

Senate Select Committee on COVID-19

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Australian Government response to the COVID-19 pandemic - 06 August 2020

Outcome: Employment

Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ20-000139

Senator Rachel Siewert provided in writing.

jobactive caseload by demographic data

Question

Please provide an updated version of QON IQ20-000065: current jobactive caseload by demographic data including gender, age group, employment services program, disability status, First Nations status, and payment type.

Answer

jobactive caseload as at 31 July 2020.

Demographic	Number
Gender	
Male	749,462
Female	696,557
Participant Cohorts	
Indigenous	105,710
People with Disability	250,353
Age Group	
Age <22	117,098
Age 22-24	144,390
Age 25-29	197,033
Age 30-39	324,693
Age 40-49	283,942
Age 50-54	119,880
Age 55-59	112,533
Age 60+	146,450
Allowance Type	
JobSeeker Payment	1,270,554
Youth Allowance	115,970
Parenting Payment	36,853
Disability Support Pension	1,692
Carer Payment	1,254
Other Allowance	4,584
Income Support Claim Pending	4,695
Not Receiving an Income Support Payment	10,417
Employment Services Program	
Online Employment Services ¹	395,506
jobactive provider servicing	988,540
New Employment Services Trial	61,973
Total	1,446,019

¹ Some participants in the Online Employment Service are undergoing further assessment and will be transitioned to jobactive provider servicing or another program such as Disability Employment Services or Transition to Work.

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Outcome: Employment

Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ20-000140

Senator Rachel Siewert provided in writing.

New jobactive participants by stream

Question

Please provide an updated version of QON IQ20-000063: breakdown of new jobactive participants referred to the program on or after 20 March 2020 by stream.

Answer

New jobactive participants are considered to be those referred to the program on or after 20 March 2020, when referral volumes began to increase significantly. The table below shows the stream distribution of new participants on the caseload as at 31 July 2020.

Stream	Number
Stream A	642,207
Stream B	74,222
Stream C	12,813
Stream A Volunteer	9,657
Stream not determined	122,374
Total	861,273

Notes:

1. The data includes participants in the Online Employment Services Trial, Voluntary Online Employment Services Trial and New Employment Services Trial.
2. Participants whose stream was not determined had yet to complete the Job Seeker Classification Instrument.

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Australian Government response to the COVID-19 pandemic - 06 August 2020

Outcome: Employment

Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ20-000141

Senator Rachel Siewert provided in writing.

jobactive participants completing JSCI

Question

Please provide an updated version of QON IQ20-000064: number of new jobactive participants have completed their JSCI online voluntarily?

Answer

Between 28 March and 31 July 2020 (inclusive), 560,568 participants who are newly referred to employment services have completed their JSCI online.

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Outcome: Employment

Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ20-000142

Senator Rachel Siewert provided in writing.

Communication between jobseekers and jobactive providers

Question

Are you keeping any metrics or doing any analysis on the effectiveness of the communication between jobseekers and jobactive providers?

Answer

Analysis of provider communications with job seekers forms part of the independent audit process required for jobactive organisations to obtain and maintain mandatory certification under the jobactive Quality Assurance Framework. The Department of Education, Skills and Employment's regular performance discussions with senior provider staff also include qualitative investigations and feedback on their organisation's communication and engagement with job seekers.

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Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ20-000143

Senator Rachel Siewert provided in writing.

Complaints about jobactive providers

Question

Please provide a breakdown of the number and nature of complaints the Department received about jobactive providers since the start of the pandemic?

Answer

The table below provides the number of complaints relating to jobactive providers recorded in the Department of Education, Skills and Employment's Employment Services Feedback System received between 20 March 2020 and 31 July 2020.

Topic	Number
Provider Service	1,301
Complaints Process	115
Employment Fund	83
Participation Policy	76
One or more other topics	156
Total Complaints	1,340

Notes:

- 1) 'Provider service' covers a range of issues, such as the adequacy and appropriateness of assistance delivered.
- 2) The total number of complaints is less than the sum of individual topics as complaints may involve more than issue.

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Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ20-000144

Senator Rachel Siewert provided in writing.

Breaches of jobactive deed

Question

Under the jobactive deed, providers are obliged to deliver accurate and consistent advice and information to participants. Failure to meet this obligation may constitute a breach of the deed. If an alleged breach against a provider is substantiated, the department will require the provider to rectify the impact of the breach and reduce the risk of such a breach reoccurring.

1. How many breaches has the Department recorded since the start of the pandemic, broken down by name of provider?
2. How many times has the Department asked providers to undertake rectification action since the start of the pandemic?
3. On how many occasions did providers fail to rectify a breach to the Department's satisfaction and what was the result?

Answer

Between 20 March 2020 and 31 July 2020:

1. no breaches of the jobactive deed were recorded, with a number of investigations by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment (the department) ongoing
2. the department required two providers to undertake rectification action for breaches that occurred prior to 20 March 2020, and
3. the department has been satisfied with the action taken in relation to the breaches outlined above.

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Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ20-000145

Senator Rachel Siewert provided in writing.

Complaints about employment service providers

Question

Is there a centralised database where complaints about employment service providers are held? For example, if a jobseeker complains to the Minister's Office about their provider, is this logged by the Department?

Answer

All contacts, including complaints, to the Department of Education, Skills and Employment's National Customer Service Line are recorded in a centralised database called the Employment Services Feedback System (ESFS). Complaints about employment services providers raised with the Minister's Office may be recorded in ESFS or addressed through correspondence.

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Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ20-000147

Senator Rachel Siewert provided in writing.

Young SPI participants

Question

What additional supports or services are provided to young people who are SPI participants?

Answer

Stronger Participation Incentives (SPI) eligible participants are those aged under 25 who are in receipt of income support and who are assessed as being in Stream A or B.

jobactive providers must provide additional services to SPI participants to help them gain work related skills and find a job. This includes a requirement that they have appointments with SPI participants at least once each month to discuss the job searches that they have undertaken in the previous month, and to assist in identifying additional jobs to which the participant can be referred.

In addition to SPI, the following assistance is available to young people:

Youth Jobs PaTH (Prepare Trial Hire)

Youth Jobs PaTH (PaTH) is an Australian Government employment service that helps young people gain skills and the work experience they need to get and keep a job. PaTH maximises the chances of young Australians under 25 and on income support to get a job.

Employability Skills Training

Employability Skills Training courses help young people get job ready by building skills and improving their chances of getting a job or a PaTH Internship, there are two courses. In course one, participants learn workplace skills including communication skills and problem solving. In course two, participants learn job search skills and receive help to write their resume, job applications and to improve interview skills.

Internship Placements

A PaTH Internship helps young people to get work experience hosted by a business offering a reasonable prospect of employment for the young person. It is a chance for them to show an employer what they can do and how they fit into their business. Young people can select an Internship at a business that interests them, working on activities that match their skills and qualifications. They also receive an extra \$200 a fortnight on top of their income support.

Transition to Work

Transition to Work ensures young people aged 15–24 who do not have year 12 or equivalent receive intensive support from community-based organisations with expertise in helping them to develop their work-like skills. This program is focused on developing a young person's skills, confidence and readiness to enter employment. Providers help them develop practical skills to get a job, connect with education or training, and find and complete work experience placements. They also help young people to find job opportunities in their local area and connect with relevant local community services.

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Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ20-000148

Senator Rachel Siewert provided in writing.

Additional staff for employment service providers

Question

How many additional staff have employment service providers brought on since March 2020 broken down by month?

Answer

This information is not available as employment service providers are not required to report their employee numbers to the Department of Education, Skills and Employment.

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Outcome: Employment

Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ20-000149

Senator Rachel Siewert provided in writing.

Completion of Career Transition Assistance Program

Question

Please provide the number of mature age jobseekers who have commenced, and the number who have completed, the Career Transition Assistance Program since 20 March 2020?

What outcomes have been achieved by those who have completed the program since March 2020?

Answer

Commencements and completions

Between 20 March 2020 to 31 July 2020 there have been 1,601 commencements in the Career Transition Assistance Program (CTA). Of these 804 continue to participate in the program, and 797 have exited the program, including 322 who have completed the program (recorded 75+ hours).

Outcomes

CTA participants have recorded 105 job placements between 20 March 2020 to 31 July 2020, noting a participant may have more than one job placement.

CTA also provides participants with a broad range of support, such as identifying and increasing confidence in their skills and experience, increasing their motivation and resilience to continue looking for work, developing technological and digital skills, building understanding of opportunities available in their local labour market, and better tailoring their job applications to particular industries and employers.

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Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ20-000150

Senator Rachel Siewert provided in writing.

Success of Career Transition Assistance Program

Question

How are you measuring the success of the Career Transition Assistance Program?

Answer

The success of the Career Transition Assistance Program (CTA) is measured against a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for CTA providers that reflect the program objectives; to support mature age people to identify and articulate transferable skills, increase their job readiness and better target their job search to local industries and available jobs, improve digital literacy, and apply for jobs – including online.

These KPI measures include the quality of Career Pathway Assessments, Career Pathway Plans and resumes developed in collaboration with participants, the impact on participants' digital literacy, resilience and confidence, and levels of engagement with local employers and industries.

An evaluation is also assessing whether the Career Transition Assistance Program is achieving the policy objective to build mature-age job seekers' confidence, job search skills and digital literacy, so that they become more competitive in their local labour market.

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Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ20-000151

Senator Rachel Siewert provided in writing.

Placements through Harvest Labour Services

Question

How many people have been placed into work through Harvest Labour Services broken down by each of the 16 delivery regions?

Answer

On 1 July 2020 the Harvest Trail Service replaced the predecessor Harvest Labour Service (HLS).

Placement data for the 16 regions will not be available until after the first quarter of 2020–21.

Data below shows the total harvest positions filled for 11 harvest areas under the previous HLS contract, for the period 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2020:

Table 1 – Harvest Labour Services 1 July 2015 – 30 June 2020

Harvest Area	Positions filled
Adelaide Hills	3,137
Goulburn Valley	13,832
Kununurra	1,831
Mid Murray	7,402
North Burnett	7,259
Riverina	10,914
Riverland	10,103
Southern Queensland	16,266
Sunraysia	16,784
Tablelands	1,887
Top End	2,009
Grand Total	91,424

Note:

- 1) Participants can be placed more than once.

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Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ20-000152

Senator Rachel Siewert provided in writing.

Harvest Labour Services and employment service providers

Question

How are Harvest Labour Services working with mainstream employment service providers to place Australians into seasonable horticultural work?

Please explain how Harvest Labour Services and mainstream employment service providers are both able to claim outcome payments after placing people into horticultural seasonal work.

Answer

On 1 July 2020 the Harvest Trail Service (HTS) replaced the predecessor Harvest Labour Service.

HTS providers collaborate with employers and other employment service providers, such as jobactive, to encourage Australian job seekers to take up seasonal work, as well as to raise job seekers' awareness of work in the horticultural sector and possible career progression opportunities.

From 1 July 2020, both jobactive and HTS providers receive financial incentives of 4, 12 and 26 week outcome payments when Australian job seekers on income support are placed into harvest work. HTS providers source harvest vacancies from growers and screen suitable harvest workers, provide information about accommodation, transport, biosecurity, as well as the terms and conditions of employment, and confirm with employers the suitability of referred job seekers. Jobactive providers facilitate the referral to HTS and provide assistance to job seekers to gain and maintain harvest jobs, addressing identified barriers to employment.

Where an organisation is delivering both HTS and jobactive services (in the same Harvest Area), only one outcome payment is available to be claimed and the provider can choose to claim the outcome under the HTS or the jobactive Deed.

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Department of Education, Skills and Employment Question No. IQ20-000153

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Harvest Labour Service providers

Question

Please list the names of Harvest Labour Service providers who are also providers of other Commonwealth funded employment services.

Answer

On 1 July 2020 the Harvest Trail Service (HTS) replaced the predecessor Harvest Labour Service.

The following HTS providers deliver other Commonwealth funded employment services:

- BEST Employment
- MADEC Australia, and
- Mareeba Shire Job Training Association Incorporated, trading as Quality Innovation Training and Employment (QITE).