

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

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 2009-10**

Outcome 4

DEEWR Question No. EW784_10

Senator Boyce provided in writing.

Question

Indigenous Employment

The provision of employment services is now being undertaken through the Indigenous Employment Services (IEP). However, this service does not provide community based activities to develop participant skills.

What has happened to the participants of the CDEP who are not in private employment? Are they still working on community activities under the transition arrangements, or are they simply being paid money?

Answer

The reformed Indigenous Employment Program (IEP) is not the sole or principal employment service for Indigenous Australians. The reformed IEP welcomes proposals for community based activities to develop participant skills.

Indigenous Australians participate in the full range of Australian Government employment services. The majority of Indigenous job seekers are serviced through Job Services Australia. Indigenous Australians also receive services through Disability Employment or Vocational Rehabilitation services based on individual circumstances.

Through Job Services Australia, all jobseekers receive an individualised Employment Pathway Plan tailored to their needs, and supported by the Employment Pathway Fund, to receive the right mix of tailored vocational and non-vocational assistance, training and work experience to build skills and work readiness and to find and sustain employment. Activities include a wide range of community based and other activities to develop participant skills. Examples of work experience activities include training, Work for the Dole, participation in the Community Development Employment Project program (CDEP) where it operates, assistance to develop a business through the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme, and voluntary work, part-time employment or work experience placement in an enterprise or social enterprise. Service Level Agreements are in place between all Job Services Australia providers and local CDEP organisations in locations where CDEP operates.

The reformed IEP provides additional opportunities through project-based funding to employers and organisations for projects to assist the employment of Indigenous Australians and to develop sustainable Indigenous businesses and economic opportunities in urban, regional and remote communities. The Guidelines for the reformed IEP welcome proposals by communities for local community based activities and IEP plays a significant role in local community plans. Indigenous Australian job seekers may be referred by Job Services Australia to projects funded through the IEP, and to CDEP projects, while also receiving ongoing support and assistance from their employment service provider.

The Dept of Family, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs has portfolio responsibility for administering the CDEP program.