub Total 1		134	5,058,768
<i>Leakage</i>	12%	16	607,052
Sub Total 2		118	4,451,716
<i>Displacement</i>	27%	32	1,201,963
Sub Total 3		86	3,249,753
<i>Substitution</i>	4%	3	129,990
Sub Total 4		83	3,119,763
<i>Multiplier</i>	1.3	25	935,929
Net Impact		108	4,055,691

9.31 For redeployment, **persistence is estimated to be one year** (for matching people to jobs).²² In other words, that the impacts of the net jobs can be attributed to the Career Chain project for one year. This means that net GVA remains unchanged at £4.1m.

9.32 Beneficiary survey respondents who at the time of the survey had (re)entered employment reported that they have now been in work for an average of six months. This implies that half of the project net GVA has been achieved to date whilst the remaining half will be achieved in the first two quarters of 2010/11.

Improved Business Competitiveness

9.33 Impact deadweight (whether the business would have reduced costs anyway without Career Chain) is not available from the business survey, so in this instance, activity deadweight, which may be drawn from the survey, is used as proxy measure (whether the business would have undertaken similar outplacement or support services without Career Chain). The two measures are slightly different but are logically linked and similar in scale.²³

9.34 Based on results from the beneficiary survey, 36% of respondents would have 'definitely' provided some form of outplacement or other support to their employees had Career Chain not been available (taken as 100% deadweight for this cohort) whilst 43% would have 'probably' done so (taken as 67% deadweight).

9.35 When questioned, 50% of businesses thought that their own support would have been of a higher quality to Career Chain, whilst the remainder thought that it would have been of a lower quality or scale. Accordingly, these adjustment factors cancel each other out. It should be noted, however, that these proportions are derived from very low sample sizes. Based on the above factors, **deadweight is estimated to be 69%**, as shown in Table 20.

²² BIS (2009) RDA Evaluation: Practical Guidance on Implementing the Impact Evaluation Framework.

²³ There is no national evidence that provides benchmarks for activity deadweight as well as impact deadweight. The proxy between the two is based on the logic that the proportion of respondents that would have accessed support is similar to the proportion that would have achieved benefits anyway. For example, ekosgen have recently undertaken the evaluation of UKTI in the East Midlands which found activity deadweight of 38% and impact deadweight of 32% (based on a sample size of 96 respondents).

Table 20

Extent to which Reduced Costs are Attributable to Career Chain		
	Proportion of respondents*	Gross GVA (£)
		53,383
<i>Would have definitely provided support (0%)</i>	36%	0
<i>Would have probably provided support (33%)</i>	43%	7,626
<i>Would have probably not provided support (67%)</i>	14%	5,084
<i>Would have definitely not provided support (100%)</i>	7%	3,813
		16,523
Lower quality (+25%)	50%	2,065
Higher quality (-25%)	50%	2,065
		16,523
Deadweight		36,860
Deadweight %		69%
* Based on sample of 18 responses		

9.36 Similarly to enhanced redeployment, there is no conclusive evidence from the business survey to cover other adjustment factors. Applying national benchmarks (for improved business competitiveness), the project has created **£16,023 net GVA**. This is based on adjustments of: leakage (6%); displacement (30%); substitution (1.75%); and regional multiplier (1.5).²⁴ Using the same guidance as applied to enhanced redeployment, impact is based on a persistence of 1 year.

Improved Skills and Qualifications

9.37 As noted, approximately 27 people are expected to have gained qualifications through the intervention of Career Chain. These increases in skills levels can reasonably be expected to lead to improvements in GVA through improved productivity of the individuals concerned. However, there is no evidence available from the survey to inform the extent of this increase in productivity per individual. Whilst this prevents an estimate being made for individual productivity improvements, these benefits would have overlapped with the £16,023 reported through improved business competitiveness (above). This reflects the perspective of uniform productivity increases for both the employee and employer.

9.38 As an alternative to GVA impact, gross to net adjustments can be applied to the number of people who have improved their skills or qualifications. Although there are no specific gross to net adjustments derived from the survey, the national benchmark for gross to net (overall) may be used which is 58-64%. Taking a mid-point of 61% and applying it to the gross total of 27 beneficiaries, it is reasonable to assume that a net total of 16 people have gained qualifications following support from Career Chain.

Return on Investment

9.39 The above sections set out how the gross impacts of Career Chain have been established (in keeping with the project Logic Chain in Annex D), and the proportion of these

²⁴ BIS (2009) Research to Improve the Assessment of Additionality.

that could be considered as net impacts. The net impact of the project according to the three measurable strands are:

- £4.1m GVA due to redeployment of at risk/unemployed beneficiaries;
- £16,023 GVA from enhanced competitiveness of businesses supported; and
- 27 beneficiaries achieving qualifications (predominantly at NVQ Levels 2 to 3).

9.40 Each of the above impacts count as individual achievements in keeping with the original aims of the project.

9.41 As displayed in Table 21, the aggregated net impact of the project in economic terms is £4,071,715 GVA. This compares to an investment by *emda* (to date) of £1,525,766, equivalent to a **return on investment (to date and anticipated) of 1:2.7**.

Table 21

Summary of Net Economic Impact			
	GVA (£)	<i>emda</i> Investment	Return on Investment
<i>Redeployment achieved impact</i>	4,055,691	1,525,766	2.7
<i>Competitiveness achieved impact</i>	16,023	1,525,766	0.0
Total achieved impact	4,071,715	1,525,766	2.7
Cumulative impact (with persistence)	4,071,715	1,525,766	2.7
Including future potential impact	5,736,944	2,149,766	2.7

9.42 This represents a good return for *emda*, particularly when the non-economic impacts of increased qualifications and improved beneficiary confidence are taken into account. If these improvements help even more beneficiaries to find work in the future, the overall GVA impact could in fact be higher.

9.43 Compared to national benchmarks, the return of 1:2.7 compares favourably against an average return of 1:0.8 for matching people to jobs and 1:1 for skills and workforce development.

9.44 Anticipated future *emda* investment in Career Chain to March 2011 amounts to £624,000. Based on the return on investment (to date) of 1:2.7 continuing, this would suggest that an additional £1,665,229 net GVA could be generated in the future as a result of the project.

9.45 Combining net GVA to date and anticipated future impact, this suggests that the project will generate an aggregate GVA of £5,736,944 by March 2011 based on an *emda* investment of £2,149,766 (a return on investment of 1:2.7).

10 Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction and Context

10.1 The construction and engineering sectors have been some of the worst hit nationally in the run up to the downturn and the period of recession that followed, yet they make up a substantial proportion of the East Midlands economy, in employment and productivity terms, and have a high degree of strategic prominence within the RDA. Building upon the Pan Business Redeployment model and the Midlands Engineering Industries Redeployment Project (MEIRG), Career Chain was conceived to support the retention and development of engineering and construction skills and people across the East Midlands.

10.2 This report has emphasised that longer term health of the economy is important given that prior to the recession it outperforms the English average in GVA terms (even accounting for the inevitable strength of London and the South East). The project fits well with the government's aspirations for recovery and support for these sectors is familiar feature of regional policy across the RDA network. These sectors are unlikely to recover quickly which means, at least in the short term, they will need continued support to ensure that the region's competitive advantage does not deteriorate.

Project Performance

10.3 It is clear that activity levels against two out of three key output targets have been high. The project is on target to meet its employment (T2) and skills support (T6) targets. By March 2010 Career Chain had exceeded its pro-rata T6 targets (108%) and had shown strong performance against T2 output targets (86%). This performance is strong, particularly in light of contract variations and expansion into the construction sector. There may be scope to stretch these targets.

10.4 Currently, reported business assists (T4) are behind profile, despite the high activity levels in terms of contacting senior managers of companies and partnership work with organisations such as ConstructionSkills. The evaluators highlighted a number of circumstances, such as the impact of the economic downturn (leading to a higher number of redundancies per employer, and therefore Career Chain working with fewer employers but more employees than anticipated) that have called into question the appropriateness of this target. It may be worth setting a more realistic target here.

Business Benefits

10.5 The business survey gave a strong endorsement of the Career Chain project with 95% either very satisfied or satisfied with the service they received. They highlighted the flexibility of Career Chain and the speed of response and quality and relevance of the information provided as particular strengths. It would appear that a highly tailored approach was particularly appreciated.

10.6 The direct commercial benefits of Career Chain were not widely cited by businesses, although it was clear that their engagement with the project had improved business competitiveness. This is not particularly surprising given it was not a primary objective of the study though it is clear nevertheless that there has already been a public return on investment

to date anyhow (and this does not take into account any benefits that might have been paid out or exchequer benefits lost had people not been redeployed). Career Chain has encouraged good relations between employers and managers; led to improvements in company culture and increased business awareness of workforce development provision.

Beneficiary Attitudes

10.7 Individuals supported through the project indicated a high level of satisfaction with the advice and guidance received and praised project advisors for their approachability and clear articulation of the Career Chain offer. Advice and guidance appears to have been an important part of the process for them. Beneficiaries were commonly made aware of the project through their employer and agencies such as Jobcentre Plus, underlining the importance of successful employer engagement and effective partnership working.

10.8 One of the most significant and perhaps under-reported benefits of the project has been the transformational impact it has had on some beneficiaries lives through what has often been a difficult and stressful period. Project assistance (especially advice and guidance) has enhanced the redeployment prospects for those who received support. Following their involvement with Career Chain, 40% of beneficiaries surveyed reported a more positive outlook on their job prospects, whilst 37% felt more confident in finding work, perceiving that they now have more opportunities to progress.

10.9 All three core types of support (advice and guidance, C-web Vacancy Database and top-up skills) were well received by beneficiaries. In terms of the end user experience, with the exception of C-web (the effectiveness of which to an extent is out of the control of Career Chain), no major modifications to the model are required.

Project Impact

10.10 The Career Chain project has generated considerable net cumulative GVA impact (£4.1m) once we have accounted for the various additionality adjustments that need to be made. It derived almost entirely from its success at supporting beneficiaries who had been made, or were at risk of being made redundant into new employment. At 1:2.7, the project's net return on investment (to date and anticipated) also compared favourably against national benchmarks for matching beneficiaries to jobs (1:0.8) and skills and workforce development (1:1). This will be revisited in the final evaluation.

Governance and Management Arrangements

10.11 The Project Steering Group has successfully brought together a range of relevant project partners to support the governance to Career Chain. Stakeholders consulted with particularly valued the opportunity to make an active contribution to Steering Group meetings, and felt informed regarding project performance and activities.

10.12 There are some areas, however, where refinements could be made. Stakeholders identified these as including an internal review of current partnership arrangements to provide transparency to its membership and ensuring that clarity is given regarding how all partnership organisations fit into and contribute toward the Career Chain project. Looking forward, the risk of a fragmented approach, on account of the number of frontline staff

involved in delivery, may be mitigated by continuous efforts to ensure consistency and alignment across separate delivery organisations.

Recommendations for the Future Development of the Project

10.13 Below we make nine relatively straightforward recommendations for the future development of the Career Chain project that stakeholders may wish to consider. These have been presented under three broad themes: strategy, delivery and performance. They will be revisited at the final evaluation stage.

Strategy

10.14 **Recommendation 1 Strategic Direction:** As the economic climate changes, the relative importance of the different strands of Career Chain may change and therefore the forward strategy may plot a course for the project that looks different to how it has been operating over the past 12 months. The Steering Group and evaluation team will need to ensure a continued focus on the strategic direction of Career Chain. We recommend a workshop is convened following the election to consider the future direction and sustainability of the project and so that foundations for the forward strategy are developed.

10.15 **Recommendation 2 Dissemination and Marketing:** The evaluation findings should be disseminated to, and discussed with, Steering Group members and marketing messages communicated to wider stakeholders where appropriate in suitable formats. The evaluation team would be happy to present the findings at the next meeting of the steering group

Delivery

10.16 **Recommendation 3 Governance:** In light of stakeholder comments the governance arrangements are fit for purpose but would benefit from a review of membership and attendance and the clarification of roles, responsibilities and expectations. This would avoid any confusion.

10.17 **Recommendation 4 Partnership:** Partnership is a strong feature of the project and needs to be retained. Stakeholders could consider how they can further strengthen and deepen regional partnerships with agencies such as Business Link and Jobcentre Plus and initiatives such as Train to Gain to maximise alignment and cross referral. As initiatives changes the continued strength of these relationships will come into play.

10.18 **Recommendation 5 Employer Engagement:** Successful employer engagement is at the heart of Career Chain. Stakeholders may wish to consider measures to continue to extend its reach and boost the number of businesses assisted (within the grain of recommendation 7). This should include measures to reach more difficult segments (micro construction employers for instance) perhaps through specialist intermediaries.

10.19 **Recommendation 6 Targeting:** Consideration should be given to whether Career Chain can help to bolster the prospects of high technology/low carbon businesses in particular - meeting the government's New Industry New Jobs agenda.

Performance

10.20 **Recommendation 7 Targets:** Consideration should be given to revising the T4 business support target for the remainder of the project in order to reflect the climate under which Career Chain has been operating. This should be a realistic, achievable figure against which sensible measures can be considered. In a similar vein there may be scope to stretch the employment (T2) and skills supports (T6) targets slightly.

10.21 **Recommendation 8 Service Delivery:** Feedback from stakeholders suggested that Steering Group members could consider how to address the current time lag experienced by some beneficiaries between customer referral and service delivery, through ensuring a rapid response across all delivery agents. Our survey did not corroborate this but response times may be worth recording to ensure the beneficiary experience is a positive one (and perhaps a minimum response time set if it is not already).

10.22 **Recommendation 9:** To provide a more accurate assessment of project performance, it is recommended that the number of beneficiaries securing new employment as a direct result of using the C-web Vacancy Database could be tracked more effectively. Beneficiaries should be more routinely directed to the C-web database - for those who used it, it was seen as an effective mechanism. It has been underused to date but has the potential to be a valuable resource as the sectors recover.

APPENDIX A. CONSULTATION LIST

The following stakeholders were consulted with through Phase 1 of the evaluation of Career Chain.

Table 22

Stakeholders consulted for the research	
Name	Organisation
Hev Bingley	Business Link*
Amanda Sergeant	Construction Skills
Sue Kirby	EEF
Cathie Clarke	EMCBE
Karen Heywood	EMDA
Linda Stevenson	Guideline Careers / Next Steps
Angela Stansfield	Jobcentre Plus (Derbyshire)
Aysha Rahman	Jobcentre Plus (Leicester)
Dennis Noble	Jobcentre Plus (Lincoln)
Paul Henshaw	Jobcentre Plus (Nottingham)
Dez Grant	Jobcentre Plus (Regional)
Nigel Jackson	LSC
Anita Mason	NE Group
Matthew Bust	NE Group
Malcolm Healey	SEMTA
Maggie Lambert	Unite
Chris Jarman	Winchester Consulting

* NB: Nominated by the EMB's Business Development Director.

APPENDIX B. TECHNICAL APPENDIX

Business Profile

Position within organisation: Businesses responding to the survey held the following positions in their organisation:

Table 23

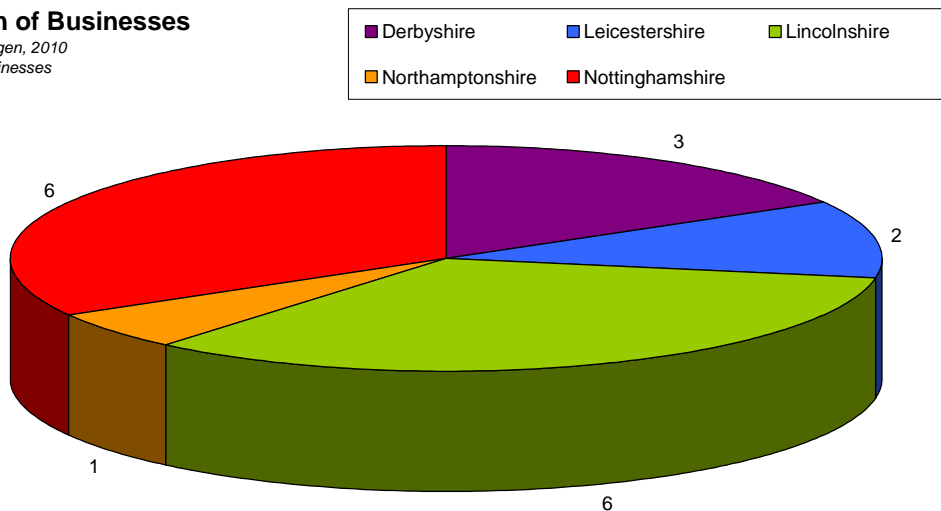
Position within organisation	
Title	Number
Learning and Development Advisor	1
Resource Centre Manager	1
HR (Head, Manager, Director)	6
HR Specialist	1
Personnel Advisor / HR Advisor	2
Managing Director / Manager / Community Director	6
Not disclosed / refused	1
TOTAL	18

Business Location: The largest proportion of respondents were from Lincolnshire (6) and Nottinghamshire (6). Less represented were Derbyshire (3), Leicestershire (2) and Northamptonshire (1). No responses have yet been received from Rutland.

Figure 13

Location of Businesses

Source: ekosgen, 2010
Base: 18 Businesses



Industrial Sectors: Fifteen respondents were from the engineering sector, whilst three were from the construction sector.

Trading period: All but one of the business respondents had been trading for over 10 years (14 from the engineering sector and 3 from the construction sector). One respondent from the engineering sector had been in business between 3 and 5 years.

Business Size: Over half of all business respondents (10) at the time of completing the survey employed 250+ members of staff.

Table 24

Business Size		
Number of full time equivalent employees	Engineering	Construction
1 - 4	-	-
5 - 9	1	-
10 - 49	2	-
50 - 99	2	-
100 – 149	1	-
150 – 199	1	-
200 – 249	-	-
250+	8	2
Don't Know	-	1
TOTAL	15	3

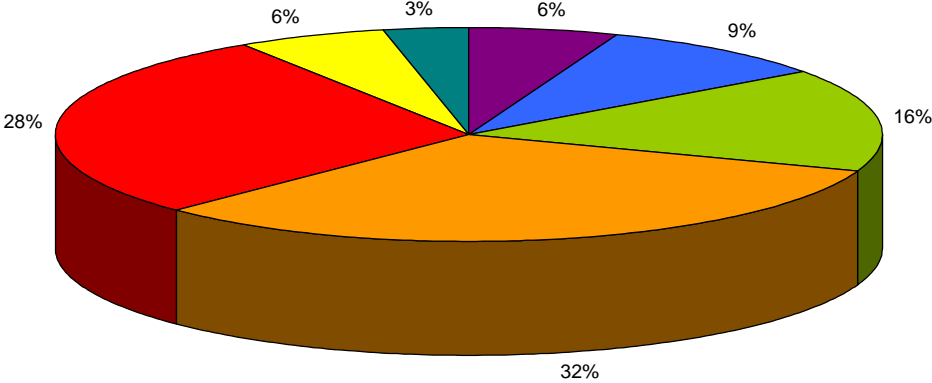
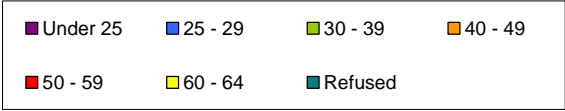
Beneficiary Profile

Age of Beneficiary: A third of the beneficiaries consulted with (32%) were aged between 40 and 49, and a similar proportion were aged between 50 and 59 (28%). Less represented age groups were 30 to 39 (16%), 25 to 29 (9%) and under 25 and 60 to 64 (both 6% respectively).

Figure 14

Age of Beneficiaries

Source: ekosgen, 2010
Base: 187



Industrial Sector: Approximately two thirds of responding businesses (69%) were employed in the engineering sector, whilst just under a third (31%) were employed in the construction sector.

APPENDIX C. CASE STUDIES

Introduction

Beneficiary survey respondents were asked if they would like to participate in a follow-up depth consultation to support the development of six case life histories. Six individuals from across waves 1 and 2 of the survey were chosen at random from those who agreed to participate.

The following six case studies provide differing experiences of engagement with the Career Chain project. Whilst four beneficiaries (case studies 1 to 4) had a positive experience, two beneficiaries, although highlighting some positive elements of the service, felt overall that it did not meet their needs (case studies 5 to 6).

CASE STUDY 1 - BENEFICIARY PROFILE

Gender/ Age: Female, 35

Support received: Support to develop a professional CV, interview skills training and Career Advice and Guidance through a one to one session

Date support was accessed: March 2009

Sector: (Engineering/ construction): Engineering

DESCRIBING THE STARTING POINT

The beneficiary had been employed as a Design Engineer for eight and a half years for a manufacturer of construction and mining equipment. She was put under notice of redundancy in March 2009.

When her previous company announced that they would be making redundancies, the beneficiary did not perceive that her job would be at risk. When she received notification of redundancy it came as a 'nasty surprise'. After the initial shock had worn off, the beneficiary took some time to consider her options for new employment.

"Over time it [redundancy] became less of an issue for me and more of an opportunity".

ACCESSING CAREER CHAIN AND THE SUPPORT RECEIVED

Soon after announcing the job losses, the beneficiary's previous employer organised a workshop day for all those under notice of redundancy. A number of support organisations, including Career Chain, were invited to present the support options available to employees.

The beneficiary made initial contact with Career Chain project staff at this event. Through Career Chain, she received interview skills training and support to develop her CV. This took place over four one-to-one sessions.

Over the course of the one-one sessions, the Career Chain advisor went through the content and presentation of the beneficiary's CV. The advisor also spoke to the beneficiary about her skills and strengths, which helped her to recognise the different employment options available to her. By the end of the advice and guidance sessions, the beneficiary felt confident about her CV and was in a position to make more informed decisions regarding the next steps in her career.

"It was what I needed at the time. The Career Chain project directed me to the right people [for support], looked at what I could do and provided the support to move me forward".

VIEWS ON THE SUPPORT RECEIVED

The beneficiary had a very positive experience of the Career Chain project. From the workshop session when she was first introduced to Career Chain, the beneficiary had a clear idea regarding how the project could help her and the nature of the support available. She felt that the advisors were approachable and clearly understood her requirements for assistance. Following the training, she also

felt more confident about attending future interviews and applying for jobs that she wouldn't normally have considered.

"They [Career Chain] really gave me the support and skills that I needed to turn my situation into a positive one... [when first made redundant] I wasn't in the right frame of mind, they changed my mindset".

IMPACT OF CAREER CHAIN

Following her intervention with Career Chain, the beneficiary has found new full-time employment in the engineering sector as a Vehicle Engineer, with a supplier of rail equipment and services. Since starting in post six months ago, she has progressed into the management team and now has responsibility for the design engineers.

The beneficiary's new job has a high degree of fit with her skills and strengths that were identified by the Career Chain advisor. She has remained on the same salary as her last post, which she is happy with and is enjoying her new job. Reflecting on the impact of Career Chain, the beneficiary felt that:

"The advice and guidance support helped me get back into work fast – I could not have done without it."

THE FUTURE

Following the intervention of Career Chain, the beneficiary was less worried about the future and had a positive outlook on her career prospects. Since starting in her new post, she had developed her skills profile and feels that the post offers her more opportunities to progress when compared with her previous job.

"I'm glad I got made redundant now, it's the best thing that has happened to me".

Looking to the future, the beneficiary believes that she has better longer-term prospects with her new employer. She has successfully transferred and applied the skills from her previous post to her current one. Since starting in employment six months ago, her new company has supported her to undertake a seven day leadership development course and provides regular leadership coaching skills training, held on a one-to-one basis.

The beneficiary plans to stay with her current company and to progress into the senior project management team, which will enable her to start managing engineering projects. She would recommend Career Chain to anyone in a similar situation to her starting point:

"It [Career Chain] gives you the support to look at jobs with fresh eyes and to target skills to jobs I would not have thought of".

CASE STUDY 2 - BENEFICIARY PROFILE

Gender/ Age: Male, 45

Support received: Career advice and guidance through a group session and top-up skills

Date support was accessed: August 2009

Sector: (Engineering/ construction): Construction

DESCRIBING THE STARTING POINT

In July 2009, the beneficiary was made redundant from his job at a Fire Safety Organisation where he had been employed for one year as a Fire Proofing Specialist. His job involved having a responsibility for installing fire detection and alarms, emergency lights, fire extinguishers and undertaking fire risk assessments. Since losing his job, he has struggled to find alternative employment and remains unemployed.

"I have always worked, it is stressful at the moment. I have always found employment by myself and not through the Jobcentre".

ACCESSING CAREER CHAIN AND THE SUPPORT RECEIVED

In order to secure employment, the beneficiary decided to diversify his skills base, therefore providing a broader range of potential jobs that he could apply for.

A friend recommended that he approach Career Chain in order to explore the potential of funding to undertake a 360° Mini Digger Course. The course provided the beneficiary with the safety knowledge and practical skills required for the operation of a 360° Mini Digger, weighing up to 10 tonnes.

Following an interview with a Career Chain project advisor, the beneficiary received support to undertake the training, which he completed approximately one month later.

"It was a good two week course, and I have put my friends forward to do it as well".

VIEWS ON THE SUPPORT RECEIVED

Reflecting on the support he received through Career Chain, the beneficiary strongly felt that it was appropriate for his needs, and that it increased his awareness of the opportunities available to him.

"Career Chain boosted my confidence".

The skills gained through the Mini Digger course were perceived to be highly relevant to the beneficiary's anticipated future jobs and was thought to have a positive impact on his employment and longer-term prospects. Following his initial engagement with the Career Chain project, the training was organised quickly and held at a location that suited him.

"They [Career Chain project staff] were very good and very helpful. Career Chain pushed and I got on a course".

IMPACT OF CAREER CHAIN

Since undertaking the Career Chain supported training, the beneficiary has not been able to secure alternative employment.

Although he gained confidence through his involvement with Career Chain and through his attendance on the course, the sustained period of unemployment has led to him feeling low. He recognises, however, that this is a product of the wider economic circumstance (as opposed to a fault of the project), and is optimistic about finding employment opportunities:

“Things aren’t so good now, but they will pick up”.

The beneficiary had a positive experience with Career Chain, and highlighted the proactive attitude of the advisors as being a key strength of the service. He has recommended the service to his friends who are in a similar position:

“It’s better to be doing something rather than nothing”.

THE FUTURE

Following his positive experience of Career Chain supported training, the beneficiary plans to undertake an advanced Mini Digger course, and a Mini Dumper course (a short course in the operation of dumper trucks). On completion of these courses, the beneficiary will be issued with a Construction Plant Certification Scheme (CPCS) Card, which will open up more opportunities to work in the sector.

He is currently looking for further funding to undertake this course, but has so far been unsuccessful. In the short-term whilst looking for more permanent employment, the beneficiary plans to start his own business as a gardener and has invested in a second-hand van, chainsaw and a lawnmower.

CASE STUDY 3 - BENEFICIARY PROFILE

Gender/ Age: Male, 58

Support received: Support to develop a professional CV and Interview skills training

Date support was accessed: April 2009

Sector: (Engineering/ construction): Construction

DESCRIBING THE STARTING POINT

The beneficiary had been employed by an international construction company as a Store Supervisor for sixteen years, when he was placed under notice of redundancy in April 2009.

Having previously been made redundant from a different company, and through his awareness of the impact of the financial crisis on the sector, he recognised that redundancy was likely:

“When the company announced that they would be making redundancies, I wasn’t surprised. However, signing on has a devastating effect on you”.

ACCESSING CAREER CHAIN AND THE SUPPORT RECEIVED

The beneficiary first became aware of the Career Chain project through his employer. In April 2009, he met with a member of Career Chain project staff on a one-to-one basis who provided support to develop a professional CV.

The approach to developing his CV was by identifying his core qualities and skills, and supporting these with examples from his professional and personal life to build a story. Although the beneficiary found this method of working to be appropriate for his needs, it was commented that for some individuals, this process may be quite daunting.

In terms of the interview skills training, the beneficiary undertook a computerised simulation interview. Through this process he was supported to identify his strengths and weaknesses in an interview situation, which he discussed further with a project advisor over two one-to-one sessions. Although he initially found the system to be quite ‘probing’, by the end of his one to one sessions his confidence had increased.

VIEWS ON THE SUPPORT RECEIVED

Reflecting on the support he received through Career Chain, the beneficiary highlighted that it was appropriate for his needs and that following his intervention, he was more aware of the future employment options available to him. Of particular benefit was the interview skills training, which made him feel more confident about attending future interviews.

“Career Chain was very important to me and certainly contributed to me finding new employment”.

IMPACT OF CAREER CHAIN

Following his involvement in the Career Chain project, the beneficiary has gained new employment as a Driver/ Store Worker with a company specialising in logistics management in the retail sector. He has been working there on a temporary contract basis since November 2009.

Although financially the position is not as well paid as his previous employment, the beneficiary is pleased to be working again and is enjoying the challenges of working in a different sector. The beneficiary has been able to apply some of the skills he acquired in the construction sector to his new post in the retail sector, such as his understanding of European safety laws and his time management skills.

The beneficiary attributes some of his success in finding new employment to Career Chain, as it raised his confidence levels and provided him with an up-to-date and professional looking CV, following a long period of employment.

THE FUTURE

The beneficiary is enjoying his new job and is working toward progressing within the organisation. He particularly valued the personalised nature of the support offered through Career Chain highlighting that this was a key success factor, marking the service out as being different from other support channels.

CASE STUDY 4 - BENEFICIARY PROFILE

Gender/ Age: Male, 24

Support received: Support to develop a professional CV and top-up skills

Date support was accessed: January 2009

Sector: (Engineering/ construction): Construction

DESCRIBING THE STARTING POINT

In November 2008, the beneficiary was made redundant from his job as a driver and kerb labourer for a construction company, which he had held for two years. He has not been able to find any alternative employment since this point.

The beneficiary was notified of his redundancy by letter and feels that he was not provided with any support in seeking alternative employment or training from his employer.

ACCESSING CAREER CHAIN AND THE SUPPORT RECEIVED

In January 2009, the beneficiary was referred to the Career Chain project by Jobcentre Plus. Through Career Chain he accessed support to develop a professional CV and attended a one week Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) course, which he passed.

VIEWS ON THE SUPPORT RECEIVED

The beneficiary found the CSCS training received through Career Chain to be highly relevant to his career and expected it to have a positive impact upon his employment and longer term prospects.

In the beneficiary's experience, the training was organised quickly and held at a time and location which suited him. He found Career Chain project staff to be approachable, and that they understood his requirements for support.

IMPACT OF CAREER CHAIN

Although the beneficiary had a positive experience of Career Chain, he has not been able to find alternative employment since being made redundant. He has been regularly applying for local jobs, but indicated that the job market isn't very healthy at the moment. Being out of work has given him low morale and he is finding it hard to stay motivated to look for new employment.

The beneficiary has recently been offered an employment opportunity with Network Rail, however he would need to complete a Personal Track Safety Course before he would be eligible for employment. This constitutes a three day course costing £180 which is the basic training requirement to work on the Network Rail infrastructure.

The possibility of receiving funding to undertake the course was discussed with Jobcentre Plus, who referred the beneficiary to a training provider. The training provider subsequently referred the beneficiary back to Jobcentre Plus who recommended that he contact an alternative training provider. The beneficiary felt frustrated by this process and was tired of being 'passed around'.

The beneficiary was unsure whether he would be eligible for additional support from Career Chain to undertake the training course and highlighted that Jobcentre Plus had not explicitly recommended that he contact the project again.

THE FUTURE

The beneficiary could not suggest any improvements to the Career Chain project and would recommend the service to anyone in his situation. More generally, however, he would like to receive greater clarity regarding what training is eligible for funding, and from whom.

"Funding needs to be made available for training, which is relevant to the job opportunities which are being advertised".

CASE STUDY 5 - BENEFICIARY PROFILE

Gender/ Age: Male, 48

Support received: Support to develop a professional CV and top-up skills

Date support was accessed: September 2008

Sector: Construction

DESCRIBING THE STARTING POINT

The beneficiary is a Joiner by trade with some training in electrics. In the first quarter of 2008 he joined a company specialising in plumbing, building and maintenance work on a temporary rolling contract. After seven months in post, the beneficiary was made redundant.

ACCESSING CAREER CHAIN AND THE SUPPORT RECEIVED

The beneficiary first found out about the Career Chain project through a referral from Jobcentre Plus. In September 2008, the beneficiary met with a Career Chain advisor who assisted him to develop a professional CV and to fill in an application for funding to complete Part P Electrical Training which is a Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) Health and Safety Course.

Prior to engaging with the Career Chain project, the beneficiaries skill set meant that he had only been able to provide joinery services to his clients. He hoped that the completion of the Part P Electrical Training course would extend his existing client offer with electrical services and would enable him to become self-employed.

Although the beneficiary left his initial meeting with the Career Chain advisor feeling 'up-beat' and optimistic regarding his future employment opportunities, he found the process to be slow. After three weeks of not hearing anything he phoned Career Chain and was informed that his request for training support was 'in the system'. After several months the beneficiary received a call from a Career Chain advisor who explained that new funding for training support was in place and asked if he would like to reapply for funding, which he did.

Once again, the beneficiary felt optimistic about the prospect of attending the training course. To date, however, following his second application for funding, he has not heard from Career Chain or attended the Part P Electrical Training Course.

VIEWS ON THE SUPPORT RECEIVED

The beneficiary found the Career Chain advisor who he met with was helpful and professional in terms of the initial support they provided following his meeting with them and during their follow up conversations on the phone. However, in the beneficiary's experience, the project was poor in following up on the support and training offered:

“They [Career Chain staff] are lovely people. They are great at the set up stage and for people who get training - brilliant, but they didn’t deliver in my case so I would give them a 0/10 score”.

IMPACT OF CAREER CHAIN

Since engaging with the Career Chain project, the beneficiary has not been able to find full-time employment that suits his skills and experience. Over the last few months, he has been working on a succession of temporary contracts to secure an income; although he is earning approximately half the salary he had eighteen months ago.

Although the beneficiary welcomed the support he received to develop his CV, due to the fact that he was unable to secure support for training through Career Chain, he found it difficult to attribute any positive impact arising from his involvement in the project.

THE FUTURE

The beneficiary did not have a positive experience of Career Chain, and would not recommend the service to anybody else. However, he thought that the principle of the project was positive in that it represents a valuable service for those who have either been made, or are facing redundancy.

The beneficiary is still keen to complete the Part P Electrical Training course, but has not been able to fund the training through other means.

CASE STUDY 6 - BENEFICIARY PROFILE

Gender/ Age: Male, 23

Support received: Career advice and guidance

Date support was accessed: September 2009

Sector: (Engineering/ construction): Construction

DESCRIBING THE STARTING POINT

In September 2009, the beneficiary was put under notice of redundancy from his job as a driver for a waste food disposal company, which he had held for three years. He was made redundant in October 2009.

ACCESSING CAREER CHAIN AND THE SUPPORT RECEIVED

The beneficiary was referred to the Career Chain project by Jobcentre Plus. He first engaged with the service in September 2009 whilst under notice of redundancy from his previous employer.

The beneficiary had a telephone conversation with a Career Chain advisor, who offered him support through a one-to-one advice and guidance session and advised him that he could apply for funding to undertake a mini Dumper Truck course (a short course in the operation of dumper trucks).

The Dumper Truck training course covers themes such as safety awareness, healthy and safety, a practical introduction to the machine, operating processes, and loading/unloading. Upon completion of the Dumper Truck training course, the beneficiary will be issued with a Construction Plant Certification Scheme (CPCS) Card, which will open up more opportunities to work in the sector.

Following his telephone conversation with Career Chain, the beneficiary understood that he would be contacted again and invited to attend a face to face meeting with a Career Chain advisor to receive the advice and guidance offered to him and to fill in an application for funding. However, the beneficiary did not hear from Career Chain for two months.

Although the Career Chain advisor did eventually call back to inform the beneficiary that he would be eligible for funding support and to arrange a time for an advisory session, in the intervening period he had secured employment as a driver with another firm. Despite still wanting to attend the training course, the beneficiary turned down the offer from Career Chain as he did not want to jeopardise his new employment.

The Beneficiary is now out of work again and currently receiving assistance from his local Jobcentre Plus office, who have confirmed that they will support him to undertake the Dump Truck training course. The beneficiary has looked into the jobs available to him should he gain his CPCS Card and is confident that, once received, he will be able to gain employment locally.

VIEWS ON THE SUPPORT RECEIVED

Although the beneficiary highlighted that the Career Chain advisor he spoke to was helpful, and approachable he felt let down by the delays experienced in his initial request to meet with an advisor, and in completing a funding application for training.

"I felt that the advisors could have been more pro-active in following up with me".

IMPACT OF CAREER CHAIN

Generally speaking, the beneficiary felt that the process he went through with Career Chain has equipped him with a greater understanding of the support available to him, and has underlined the need for him to be more pro-active in order to achieve his future goals. As a result, he has been more pro-active in following up with Jobcentre Plus and is due to meet with them at the end of April 2010 to confirm his enrolment on a Dumper Truck training course.

On balance, however, the beneficiary found it difficult to identify any tangible impact arising from his involvement in the Career Chain project. The delays experienced in accessing support for funding meant that by the time support was confirmed, the training was no longer relevant to his needs as he had found alternative employment.

THE FUTURE

Based on his experience, the beneficiary would not recommend the Career Chain service to anyone else. This is due to project staff taking too long to follow up on his support in completing a funding application for training. On reflection, however, the beneficiary did feel that a potential success of the project was the range of training courses that could be supported, which helps in assisting people back into work.

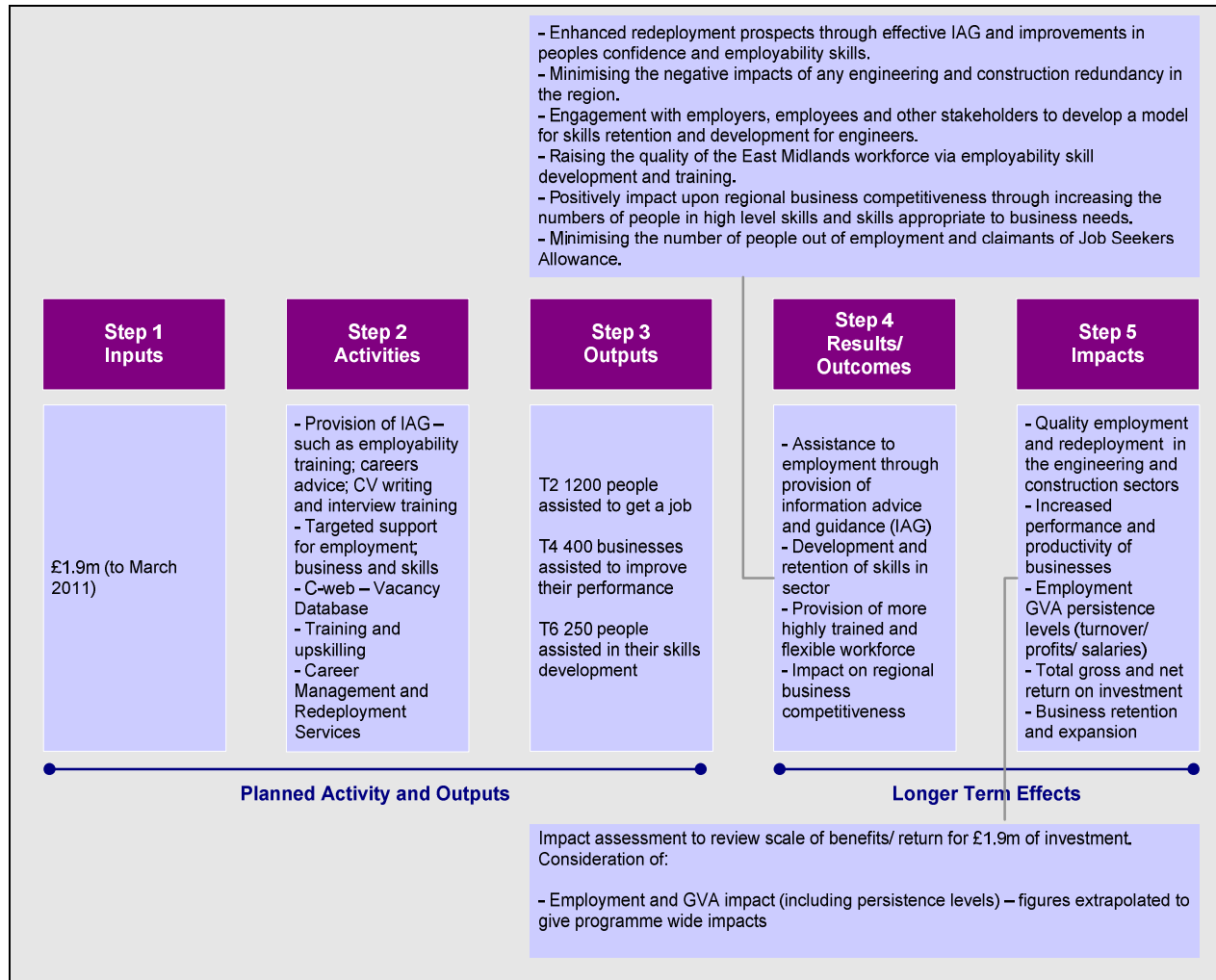
APPENDIX D. LOGIC CHAIN AND MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Logic Model

10.23 Figure 9 presents a Career Chain logic model which links outcomes with project activities/ processes and its original rationale. It will be populated and refined by *ekosgen* during the course of the first phase of the evaluation. The logic model is essentially a visual and systematic way to present and share an understanding of the relationship between resources, activities and changes, and the results anticipated.

10.24 The development of the logic model will be supported by the evaluation framework which explores the Career Chain process through a quantitative and qualitative assessment of sectoral performance and provides a tool for assessing the Strategic Added Value (SAV) and net impact elements of the evaluation.

Figure 15: Career Chain Logic Model



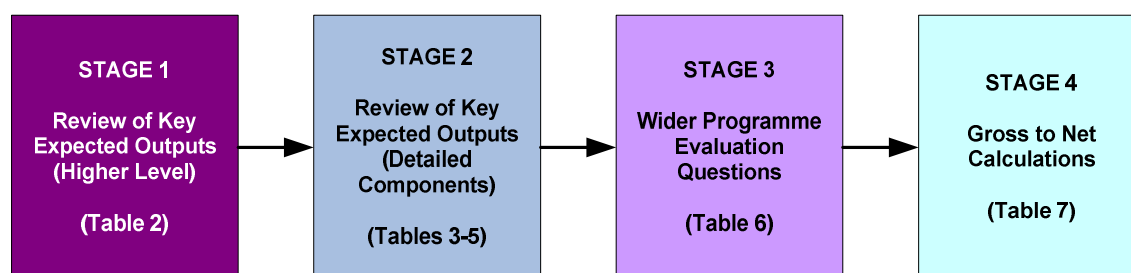
The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

10.25 This Framework has been designed to ensure that the evaluation correctly records the outputs of Career Chain, is IEF compliant in relation to the tracking of net impact and Strategic Added Value, and identifies unexpected outputs and impacts, both positive and negative. Measuring the progress of Career Chain effectively is a key part of our work.

10.26 The Framework outlines the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) against which the impact of the project can be measured. More specifically it outlines the type of information required to report on the KPIs and the way in which this information will be collected. The Framework is able to act as a point of reference for the Steering Group, *emda*, the NE Group and *ekosgen* that will help to ensure the successful tracking of impact throughout the evaluation.

10.27 As demonstrated in Figure 10, the Framework has four key stages:

Figure 16: Structure of the Proposed Evaluation Framework



Stage 1: Review of Key Outputs (Higher Level)

10.28 The higher level outputs are: T2: Employment Support; T4: Business Support; and T6: Skills. The associated KPIs and output targets are as detailed in the project contract document (expanded due to the addition of construction).

10.29 Table 2 outlines the KPIs that are attached to each output target. These will be monitored by the NE Group throughout the course of the project.

Stage 2: A Review of Key Outputs (Detailed Components)

10.30 A detailed review of the components of the key outputs provides *ekosgen* with an opportunity to explore performance with a greater degree of granularity. For example, whilst the T2 target shows the number of people assisted to get a job, Stage 2 of the evaluation framework reviews whether beneficiaries have successfully found employment following this assistance and if so, the nature and quality of this employment. The evaluation framework for Stage 2 has been presented through 3 tables; one for each of three outputs (T2, T4, T6).

10.31 Tables 3 to 5 outline the additional KPIs that the evaluation will measure. The information we propose to collect differentiates, where possible, between the types of assistance provided through the project. This stage will be led by information collected by the NE Group, although will be supported by business and beneficiary survey information collected by *ekosgen*.

Stage 3: Wider Project Evaluation Questions

10.32 Stage 3 identifies our approach to collecting the information required to fully address *emda's* research brief. The evaluation framework for Stage 3 considers questions around four key areas: Career Chain aims, objectives and justification; Career Chain operation; Career Chain effectiveness; and the creation of a forward strategy.

10.33 Table 6 aligns the data to be collected with the key questions the evaluation will seek to answer. This table also outlines which questions will be covered in the interim and final evaluation reports.

Stage 4: Gross to Net Calculations

10.34 Stage 4 outlines a framework for the SAV and net impact elements of the evaluation. These parts of the evaluation are largely the responsibility of *ekosgen* although the collection of appropriate data to record leverage will partly be undertaken as part of the routine recording of Management Information (MI) conducted by the NE Group.

10.35 Table 7 again records the type of information that will be needed to evidence each element of impact, the mode of collection assigned to this information and the frequency with which the information will be collected.

Table 25: STAGE 1 - Review of Key Outputs (Higher Level)

Type of Impact	KPI	Output Target by end of project	Associated Outcomes	Type of Information	Mode of collection	Frequency of collection
Employment Support	T2. Number of people assisted to get a job	1200	Retention of skills in sector	People count as per project records	- NE Group – monthly monitoring and returns	Monthly
Business Support	T4. Number of businesses assisted to improve their performance	400	Impact on regional business competitiveness	Business count as per project records	- NE Group – monthly monitoring and returns	Monthly
Skills Support	T6. Number of people assisted in their skills development	250	Retention of skills in the sector and region Skills support to secure new employment Increased flexibility of the workforce.	People count as per project records	- NE Group – monthly monitoring and returns - NE Group – Skills and training needs analysis form	Monthly

Table 26: STAGE 2 – Review of Key Outputs (Detailed Components) – T2 Employment Support

Impact	KPI/ Key activities	Associated Outcomes	Type of Information and outcome measures	Mode of collection		Frequency of collection
				ekosgen	NE Group	
Type of T2 Employment Support	- Number of people assisted through IAG according to type of support received (for example, careers advice, CV writing, interview training)	- Retention of skills in sector - Impact on regional business competitiveness	- Career Chain beneficiary Action/ Follow Up Visit Form - People count as per project records - Establish the nature of original barriers		- Grant Claim and Monitoring Form submission	Monthly
	- Number of people assisted through using the C-Web service (job search/ job matching)	Retention of skills in sector	- Perceived impact of C-Web in assisting recruitment problems	- Beneficiary survey	- NE Group data relating to the number of existing C-Web personal users and the number of new personal users registering to use the service each month	- <i>ekosgen</i> - 6 intervals throughout project evaluation - NE Group – Monthly
Intensity of T2 Employment Support	Demand/ effectiveness and usage of C-Web job matching service	Retention of skills in sector	Monitoring information from NE Group		- Grant Claim and Monitoring Form submission	Monthly
	- The number of IAG assists according to the intensity of support	Retention of skills in sector	- Monitoring of the number of assists received by beneficiaries - Monitoring of the intensity of each assist in terms of its duration		- Grant Claim and Monitoring Form submission	Monthly
Quality of T2 Employment Assists	Number of people who have successfully found employment following T2 support	Retention of employment skills in the sector and region	- Movement from business assists into positive employment - Tracking qualitative benefits - Enhanced employment/ redeployment and employability skills	- Beneficiary survey - Case life histories	- Tracking of individuals	- NE Group – tracking of beneficiaries at 3 month and 5 month intervals post intervention to establish longer term impacts - <i>ekosgen</i> – beneficiary surveys at 6 intervals throughout project evaluation
	Type of employment/ company beneficiaries enter into	Career aspirations/ decision to stay in the	- Type and suitability of employment	- Beneficiary survey - Case life histories	- Tracking of individuals	- NE Group – tracking of beneficiaries at 3 month and 5

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Impact	KPI/ Key activities	Associated Outcomes	Type of Information and outcome measures	Mode of collection		Frequency of collection
				<i>ekosgen</i>	NE Group	
		region	- Type and suitability of company			month intervals post intervention to establish longer term impacts - <i>ekosgen</i> – beneficiary surveys at 6 intervals throughout project evaluation
	Quality of the employment that beneficiaries enter into	Career aspirations; decision to stay in the region; job satisfaction	- Perceived prospects of the employment. Factors may include skill level required; salary; and length of employment; and quality of employment - Comparisons to be made between new and previous employment - Is the new employment suited to the skills and experiences of the beneficiary/ does it match their career aspirations?	- Beneficiary survey - Case life histories	- Tracking of individuals	- NE Group – tracking of beneficiaries at 3 month and 5 month intervals post intervention to establish longer term impacts - <i>ekosgen</i> – beneficiary surveys at 6 intervals throughout project evaluation
	Perceived usability of the C-Web vacancy database	- Reduction of recruitment problems in engineering and construction businesses - Impact on regional business competitiveness - Retention of employment skills in the sector and region	- Navigability/ usability - Number and relevance of opportunities in database	- Business and beneficiary surveys	- C-web vacancy database monitoring information	- <i>ekosgen</i> – beneficiary surveys at 6 intervals throughout project evaluation
	- Perception of IAG assist in terms of its quality	- Retention of skills in sector - Beneficiary satisfaction with	- Beneficiary perception of quality of IAG - Was IAG assist needs-led? - To what extent were	- Business and beneficiary surveys		- <i>ekosgen</i> – beneficiary surveys at 6 intervals throughout project evaluation

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Impact	KPI/ Key activities	Associated Outcomes	Type of Information and outcome measures	Mode of collection		Frequency of collection
				<i>ekosgen</i>	NE Group	
		support provided	business/ beneficiary needs fully understood? - Any increases in beneficiary self-confidence?			

Table 27: STAGE 2 – Review of Key Outputs (Detailed Components) – T4 Business Support

Impact	KPI/ Key activities	Associated Outcomes	Type of Information and outcome measures	Mode of collection		Frequency of collection
				<i>ekosgen</i>	NE Group	
Type of T4 Business Assists	- Provision of flexible and needs-led support or advice to businesses (this may take place through, for example, face to face or telephone consultations, conferences, workshops or web-based dialogue).	Impact on regional business competitiveness	Letter signed by businesses confirming that support or advice was provided (this must constitute a minimum of 2hrs of support to be recognised as an output)		- Grant Claim and Monitoring Form submission	Monthly
	- Number of businesses using the C-Web Vacancy Database	- Reduction of recruitment problems in engineering and construction businesses - Retention of skills in sector	- How many businesses are using the C-Web Vacancy database, how effective do businesses perceive the service to be and what would be its future relevance - Monitoring information from NE Group	- Business survey	- Data relating to the number of existing C-Web business users and the number of new business users registering to use the service each month - Grant Claim and Monitoring Form submission	- <i>ekosgen</i> - 6 intervals throughout project evaluation - NE Group – Monthly
Intensity of T4 Business Assists	Amount of funding spent on business support/ cost of support	Impact on regional business competitiveness	Profile of <i>emda</i> spend		- Grant Claim and Monitoring Form submission	Monthly
Quality of T4 Business Assists	Persistence of recruitment problems	Reduction in recruitment problems attributable to <i>emda</i> spend	- Nature of the recruitment problems - Perceived impact of C-Web in assisting recruitment problems	- Business survey		- <i>ekosgen</i> - 6 intervals throughout project evaluation

Table 28 STAGE 2 – Review of Key Outputs (Detailed Components) – T6 Skills Support

Impact	KPI/ Key activities	Associated Outcomes	Type of Information and outcome measures	Mode of collection		Frequency of collection
				<i>ekosgen</i>	NE Group	
Type of T6 Skills Support Assists	- Number of people receiving a training needs analysis	Identification of essential training needs for redeployment that cannot be funded elsewhere	- Career Chain Skills and Training Needs Analysis Form - People count as per project records		- Grant Claim and Monitoring Form submission - Client case files - Skills and training needs analysis form	Monthly
	- Number of referrals to Train to Gain, Jobcentre Plus or other publicly funded bodies who can deliver the necessary training requirements, skills supports or assists	Provision of training support through a positive referral	People count as per project records		- Grant Claim and Monitoring Form submission - Client case files	Monthly
	- Number of people receiving top-up skills to support redeployment, where not available elsewhere	Individuals assisted to find employment Topping up necessary skills to secure new employment. Increased flexibility of the workforce.	Nature of top-up skills; fit between top up skills and career/ employment aspirations.	- Beneficiary and business survey - Case life histories	- Grant Claim and Monitoring Form submission	- NE Group - Monthly - <i>ekosgen</i> - 6 intervals throughout project evaluation
Intensity of T6 Skills Support Assists	Proportion of training budget spent on essential top-up skills/ cost per individual support	Individuals assisted to find employment. Topping up necessary skills to secure new employment. Increased flexibility of the workforce.	Profile of <i>emda</i> spend	- Business survey	- Grant Claim and Monitoring Form submission	- NE Group - Ongoing – monthly - <i>ekosgen</i> - 6 intervals throughout project evaluation
Quality of T6 Skills Support	- To what extent do beneficiaries perceive that the top-up skills support received was appropriate	- Enhanced redeployment prospects	Perceived benefits of essential top-up skills support received	- Beneficiary survey - Case life histories		- <i>ekosgen</i> - 6 intervals throughout project evaluation

Impact	KPI/ Key activities	Associated Outcomes	Type of Information and outcome measures	Mode of collection		Frequency of collection
				<i>ekosgen</i>	NE Group	
Assists	to their needs?	- Minimising the negative impacts of any regional redundancies				

Table 29: STAGE 3 - Wider Project Evaluation Questions

	Evaluation Question	Reporting Information		Interim or final evaluation?
		<i>ekosgen</i>	NE Group	
Career Chain, Aims, Objectives and Justification	What is the effectiveness of Career Chain in terms of preparation, purpose, aims, objectives, funding agreements, review, updating and exit/ succession strategies?	- Stakeholder consultations - Business and beneficiary surveys	- NE Group - PR materials	Interim and final
	As the economic climate unfolds, to what extent is Career Chain a valid investment?	- Stakeholder consultations - Desk-based review of policy context and sectoral performance - Business and beneficiary surveys		Interim and final
	What is the context and continued relevance of the aims, objectives and activities of Career Chain? Would businesses and beneficiaries have accessed alternative forms of support in the absence of Career Chain?	- Stakeholder consultations - Business and beneficiary surveys - Desk-based review of policy context and sectoral performance	- Company participation and evaluation forms - Beneficiary participation and evaluation forms	Interim and final
	To what extent has the project moved towards achieving its objectives and those of its partners? What obstacles, if any, have restricted its performance and success?	- Stakeholder consultations - Business and beneficiary surveys	- NE Group - Client case files - NE Group - Grant Claim and Monitoring Form submission - NE Group - Steering Group/ KIT meeting minutes	Interim and final
	What is the role, effectiveness and contributions of funding partners in supporting the delivery process?	- Stakeholder consultations - Desk-based review of contextual documents such steering group minutes	- NE Group - Steering Group/ KIT meeting minutes	Interim and final
Career Chain Operation	What is the effectiveness and relevance of the Career Chain structure and governance processes, including the role of the Career Chain Steering Group?	- Business and beneficiary surveys - Stakeholder consultations	- Company participation and evaluation forms - Beneficiary participation and evaluation forms	Interim and final
	How effective has the Project's model for delivery	- Stakeholder consultations		Interim and final

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	Evaluation Question	Reporting Information		Interim or final evaluation?
		<i>ekosgen</i>	NE Group	
	been?	- Business and beneficiary surveys		
Career Chain Effectiveness	What has been the effectiveness of Career Chain's expansion into the construction sector?	- Stakeholder consultations - Business and beneficiary surveys		Interim and final
	To what extent has Career Chain helped to improve co-operation and efficiency of working between funding partners and stakeholders?	- Stakeholder consultations	- Memorandums of Understanding developed with partners - Steering Group/ KIT meeting minutes - Monitoring visit records	Interim and final
	What Career Chain activities fall outside of its original aims, objectives and funding agreements? What is their fit at a strategic, operational and stakeholder/ partnership level and within contractual obligations?	- Desk-based review of contextual documents such as the original funding application - Stakeholder consultations		Interim and final
	How effective is the C-Web Vacancy database? What obstacles, if any, have restricted its performance and success? To what extent does the service represent value for money?	- Stakeholder consultations - Business and beneficiary surveys		Interim and final
Creation of a Forward Strategy	In what ways could the project's operational delivery be enhanced? Are there any policy lessons or elements of good practice arising from the project that could be transferred or rolled out more widely?	- Business and beneficiary surveys - Stakeholder consultations		Final
	How should aims, objectives, activities and funding be carried forward and what changes are necessary in light of the changed economic landscape and what funding options may be necessary to continue this support?	- Business and beneficiary surveys - Stakeholder consultations		Final

Table 30: STAGE 4 - Framework for Gross to Net Calculations

Type of Impact	Element	Commentary	Type of Information	Mode of collection		Frequency of collection and lead
				<i>ekosgen</i>	NE Group	
Net Impact	Level of substitution	The extent to which businesses and beneficiaries of the Project proceeded with one form of action as a result of the support, as opposed to a different one.	MI Information	- Stakeholder consultations - Business and surveys	Monthly monitoring and returns	- Interim and final reporting stages (<i>ekosgen</i>)
	Level of displacement	Explores the extent to which one business benefitting from Career Chain has displaced benefits from a business not taking up the support. NB: Lower levels of displacement are expected in the short-term due to the economic recession.	Agreed net impact adjustment factors	- Stakeholder consultations - Business and beneficiary surveys	- Monthly monitoring and returns	- Interim and final reporting stages (<i>ekosgen</i>)
	Level of leakage	Explores degree to which benefits leave the region (people seeking employment elsewhere for instance)	Agreed net impact adjustment factors	- Stakeholder consultations	- Monthly monitoring and returns	- Interim and final reporting stages (<i>ekosgen</i>)
	Level of deadweight	Could (and would) businesses and beneficiaries have accessed similar support from any other source, or does Career Chain offer something unique.	Agreed net impact adjustment factors	- Stakeholder consultations - Business and beneficiary surveys	- Monthly monitoring and returns	- Interim and final reporting stages (<i>ekosgen</i>)
	Multiplier ratios	How much increased employer and employee spend has been generated by the Project and how much can be expected in the future? NB: Lower levels of employer and employee spend are expected in the short-term due to the economic recession.	Agreed net impact adjustment factors	- Stakeholder consultations	- Monthly monitoring and returns	- Interim and final reporting stages
Strategic Added Value	Strategic Leadership / Catalytic Role	To what extent has the Project created confidence in the prospects for economic growth and in the capacity of partners and stakeholders to realise the potential for growth and improved sub-regional performance.	Stakeholder views	- Stakeholder consultations		- Interim and final reporting stages (<i>ekosgen</i>)

Type of Impact	Element	Commentary	Type of Information	Mode of collection		Frequency of collection and lead
				<i>ekosgen</i>	NE Group	
	Strategic Influence	To what extent has the Project generated wider partnerships of mutual benefit to the growth prospects/objectives of each partner.	Stakeholder views	- Stakeholder consultations		- Interim and final reporting stages (<i>ekosgen</i>)
	Leverage	To what extent has the Project aligned funding and other resources from partners and stakeholders to avoid duplication.	MI Information Stakeholder views	- Stakeholder consultations	- Monthly monitoring and returns	- Interim and final reporting stages (<i>ekosgen</i>)
	Synergy	To what extent has the Project reduced duplication of service provision from regional partners.	Stakeholder views Desk-based strategic alignment assessment	- Stakeholder consultations	- Monthly monitoring and returns	- Interim and final reporting stages (<i>ekosgen</i>)
	Engagement	To what extent has the Project introduced quality and innovation in partner interventions through the transfer of good practice, the development and use of benchmarks and the adoption of new processes and methods.	Stakeholder views	- Stakeholder consultations	- Monthly monitoring and returns	- Interim and final reporting stages (<i>ekosgen</i>)