

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Supplementary Budget Estimates 2014-2015

Outcome 1 - Employment

Department of Employment Question No. EM1611_15

Senator Lines provided in writing.

Question

Classification of job seekers

- a) The Release for Tender states that for Stream A there must be a reasonable jobs market. - Does that mean that in states which cannot be seen to have a reasonable jobs market, there won't be any job seekers classified in Stream A?
- b) Does the Government agree that as a result of more job seekers being confined within fewer streams, there will be vulnerable job seekers with numerous barriers to employment, wrongly classified as Stream B?
- c) In the current system, providers spend a great deal of their time attempting to get job seekers re-assessed because many are more vulnerable, with more barriers to employment, than what is first identified in the initial assessment. - How has the Government addressed this issue?

Answer

- a) The Request for Tender for Employment Services 2015-2020 (the RFT) states at page 33 that "Stream A job seekers will be the most job competitive. Typically they will:
 - have a low to moderate job seeker Classification Instrument score
 - be required to find work by themselves with only limited support from Employment Providers in the first six months.
 - an example is a job seeker who resides in a labour market region with good employment opportunities, has reasonable language, literacy and numeracy skills, and recent work experience. Many of these job seekers will have one or two risk factors such as being a young person, mature age, or single parent. However, they will not have multiple significant issues."

This description provides an example of a Stream A job seeker, as indicated in the RFT, and does not mean that only job seekers in labour market regions with good employment opportunities can be allocated to Stream A. Labour market condition is one of many contributing factors affecting job seeker's Job Seeker Classification Instrument (JSCI) score and Stream.

- b) No. The job seeker's Service Stream will be determined using the JSCI and, where needed, an Employment Services Assessment (ESAt).

The job seeker's responses to the JSCI are used to determine the job seeker's eligibility for Stream A or Stream B. The JSCI also indicates whether a job seeker

has multiple and complex issues for employment that may require further assessment through an ESA. The ESA will determine if the job seeker requires Stream C Services or referral to other services such as Disability Employment Services.

The JSCI is subject to regular review and monitoring to ensure that job seekers are allocated to the appropriate levels of service based on their relative disadvantage in the labour market.

- c) For job seekers in Stream A or B, if at any time during their period of service the job seeker has a change in their circumstances or discloses new or additional information which would affect their most recent JSCI, a change of circumstances reassessment JSCI will be conducted to ensure the job seeker is appropriately classified. Change of circumstances reassessment JSCIs will be conducted by the Department of Human Services for job seekers who are in their first six months of service or, if subject to the Stronger Participation Incentives for job seeker under 30 measure (subject to the passage of legislation), prior to starting their first Work for the Dole phase. Otherwise, change of circumstances reassessment JSCIs will be conducted by the Employment Provider.

Where a job seeker in Stream C has had a change in circumstances such that their current work capacity or level of employment assistance required is affected the Employment Provider will be able to refer the job seeker to the Department of Human Services for reassessment through an ESA.