

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

### **QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

#### **The administration and purchasing of Disability Employment Services in Australia**

#### **Outcome 4 - Employment & Participation Policy**

#### **DEEWR Question No. 3**

**Senator Siewert asked on 27/10/2011, Hansard page 61**

#### **Question**

Is it against the contract to claim an outcome in an ADE. So if you had a DES provider placing someone in an ADE they could not claim an outcome for it. Has this happened? Numbers ? Is it auditable?

#### **Answer**

Disability Employment Services (DES) promotes employment of job seekers with disability, injury or health condition in the open labour market. Since Australian Disability Enterprises (ADE) offer supported employment for participants who may be unable to work in the open labour market, DES providers are precluded under the Disability Employment Services Deed 2010-2012 from claiming Job Placement or Outcome fees for placing participants into supported employment in an ADE.

ADE participants who wish to obtain employment in the open labour market may be eligible to enter DES to obtain assistance if their supported employment hours are not already at the participant's assessed capacity for work. Where an ADE participant commences in DES, their supported employment hours cannot be considered for DES outcome purposes.

While supported employment from participation in an ADE cannot be counted for DES outcome purposes, DES providers are able to claim Job Placement and Outcome fees if an ADE employs a job seeker in a role other than those that are part of the Government-funded ADE program. This could include, for example, employing someone with disability to provide administrative support to help manage the ADE contract with the Government. DEEWR has identified that Outcome fees have been claimed since March 2010 for approximately five hundred DES participants for placements with employers who operate ADEs.

DEEWR audits all its programs. It uses a range of monitoring and detection strategies to identify activities and practices that impact on the integrity of employment programs. These strategies cover a broad spectrum of activities from centralised data monitoring to site visits and discussions with providers and feedback from program participants or other third parties through program assurance activities and customer service lines.

As part of the ongoing review of employment programs and their identified risks, where discrepancies between policy and practice are found, findings may result in provider education, recovery of fees, fraud investigation or even the issue of a breach of contract notice. The outcomes for fraud investigations are used to further strengthen DEEWR's prevention and detection strategies.