

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

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2010-2011**

Outcome 3 - Higher Education

DEEWR Question No.EW0314_11

Senator Cormann asked on 2/06/2010, Hansard page 41.

Question

SKILLED OCCUPATION'S LIST

I have read articles about the minister's home state of Victoria where the union over there, the Ambulance Employees Australia union, and Mr McGee keep talking about serious shortages in paramedics and ambulance officers. How come that was removed from the Skilled Occupations List? Mr Shreeve—I would need to have a look at ambulance officers in detail on notice but it could be that in some cases some occupations are covered by other occupations. An ambulance officer's qualifications might be based within some other medical professional, that is, a nurse, and they are still on the list.

Answer

Skills Australia has provided the following response:

Ambulance Officers and Paramedics

The occupation group 4111 Ambulance Officers and Paramedics was *not* included on either the original Specialised Occupations List (SpOL) developed by Skills Australia for workforce development planning – nor the Skilled Occupations List (SOL), which was provided to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship for General Skilled Migration (GSM) purposes.

Ambulance Officers and Paramedics did not satisfy a sufficient number of criteria in order to be included on these lists. In particular, they did not meet the criteria for 'long lead time', which was an essential requirement for inclusion on the Skilled Occupations List.

Skilled Occupation Criteria

Long-lead time

Ambulance Officers and Paramedics do not meet the criteria for long lead time. This criteria requires a training commitment equivalent to four years' of university study or more than 1000 hours' of VET study:

- Employment as a paramedic generally requires the completion of a university qualification of three years' study (full-time equivalent), such as a Bachelor of Clinical Practice (Paramedic); or completion of a VET qualification such as a

Diploma in Paramedical Science. Research shows that 100 per cent of VET enrolments in 2008 were in courses of 800 hours or less.

- In some states and territories, training as an ambulance officer or paramedic can also be achieved through a vocational pathway, which requires approximately 12 months as a trainee paramedic (on-road training) and a further two years of practical experience as a paramedic intern.

High use

Ambulance Officers and Paramedics do not meet the criteria for high use, which indicates that there is an insufficient match between intended versus destination occupation:

- While there are almost no people currently employed in the occupation without the requisite qualifications (97.5 per cent), the match between intended versus destination occupation was below 40 per cent (at the major group occupation level) for VET graduates. The criteria requires a match of 50 per cent or more of at the occupation group level. While there was a strong degree of 'match' for university graduates, Ambulance Officers and Paramedics did not meet an adequate number of criteria overall in order to be considered 'high use'.

High risk

Ambulance Officers and Paramedics meet the criteria for high risk/high disruption, as the occupation group has licensing and registration requirements, and is important to meet government priority policies. However, as it did not meet either long lead time or high use, it was not eligible for inclusion on the SOL or SpOL lists.

Ambulance Officer and Paramedics were included on the previous ENSOL list, and employer-sponsored migration under the 457 visa program is available to meet employer needs