

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates 26 May-6 June 2014

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Outcome/Program: 1.1 Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: School Attendance Officers

Senator: Senator the Hon Jan McLucas

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Question:

1. How many of the School Attendance Officers that are no longer with the programme do not currently hold a job?
2. Under the Government's School Attendance Policy, what support is required to be provided to people exiting employment?
3. What supports are in place for School Attendance Officers who are experiencing difficulties in their position?

Answer:

1. School Attendance Officers are employed by service providers and not by the Australian Government. Accordingly the Department does not have information about the destination of people who cease work as School Attendance Officers.
2. Where a person is employed as a School Attendance Officer by a provider organisation, it would be expected that they would be provided with the normal supports that that provider gives to its other employees according to the terms and conditions in the relevant award or agreement.
3. School Attendance Supervisors assist and guide School Attendance Officers in performing their duties. Training workshops and recalls were conducted across the majority of the Remote School Attendance Strategy sites between March and June 2014 for School Attendance Officers and Supervisors which, in addition to providing information and building their skills, provided forums for School Attendance Officers and Supervisors to ask questions and to discuss their roles and the challenges in their jobs.

A Workforce Development Strategy has also been put in place which will help identify skill needs and provide training to School Attendance Officers and Supervisors over the next eighteen months.

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School Attendance Officers and Supervisors have been provided with a range of information to assist them in their duties such as fact sheets, a resource kit and a parent and carer guide.