EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 1 and 2
Output Group: 1.2 Assistance for individuals including those with special needs
               2.5 Assistance for post school students including those with special needs

DEST Question No. E123_04

Senator Crossin asked on 3 June 2003. EWRE Hansard pages 260-261

Question:

Similarly, can I ask if you have looked at the policy that is, I guess, around the traps kind of called the 'no show' policy?

I wonder if you can take that on notice. The inflexibility of this policy and whether or not it can actually be reviewed, revisited or in some way relaxed has been raised with me a number of times. If you could take that on notice and provide me with any feedback you get, it would be interesting.

Answer:

ABSTUDY travel 'no show' policy

The 'no show' policy refers to travel that has been arranged, or a ticket authorised by Centrelink for a student and the student subsequently does not travel. If a tertiary student does not undertake the travel that was booked by Centrelink, the student must arrange their own travel for this journey. They can be reimbursed for this if the initial fare was refundable. Secondary students are entitled to one 'no show' for the duration of secondary schooling without a penalty applied. If the 'no show' was caused by circumstances beyond the control of the student, the penalty will not be applied.

Centrelink have provided the following data in relation to 'no shows'.

As at 13 June 2003, 391 customers failed to travel as requested and arranged by Centrelink. Of these, there was no penalty applied for 308 customers and a penalty was applied for 83 customers.

The Department will consider this policy in the implementation of the Joint DEST/Centrelink Project on service delivery, however, any change to the policy would need to be considered in the context of the high cost of 'no shows', particularly the cost to ABSTUDY of charter flights.