

## Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

### QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017

#### Outcome 1 - Employment

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ16-000917

Senator Paterson asked on 19 October 2016 on proof Hansard page 27

#### Question

##### Work for the Dole invitations

Senator PATERSON: Do you have any stats on how many people when invited to participate in Work for the Dole after being unemployed for a year subsequently advise you that they have work?

Mr Hehir: I would have to check the evaluation of the pilot, but they certainly identified that there was an impact there.

Senator PATERSON: Could you please take that on notice, unless an officer has that detail now?

Unidentified Witness: There has been of range of evaluations of Work for the Dole since 1997, and there have been some slightly different parameters and so there are different results from each of them. Certainly, for the pilot evaluation, which was a really short-targeted evaluation—because it was just testing the pilot before the bigger rollout—the evidence from that evaluation at that time was a two percentage point increase in people being off income support. But I have to emphasise that that was really a short, sharp evaluation and so it did not capture the full number of people who may move into work and be off income support. For that two per cent, a lot of that would have been people who declared that they had part-time work and so declared their earnings. There were also people who had part-time work and could increase their hours reasonably easily.

#### Answer

The most recent evaluation of Work for the Dole was conducted on the 2014–15 Work for the Dole Pilot. The purpose and timing of that evaluation did not support examination of exit rates between referral and commencement and consequently this was not addressed.

Previous evaluations suggest that between being referred to Work for the Dole and commencing in the program, around 5 per cent of job seekers advise that they have found work.<sup>1</sup> Department analysis suggests that this may be explained by a mix of factors such as some job seekers finding work as a result of increasing their job search efforts in response to referral to Work for the Dole and others revealing work they may have had for some time. It is not possible to differentiate between these factors as job seekers simply advise that they have found employment.

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<sup>1</sup> These evaluation are: *Labour Market Assistance: A net impact study of off and part benefit outcomes measured in 2008* (2010); *Customised Assistance, Job Search Training, Work for the Dole and Mutual Obligation: A Net Impact Study* (2006); and *Work for the Dole Net Impact Study* (2000).