

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

**QUESTION ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018**

Outcome: Skills and Training

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ17-000607

Senator Cameron, Doug asked on 31 May 2017, Proof Hansard page 93

VET FEE-HELP

Question

Senator CAMERON: I have questions in relation to VET FEE-HELP issues. Dr Banerjee, how many tax file numbers have been given directly to providers under the VET FEE-HELP scheme?

Dr Banerjee: In the ANAO audit of the VET FEE-HELP scheme that you are alluding to, it was brought to our attention that the ATO had been providing tax file numbers directly to providers. As soon as that was brought to the department's attention, we worked with the ATO to put a stop to that practice. I will just check to see if we have the numbers of tax file numbers that were provided before that date, but I think we would have to take that on notice.

Senator CAMERON: Do you know how many requests were for students who were not bona fide students?

Dr Banerjee: As I mentioned, we would have to take the details on notice. It is the tax office's administration that deals with the provision of tax file numbers. As soon as it was brought to our attention, we talked to the ATO about the practice and it was stopped. But, in terms of the details of how many have been provided, which students they applied to and all those things, they are a matter of ATO administration. We can certainly take the questions on notice and get the information from the ATO.

Answer

Refer to SQ17-000953.