SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2009-10

Outcome 4

DEEWR Question No. EW0358_10

Senator Back asked on 4 June 2009], EEWR Hansard page 40.

Question

Operational details of the remaining element of the workforce participation criterion for independence under YA.

Senator Back—Can I just have a point of clarification. Dr Moorhead, in your response a few minutes ago on hours of work, you mentioned 'an average of 30 hours per week'. Can I just confirm that to be the case? As we all know, in country areas the chance of anybody actually getting a regular weekly job at the local shire or in the local shop—if there is one left—is minimal; whereas, of course, the nature of farming is such that, while a crop is going in, or a crop is coming off, there is tremendous opportunity for young people to get employment in agriculture and actually accumulate those hours. Could you confirm for me that it is an average of 30 hours per week, so that people can have some degree of hope with regard to their employment opportunities in the bush?

Dr Moorhead—I will take that on notice—whether it is exactly 30 hours or whether you can work 35 hours in one week and 25 in the next.

Answer

Under section1067A(10) of the *Social Security Act 1991*, a young person is considered independent for Youth Allowance purposes, if they are self-supporting. Sub-section (a) of this provision establishes that a young person will be considered to be self-supporting if he or she has undertaken paid work consisting of full-time employment of *at least* 30 hours per week for at least 18 months during any period of 2 years.