



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Employment and  
Workplace Relations**

**National Office**

GPO Box 9879 CANBERRA ACT 2601

Mr Russell Chafer  
Secretary  
Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Chafer

I refer to your letter of 6 July 2006 concerning the provision of additional information to the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit regarding the 27 March 2006 JCPAA hearing which reviewed ANAO audit reports No 6 (2005/06): *Implementation of Job Network Employment Services Contract 3 (ESC3)*, and No 51 (2004/05): *DEWR'S oversight of Job Network Service to Job Seekers*.

I am pleased to submit further information as enclosed and will forward the hard copy by mail.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christine Leary".

Christine Leary  
Chief Internal Audit

4 August 2006

JCPAA Ref: PA6



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**Joint Committee of Public Accounts & Audit  
Hansard Question Taken on Notice**

**Question:**

*“Ms GRIERSON—Thank you. What about complaints in that area? Has that diminished in terms of Job Network placement with a provider?”*

*Mr Manthorpe—Again, we would have to take that on notice.”*

**Answer:**

DEWR is unable to provide further breakdown of job seeker transfer data than that already provided to the JCPAA on 5 May 2006 in Question on Notice 1.3.

JCPAA Ref: PA19



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### Joint Committee of Public Accounts & Audit Hansard Question Taken on Notice

**Question:**

**Ms GRIERSON**— . . . *Firstly, do you have a return rate on client satisfaction surveys that are returned to DEWR?*

**Mr Manthorpe**—*I am sorry, I would have to take that on notice.*

**Ms GRIERSON**—*Okay.*

**Ms Golightly**—*We would have one.*

**Ms GRIERSON**—*So some analysis, and I would really like to know the system you used to*

*analyse those from clients. So if you could take that on notice, that would be great.*

**Mr Manthorpe**—*Certainly.”*

**Answer:**

DEWR has an ongoing programme of surveys to measure job seeker service quality.

The Job Seeker Omnibus Survey obtains information about job seekers' satisfaction with Centrelink and Job Network services.

The Omnibus Survey is conducted using a Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) methodology. A log of calls is kept for each cycle of the survey and the response rate is calculated by dividing the number of interviews conducted by the number of job seekers who were contacted and 'in-scope'. Some of the job seekers contacted are not interviewed as they are out of scope. 'In-scope' job seekers are fully Job Network eligible (FJNE) job seekers who are registered and who have had contact with Centrelink and / or Job Network members in the three months prior to the survey.

Between August 2004 and May 2005, a total of 6,469 job seekers participated in the Omnibus Survey. This represents 75.4% of the 8,574 job seekers who were contacted and "in-scope".

A total of 2730 job seekers participated in the Omnibus Survey between October 2003 and February 2004. This represents 77.4% of the 3,525 job seekers who were contacted and 'in-scope'.

DEWR's Post Programme Monitoring Surveys are used to monitor and analyse job seeker outcomes following their participation in labour market assistance programmes. These surveys are mailed to job seekers and the average response rate for 2004-05 was 61%.

JCPAA Ref: PA20-21



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### Joint Committee of Public Accounts & Audit Hansard Question Taken on Notice

**Question:**

**Ms GRIERSON**—*I think 450,000 profile interviews needed to be held, and that was recognised as quite a burden. It was suggested in your forward planning that, by having all those interviews, there would be some savings. Your projection was \$21.7 million, because it would also pick up people who were not eligible. Did that occur?*

**Ms Golightly**—*I am not familiar with those particular numbers but certainly the whole principle behind the government making the decision that all 800,000 job seekers needed to be called in was that they needed to test their eligibility. By making contact with them there would have been a certain number—*

**Ms GRIERSON**—*Can you give us figures on how many were picked up, through that interview process, as being ineligible and what the savings were?*

**Ms Caldwell**—*The audit report itself reports the available figures from the time of implementation. There is a range of figuring that was done at that time. We are currently looking, in our forward evaluation agenda, to revisit the long-range effects of that. So the information already published in the audit report does provide the details of what was on at that point in time.*

**Ms GRIERSON**—*Can Audit Office help me in that?*

**Dr Rowlands**—*Yes. The figure you are quoting is in the report, and that is—*

**Ms GRIERSON**—*And what was saved?*

**Dr Rowlands**—*We do not know. We have not seen any work done on that.*

**Ms GRIERSON**—*That was what I was asking.*

**Ms Golightly**—*In that sense, I think what Ms Caldwell was saying was that it will be picked up in our formal evaluation program, because what you would need to be testing for is whether they would have since become eligible and that sort of thing. I am not sure that we have done formal evaluation work to test that figure. But I can take that on notice.*

**Ms GRIERSON**—*Yes, please. That is an amazing process that occurred. Really, all the data from that would be, I would have thought, crucial to your operations.”*

**\*\*NB – JCPAA Secretariat advise that this dialogue is to be read as “Can DEWR provide data on the number of people who stopped receiving income support payments as a result of the VP interview process and the savings that were achieved as a result?””**

**Answer:**

Close examination of this issue has shown that it is not possible to determine the number of job seekers who ceased receipt of income support as a result of the Vocational Profile Interview process and, therefore, the exact amount of savings achieved.

This is because it is not possible to isolate the impact of the Vocational Profile Interview process from other factors which result in people leaving income support, such as starting a job.

JCPAA Ref: PA21-22



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### Joint Committee of Public Accounts & Audit Hansard Question Taken on Notice

**Question:**

**Ms Golightly**—*The fact that we had such a no-show rate was testament to the fact that there were many people—*

**Ms GRIERSON**—*So what happened about the no-show rate? Has that been responded to in any way?*

**Ms Golightly**—*Yes. In fact, I think Mr Manthorpe mentioned before something called RapidConnect.*

**Ms GRIERSON**—*He did.*

**Ms Golightly**—*That is probably the most significant thing, whereby if somebody rings Centrelink or goes into a Centrelink office and requests unemployment benefits they have to fill in the forms, but they must attend a Job Network interview within two days, and, if they do not attend, Centrelink does not process their application for Newstart. So it is an up-front control now rather than a—*

**Ms GRIERSON**—*So you have figures on the new attendance rates?*

**Ms Golightly**—*Yes. That was introduced in November or just before Christmas, so we would be able to give you very early figures.”*

**Answer:**

RapidConnect introduced new compliance arrangements for eligible job seekers. It is a legal requirement for job seekers streamed through RapidConnect to attend an appointment with a Job Network member before they can commence receiving income support. RapidConnect job seekers who do not attend this appointment may have their Newstart or Youth Allowance deferred.

Under Rapid Connect, job seekers who are job ready and who contact Centrelink to claim Newstart or Youth Allowance can be referred to an appointment with a Job Network member within two working days. 94% of RapidConnect job seekers have an appointment booked within two working days.

Since the introduction of RapidConnect in September 2005, there has been a noticeable increase in attendance rates at Job Network appointments. RapidConnect job seekers have an average attendance rate at initial appointments of 72%, compared with a 54% attendance for all initial appointments.

Of those job seekers who do not attend, half have a valid reason for non-attendance, or reschedule their appointment. Job seekers that do not attend within 28 days of first contacting Centrelink have their application for income support rejected as they have failed to meet their obligations.