

Senate Standing Committee on Economics
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Portfolio
Budget Estimates Hearing 2010-11
31 May 2010

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: INNOVATION, INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

TOPIC: SMEs

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard 31 May 2010, E99).

QUESTION No.: BI-32

Senator COLBECK—Okay; fine. Can you give me a sense of the number of SMEs in the country that use Enterprise Connect services? Do you have any statistics on that?

Mrs Zielke—I can give you the number of companies that we are currently working with. As at 30 April, we had 2,706 companies approved to receive a business review through the program. We also have over 3,700 companies so far this year that have been involved in other activities such as workshops or information sessions in relation to various forms of technology et cetera that have been funded under the workshops, industry, intelligence and networking element of the program as well.

Senator COLBECK—How would you say that is in the context of the number of SMEs? In percentage terms what is the sort of connection rate?

Mrs Zielke—I could take on notice the number of firms we expect would be eligible under the program more broadly, but, in effect, any company that has a turnover of between \$2 million and \$100 million—that is, a manufacturing firm or a firm directly assisting manufacturing firms—would generally be eligible under the program to receive Enterprise Connect services. There are some exceptions to that, because some of our innovation centres have additional criteria in that regard, but that is generally the eligibility criteria for the program.

Senator COLBECK—So manufacturing and turnover between \$2 million and \$100 million—they are the parameters?

Mrs Zielke—That is correct—or those firms that directly provide services to manufacturing firms as well.

Senator COLBECK—Are there turnover parameters that apply to them as well?

Mrs Zielke—The same \$2 million to \$100 million turnover.

Senator COLBECK—If you could give us those you see as being eligible by state, that would be good.

Mrs Zielke—I am sorry, Senator; I do not believe I can give you that level of detail.

Senator COLBECK—So you can give me a macro number nationally but not by state.

Mrs Zielke—That is correct.

ANSWER

The latest Australian Bureau of Statistics ABS data (2007) indicates that there were 12,687 manufacturing firms in Australia with turnover between \$2 million and \$200 million. This is 10.7 per cent of the 119,112 firms in Australia with turnover between \$2 million and \$200 million. These are the nearest ABS statistical categories to the Enterprise Connect client group.