

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017

Outcome 1 - Employment

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ16-000776

Senator Cameron asked on 06 May 2016 on proof Hansard page 33

Question

Monitoring of job seekers in Youth Jobs PaTH

Senator CAMERON: On notice, Ms Leon, can you provide details of how the monitoring of these—what are we calling them?

Ms Leon: Job seekers.

Senator CAMERON: They are not interns, are they?

Ms Leon: I do not mind if you want to call them that, if that is an easy shorthand for you.

Senator CAMERON: What are they going to be called in the program?

Ms Leon: We have not written the guidelines yet, so I do not mind if you want to call them interns.

Senator CAMERON: Let's call them job seekers. We will wait with interest to see what you call them in this half-baked program. What monitoring will take place? How many staff will be monitoring? What would constitute exploitation? What behaviour will result in a ban? How long will employers be banned for?

Ms Leon: Can I qualify that? We have given you—

Senator CAMERON: Can you let me finish? Is it a three-strike policy? Is there any policy developed on the bans? If you have a policy, can you table it? They are the issues that I am raising now on notice.

Ms Leon: I will take it on notice, but there are two qualifications to that. One is that some of the detail you have asked for will not exist yet, because we are going to develop the guidelines in consultation with industry. The second is that, as you are aware, we already have a wide range of integrity measures in place. Usually we deliberately do not put the details of those into public hearings, because we would not really want to make it easy for employers who might want to circumvent the program guidelines to evade the program scrutiny. For example, if I were to say that there is some hard and fast rule about how many times an employer can take a young person on without giving them an ongoing position, then that could be used by an unscrupulous employer to evade the program assurance. As you know, we have given you a private briefing in the past about program assurance measures, and it may be that some of the detail about the integrity measures of this program, when it is developed, is more appropriate to be handled in a private briefing than in public evidence.

Answer

Internships will be monitored by the Department of Employment as well as employment services providers in jobactive, Transition to Work and Disability Employment Services. The Program assurance is yet to be finalised.