

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2013-2014**

Outcome 2 - Schools and Youth

Department of Education Question No. ED0463_14

Senator Back asked on 26 February 2014, Hansard page 115

Question

Youth Connections and the school business partnerships - data of employees

CHAIR: For both programs, Youth Connections and the school business partnerships, along with the other data you are going to provide, can you let us know how many employees each program supports across the 67 providers in the case of Youth Connections and the 83 organisations in the school business partnerships? Mr Hehir: We can certainly take that on notice but we may not have some of that detail. It is a contract with an organisation and we would not necessarily specify within that contract how many people they would employ. They would look at that themselves. CHAIR: You would not have some indicator of that? Mr Hehir: No. CHAIR: What about the employee to young person ratio? Mr Hehir: We will have a look, but my understanding of the contract is that we do not have those specifications within the contract. It is not a requirement.

CHAIR: On Youth Connections you gave us the figures that 57 per cent of students or young people who had successfully achieved their measurable outcomes and that another 18 per cent were well on the way. Do you have any further information, firstly, on the 57 per cent as to whether they were able to get employment? Secondly, in relation to the 18 per cent, what the fate of that group was moving towards a satisfactory final outcome of employment. Mr Hehir: We can certainly take that on notice. The only thing I might add here is that this has been implemented at a time when state and territory jurisdictions have also implemented legislation around earn and learn, which requires young people to be engaged in education and training or employment up until the age of 17. A significant cohort, over 70 per cent, of this group is actually within that age bracket. In terms of causality there are some issues, and 74 per cent are under 17.

Answer

How many employees does each program support?

Youth Connections

The service contracts with providers to deliver the Youth Connections programme do not stipulate a number of staff that should be employed as is the practice with such contracts. At the beginning of each year Youth Connections providers are asked to report on their staffing levels in the Annual Service Plan and this provides an indication of the number of employees supported by the programme. The staffing levels reported by providers in the January 2014 Annual Service Plans equate to approximately 700 full time equivalent positions working on the programme in 2014. This includes youth workers, managers, program coordinators, administrative support staff and people who may only work part time or some of the time on the programme.

Partnership Brokers

The Partnership Broker service contracts across the 107 service regions do not stipulate a number of staff that should be employed, or require that providers identify to the department the number of staff they do employ, to achieve programme outcomes.

What is the employee to young person ratio?

Youth Connections

The department does not collect this information specifically. Based on the number of case workers and the number of young people active in the programme at a point in time the average ratio is 1 case worker to 14 participants. This does not take into account managers, administrative support staff or other people who work on the programme.

Partnership Brokers

The Partnership Broker providers do not work directly with young people.

Further information on Youth Connections participants

57 percent of Youth Connections participants who had successfully achieved a measurable outcome – were they able to get employment?

The department does not collect information on Youth Connections participants once they have exited the programme.

18 percent of Youth Connections participants well on the way – what was the fate of that group moving towards a satisfactory final outcome of employment?

Of the 18 per cent of young people who achieved a progressive outcome under the programme, 66 per cent exited or completed the programme and 33 per cent continued on in Youth Connections. The department does not collect information on Youth Connections participants once they have exited the programme.