

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018

Outcome 2 - Workplace Relations and Economic Strategy

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ17-004290

Senator Marshall provided in writing.

Relates to previous Employment Question No. EMSQ17-003979.

Question

Automation of jobs

The answer to Question on Notice EMSQ17-003979 – says: “The department does not produce modeling on the impact of automation and new technology.” How can the Department understand how Australia’s workforce will change in the future without conducting that kind of research? How can the Department advise government about changes in Australia’s workforce without conducting that research?

Why should the public trust the advice the Department gives to government about Australia’s workforce if they don’t conduct modelling about how it is changing?

Has the Department given advice to the government about the future of Australia’s workforce? Can it be provided?

What basis was that advice given on if the Department doesn’t conduct modelling?

Answer

The Department conducts a broad range of labour market research and analysis, which includes use of modelling where it is judged to be appropriate. For example, the Department’s industry, occupational and regional employment projections are based on time series models that summarise the information that is in a time series and convert it into a forecast.

Future predictions about the direction of technological development are by necessity theoretical. The Department monitors current literature on automation and uses this information to contextualise more robust analysis of current trends and to provide policy advice to the Government.