

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2011-2012**

Outcome 1 - Early Childhood Education and Child Care

DEEWR Question No. EW1175_12

Senator Back asked on 16 February 2012, Hansard page 16

Question

Staffing levels

Senator BACK: Also, too, I am interested in knowing the number of centres that do not have a four year degree qualified person on staff. Is that information you can provide me with on notice? Ms Taylor: I will take it on notice, but I am not sure that we have that information about the staffing levels in all sorts of centres. There are requirements that are coming in and being phased in through the national quality measure that go to the qualification level of staff, including the teaching degree. As part of the implementation of the national quality framework, though, there has been a grandfathering of the three year trained teachers who are in the system at the moment. Ms Caldwell: And again, the department conducted the national workforce census as well, and a copy of that was provided to the committee on notice at the last hearing also. Senator BACK: In that update I would be very keen to also receive a breakdown in terms of metropolitan, non-metropolitan, regional and rural, of course.

Answer

The Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011) which underpin the Education and Care Services National Law (2011), contain provisions to ensure early childhood teachers who were deemed qualified under former jurisdictional arrangements, continue to be recognised as qualified under the National Quality Framework. This includes people with three year teacher qualifications.

Additionally if, immediately before 1 January 2012, a person was enrolled in a qualification published by the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) under Regulation 137, the person is taken to hold an approved early childhood teaching qualification when they complete that qualification. This ensures that students who enrolled in a qualification prior to 1 January 2012 are not disadvantaged.

The Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) National Workforce Census, which was conducted in May 2010 shows that there were an estimated 6,282 3 and 4 year qualified teachers working in 3,652 long day care services at the time of the Census.

A full breakdown of the number of long day care services with qualified teachers, by remoteness category is at Table 1.

Table 1: Long day care services with a three or four year qualified teacher, by remoteness category.

Remoteness category	Services with a 3 or 4 year qualified teacher	Total LDC services
Major city	2,809	4,259
Inner regional	618	982
Outer regional	194	444
Remote/very remote	30	96
<i>Total</i>	3,652	5,781

Source: 2010 ECEC National Workforce Census (unpublished, weighted data).

Note: Under the provisions of the National Quality Agenda, a range of qualifications, including 3 and 4 years degrees, are recognised as early childhood teachers. Services may have other staff whose qualifications are recognised under the transition arrangements.

The Australian Government has been working closely with the states and territories to develop and implement initiatives that will ensure the early childhood workforce is able to meet demand. This includes encouraging early childhood teachers into the ECEC sector with a focus on regional and remote areas and providing an additional 1500 university places.