SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2009-10

Outcome 4

DEEWR Question No. EW0210_10

Senator Cash asked on 17 June 2009, EEWR Hansard page 48.

Question

Early Access to Intensive Employment Services.

Senator CASH—Can the department provide a copy of the revised streams for job seekers? Are you revising the streams for job seekers? You have stream 1 to stream 4, but changes have been made in terms of who can go into the streams?
Ms Golightly—In terms of the newly retrenched workers, there was a change announced in February, yes.
Senator CASH—Are you able to provide that information?
Ms Golightly—We can provide you with information on what the change was, yes. Basically, anybody who has lost their job as a result of the economic situation is eligible for immediate access to stream 2 whereas before they may have gone, depending on their level of disadvantage, into stream 1. But that announcement made an automatic entry for them into stream 2, which is a higher level of assistance for them. But it also means that providers have higher outcome payments and a greater incentive, of course, to work with them.

Answer

The services to be provided under each Stream have not changed.

The Government has committed a further $298.5 million to ensure that from 1 April 2009, people who have lost their job due to redundancy, retrenchment, operational downsizing or other reasons that can be attributed to a downturn in business are eligible for immediate access to intensive employment services. The new measure will cease on 31 March 2011.

From 1 April to 30 June 2009, early access to employment services was provided through existing Job Network services, with workers who lost their jobs due to the economic downturn able to access Job Search Training immediately, instead of waiting a minimum of three months. Providers were able to purchase services and training for job seekers through a $550 Job Seeker Account credit.

From 1 July 2009, this assistance is provided through Job Services Australia. Workers who lose their job due to the economic downturn will be placed into Stream 2 or higher and receive immediate personalised assistance, career advice, referral to available training places and job search help. They have access to a personal Employment Pathway Plan that will set out the services and training that they need to find and keep a job. The Employment Pathway Plan is underpinned by a $550 credit to pay for the specific assistance that the job seeker needs.