

**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES 2008-09**

Outcome/Agency 7

DEEWR Question No. EW1184_09

Senator Cash asked on 26 February 2009, EEWR Hansard page 49.

Question

- (i) Have any employment service providers closed sites in the last 12 months?
- (ii) If so, where have these closures occurred?
- (iii) Have any employment service providers requested changes to their trading hours?
- (iv) Have any Job Network providers handed back their contracts?
- (v) Have any other providers handed back their contract?

Answer

- (i) Yes. For the period 1 January to 31 December 2008, departmental records indicate that 16 individual providers closed a total of 30 sites throughout Australia. Employment services are currently delivered from approximately 1800 sites nationally. Requests from providers to close sites may occur for many reasons such, the provider has initiated a request to close a site and transfer their business to another site due to a sale or restructure within the provider or the provider has voluntarily/involuntarily been placed in the hands of an administrator.

Irrespective of the reason for the request, any request from a provider to close a site is considered on a case-by-case basis and a decision is made by the department in the best interests of job seekers.

- (ii) A breakdown of the data by state is in the table below.

State	Number of providers*	Number of sites
ACT	0	0
NSW	0	0
NT	2	2
QLD	4	10
SA	3	4
TAS	0	0
VIC	6	11
WA	2	3

Note 1: Of the 16 providers who closed sites, one provider closed sites in more than one state.

Note 2: Closures reported in the answer (i) and (ii) do not include Disability Employment Network services, Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Job Placement only licences providers.

Note 3: There are also around 1450 sites delivering Disability Employment Network services, Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme.

- (iii) DEEWR does not keep consolidated data on such requests which are usually negotiated between providers and their local Account Manager based on the demand for the service by job seekers in the local area. When reviewing a request to vary trading hours, Account Managers are required to assess the request against a number of key considerations aimed at ensuring that the proposed changes do not result in a reduction of service to job seekers.
- (iv) Yes. For the period 1 January to 31 December 2008, two providers approached the department to hand back their Job Network contracts.
- (v) Yes. Fifteen providers approached the department to hand back their contracts between 1 January and 31 December 2008 as outlined in the following table. This is in addition to the two providers who handed back their Job Network contracts listed in the response above.

Program	Number of providers
Community Work Coordinator Services	1
New Enterprise Incentive Scheme	1
Personal Support Programme	1
Job Placement Licence	7
Indigenous STEP ERS	5

Please note that sites that were closed as a result of a provider handing back their contract with the department, and where another provider has not taken over service delivery at that site, have been included in the table at (ii) above.