

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO**  
**2016-2017 Additional Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome Number: 3.1 Disability, Mental Health and Carers Question No: SQ17-000093**

**Topic: DES Funding**

**Hansard page: Written**

**Senator Rachel Siewert asked:**

Productivity Commission data indicates that the average DES funding level has fallen by 18 per cent between 2010 and 2014 and another 5 per cent in from 2014 to 2016. Will the Department ensure that there will be no further decreases in funding from the current program expenditure (i.e. \$800 million per year)?

**Answer:**

The Department does not determine the level of outlays on DES that will occur in any given period.

DES is a demand-driven program: it provides funding for as many people as are assessed as eligible. Total outlays on the Disability Employment Services (DES) program are an outcome of the numbers and kinds of participants in the program, and the numbers and kinds of outcomes achieved for those participants. These can also be affected by external factors such as the strength of the economy and levels of general unemployment.