

Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace Relations

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2013-2014**

Outcome 3 - Employment

DEEWR Question No. EW0132_14

Senator McKenzie asked on 4 June 2013, Hansard page 39

Question

Gippsland RESJ

Senator McKENZIE: I will just refer you to page 11 of the plan, which talks about the government intending to enter contracts for closure by 30 June 2012, and the impact that that particular government program would have on employment outcomes and training needs of the workforce in Gippsland. Given that the contracts for closure program was abandoned on 5 September 2012, I was just wondering if, as a consequence, the plan needed to be revised. Ms Cornish: There are a number of strategies that the Gippsland RESJ has been working on to try to help in relation to the contracts for closure and that whole issue around clean energy. I can outline what those strategies are. Senator McKENZIE: I am looking at them. I would love to know how they are going against those strategies. Ms Cornish: I might need to take some of that on notice. The information I do have is that some of the strategies that they have listed in the plan to support that goal of Clean Energy Future is that they are working with the DRDA forum in the Latrobe Valley to discuss green skills by the fourth quarter of 2012. They are also supporting specific energy related skills development activities. I might need to take on notice the broader question around achievements. Senator McKENZIE: I would like to actually have an understanding of how those strategies are being met, particularly the one when we were talking about the fourth quarter of 2012. We should know that by now. Ms Cornish: Okay.

Answer

The second edition of the Gippsland Plan was published on 5 August 2013 and is available on the Department of Employment's website. There is no reference to Contracts for Closure in this edition, the Gippsland RESJ Coordinator continues to support the Latrobe Valley Transition Committee to transition the Latrobe Valley economy to a low carbon economy.

The Victorian State Government *Latrobe Valley Industry and Employment Road Map* provides strategic directions for businesses and workers in a 'transitioning energy sector'. The RESJ Coordinator has had discussions with the Regional Project Manager about relevant components of the Road Map and is supporting the implementation of several actions outlined in the Road Map, particularly in Strategic Direction 2, Strengthening the workforce. These include:

- *Supporting Apprentices* by promoting this initiative to local business, Job Services Australia (JSA) providers, Australian Apprenticeship Centres and

other Australian Government education and employment programs to support displaced apprentices.

- *Work and Learning Centre* in Moe by contributing at advisory committee meetings to provide input on Australian Government programs to improve participation of job seekers in the workforce and promote working together for better outcomes.

The Regional Development Australia (RDA) forum in the Latrobe Valley to discuss Green Skills, identified on page 20 of the first edition of the Gippsland RESJ Plan did not occur in the fourth quarter of 2012 and is not planned to go ahead due to the cessation of the Contracts for Closure program. However in November 2012, working with Gippsland JSA providers and the Skilled Group, the RESJ Coordinator in the Gippsland RDA region facilitated three information sessions for Gippsland job seekers on opportunities in the mining and resources sector. The sessions were attended by approximately 250 people.

The RESJ Coordinator also plans to support specific energy-related skills development activities needed for emerging technologies. The RESJ Coordinator has participated in consultations and forums conducted by Brown Coal Innovation Australia with a focus on understanding the use of the resource and potential future for brown coal. The new technologies to support the sustainable use of brown coal will potentially require new skill sets. The RESJ Coordinator plans to facilitate the delivery of a presentation on emerging skills and future career pathways at a careers practitioners meeting by fourth quarter 2013.