

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2010–2011**

Outcome 4 - Employment & Participation Policy

DEEWR Question No.EW0933_11

Senator Siewert provided in writing.

Refers to previous DEEWR Question Nos. [EW0528 11](#) and [EW0535 11](#).

Question

THE SCHOOL ENROLMENT & ATTENDANCE MEASURE (SEAM)

Can you provide an update on progress with the SEAM Trials in the Northern Territory and Queensland? Specifically: a. What is the number of schools, parents and students now within the scope of SEAM? (any change on the October 2010 figures?) b. What were the rates of enrolment in the trial areas prior to the trial? What has been the percentage change as a consequence of the trial? c. What were the rates of attendance in the trial areas prior to the trial? What has been the percentage change as a consequence of the trial? d. What is the number of people to date who have had their income support suspended? e. What is the average period of suspension? f. What is the longest period of suspension to date?

Answer

(a) The School Enrolment and Attendance Measure (SEAM) trial continues to operate in 14 schools across six locations in the Northern Territory, and 30 schools across six trial locations in Queensland.

As at 10 December 2010, 4454 parents and 7942 children were in scope for the enrolment component of SEAM (compared with 4184 parents and 7394 children at 1 October 2010) and 3283 parents and 5673 children were in scope for the attendance component of SEAM (compared with 3102 parents and 5320 children at 1 October 2010) across both Queensland and the Northern Territory.

(b) The department does not hold information on enrolment rates for the trial areas prior to the trial. While the state/territory education authorities collect enrolment data, no data is available to identify children who are not enrolled in school. It would therefore be difficult to extrapolate enrolment rates at local level. The evaluation to be conducted upon conclusion of the trial will aim to identify new enrolments due to SEAM.

(c) The state/territory education authorities collect and hold attendance data for SEAM schools but only report on cases of low attendance to Centrelink. A full evaluation of the trial will be conducted on its completion. The evaluation will examine any impacts on attendance rates as a result of the SEAM trial.

(d) As at 18 February 2011 (and since SEAM began), across both Queensland and the Northern Territory, 120 parents (with respect to 167 children) have had their

income support payments suspended for either failing to provide enrolment information for their children or failing to take reasonable steps to ensure the regular attendance of their children at school.

(e) The average length of all suspensions issued under both the enrolment and attendance components of SEAM is 13 days.

(f) The longest suspension applied under both the enrolment and attendance components of SEAM was 64 days in duration.