

**SENATE EMPLOYMENT, WORKPLACE RELATIONS AND EDUCATION
LEGISLATION COMMITTEE**

**2003-2004 SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING
6 NOVEMBER**

EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Outcome 1: An effectively functioning labour market

Output Group 1.1: Labour Market Policy and Advice

Outputs 1.1.1: Policy Advice.

Question Number: W288-04

Question:

Senator Webber asked in writing:

On page 75 of the Annual Report under the heading of Mature Age People it appears that there has been a significant decrease in their participation across the Board. There appears to be a total decrease of 15% with a 20% decrease in Intensive Assistance. What specific projects exist for Mature Age Workers?

Answer:

Table 11 at page 75 of the Annual Report states that participation rates for all disadvantaged groups were less in 2002-03 than in 2001-02 due to the transition from Employment Services Contract 2 to Employment Services Contract 3. Referrals into employment services were significantly reduced during the period April to June 2003 as part of the transition process to Employment Services Contract 3.

DEWR has implemented a number of mature age initiatives, with some originating from *Australians Working Together*, aimed at assisting mature aged job seekers find work. Significant DEWR mature age initiatives include:

- Transition to Work (TTW)
 - assists people who have been out of the workforce for more than 2 years or who are starting work for the first time. The programme updates job seeker skills and addresses issues such as lack of confidence.
- Green Reserve
 - provides mature age job seekers with the opportunity to participate in environmental or heritage-focused activities of value to the community.

- A series of workshops on portfolio employment and the changing nature of the labour market (now concluded) funded by DEWR and delivered by COTA National Seniors;
- Training Account;
 - Job Network members can access this Account to help mature aged and Indigenous job seekers access work related training. The training purchased from the Training Account must be relevant to the circumstances of the job seeker and the needs of the local labour market.
- Employment Services Industry Strategies
 - the Department is seeking to advance the application of the *Active Participation Model* by engaging with specific industries to tailor recruitment strategies to meet their needs.
- Early access to Intensive Support customised assistance for highly disadvantaged job seekers (age is one of the factors used to assess relative disadvantage);
- Access to Job Search Training for mature age job seekers as soon as they start receiving income support;
- Access to complementary programmes, including State programmes for mature aged under the *Active Participation Model*;
- Access to Job Search Support for employees in the process of being made redundant;
- Mature Age Toolbox for Job Network staff;
- Online services such as the Jobwise website; and
- Mature Age Month
 - an initiative of the Minister for Employment Services that is intended to raise awareness of mature age issues within the Australian community generally and employers specifically.