

## Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

### QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Supplementary Budget Estimates 2014-2015

#### Outcome 1 - Employment

Department of Employment Question No. EM1541\_15

Senator Rice provided in writing.

#### Question

##### Migrant Communities Employment Fund

1. Why was the funding for the Migrant Communities Employment Fund cut?
2. Given its abolition, what steps are being taken to tackle higher levels of unemployment amongst immigrant and refugee workers in Australia, compared with the general population?

#### Answer

1. No funding was ever provided under this programme.  
The savings from this measure were directed to repair the Federal Budget and fund policy priorities.
2. The new employment services model to begin on 1 July 2015 includes significant reforms to services provided to job seekers, including those from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds, to better meet the needs of employers and improve employment outcomes.

Features include:

- three employment service streams with funding directed to those job seekers who need the most support to find and keep a job. Job seekers will have access to targeted training and assistance to help them become work ready
- less prescription for providers, with payments structured to promote stronger performance and the achievement of employment outcomes
- job seekers remaining active and engaged while they are looking for work
- wage subsidies which will encourage employers to hire, train and retain eligible job seekers who are young, mature age, Indigenous and long term unemployed.

All employment providers will be expected to deliver services to the full range of job seekers in the region, tailoring the assistance based on the needs of the individual job seeker and with specialised approaches in locations with significant numbers of people from particular client groups, such as job seekers from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds.

In responding to the Request for Tender for Employment Services 2015-2020 released on 7 October 2014, organisations needed to identify their strategies for achieving outcomes for job seekers, including their specific strategies for cohorts

of job seekers represented in the regions in which they were bidding for employment provider services. Under the new Performance Framework, successful tenderers will be held accountable for the commitments they make in their tender response.

Preference in the selection of employment providers will be given to tenderers that demonstrate ability and clear strategies (such as formal links or subcontracting/partnering arrangements with specialist organisations) to deliver quality service and achieve employment outcomes for specific client groups. Larger entities were able to consider partnering with organisations that deliver services to specific client groups, and organisations interested in providing services only to particular client groups were encouraged to consider group tendering arrangements or becoming subcontractors if they did not wish to bid in their own right. The outcomes of the Request for Tender are expected to be announced in late March 2015.