



## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES PUBLIC HEARING

**21 OCTOBER 1999**

The Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Workplace Relations asked the following questions on notice on 21 October 1999 (Hansard reference: pages 509 - 525):

- Whether every client is told of the right to change case manager if there is dissatisfaction of some kind. (Hansard reference, pages 514 - 515);
- What percentage of clients in Intensive Assistance are near the end of their 12 months support and therefore need to be reassessed? (Hansard reference, page 524);
- Do they have to wait 6 months before they can go back into Intensive Assistance? (Hansard reference, page 524);
- What happens in the meantime? What is actually done to help them? (Hansard reference, page 524); and
- What happens to people who reach the end of their assistance and then are automatically cut off? Does Centrelink keep tabs on these clients? (Hansard reference, page 525)

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The answers to the questions are:

**Whether every client is told of the right to change case manager if there is dissatisfaction of some kind. (Hansard reference pages 514 - 515)**

There are no formal arrangements in place to advise customers of their right to change case manager. However, the procedures used by Centrelink staff ensure that customers have a choice of One-to-One Customer Service Officer. There is a set of service principles that Centrelink adheres to and a customer may, at any time, request to change their One-to-One Customer Service Officer. This is a simple process with the customer advising the reasons for a change. The request is then managed within the team, facilitating a seamless service for the customer.

**What percentage of clients in Intensive Assistance are near the end of their 12 months support and therefore need to be reassessed? (Hansard reference page 524)**

As at 22/10/99 there were 233,041 job seekers in Intensive Assistance (IA). There was an expected exit figure for October of 13,740 which equates to 6%.

As at 4/2/00 there were 222,670 job seekers in IA. There was an expected exit figure for January of 9,923. This equates to 4%.

The expected exit figures do not include voluntary exits of job seekers who have not reached the end of their 12 months Intensive Assistance period. The eight approved reasons that job seekers can be exited from Intensive Assistance prior to their 12 months placement period are:

- The job seeker has relocated to an area outside reasonable travelling distance from their Job Network member;
- An irretrievable breakdown has occurred in the relationship between the job seeker and the Job Network member;
- The Job Network member has closed or their contract has been cancelled;
- The job seeker is unfit for work for 13 weeks or more;
- The job seeker is working more than 15 hours per week;
- The job seeker is over 50 years undertaking voluntary work;
- The job seeker is over 50 years and is on reduced reporting because of the application of the Social Security Act 1991;
- Some other family or personal reasons such as illness or death in the family, etc.

Reassessment for eligibility for Job Network services is undertaken at the 12 monthly anniversary of a job seeker's unemployment registration. Job seekers who have been automatically exited from Intensive Assistance and continue to be eligible for Centrelink support are able to access all other services available to registered job seekers. They cannot be re-referred to Intensive Assistance until 6 months after the completion of their previous placement.

**Do clients have to wait 6 months before they can go back into Intensive Assistance? (Hansard reference, page 524)**

Yes.

DEWRSB policy states that once the job seeker exits Intensive Assistance because they have reached the end of their placement, they cannot be re-referred to Intensive Assistance for 6 months. The only exception to this is where there are insufficient eligible job seekers in an area to provide sufficient Intensive Assistance referrals. In these cases, job seekers may be referred prior to the end of this 6 months preclusion.

**What happens in the meantime? What is actually done to help them? (Hansard reference, page 524)**

Job seekers who have exited Intensive Assistance because they have reached the end of their placement are still eligible for Job Matching services with a Job Network member. The job seeker retains their Job Matching link with their previous Job Network member and have the option to link to 4 other Job Network members in their area for Job Matching assistance.

Job seekers also have access to Job Network Access services, for example, touch screen units, in all Centrelink offices, which provide National Vacancy Database information on available jobs with employers and vacancies lodged by employers with Job Network members.

Centrelink services and support are available to all eligible job seeker customers.

**What happens to people who reach the end of their assistance and are automatically cut off? Does Centrelink keep tabs on these people? (Hansard reference, page 525)**

The job seeker reverts to standard Centrelink job seeker services and compliance obligations.

**Additional Information**

Please find attached an excerpt from the Job Network User Guide on the JSCI which Centrelink use as their procedural guide in the application of the instrument.

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**Cleared by your Executive Director:**

**YES (signed Virginia Mudie)**

### **What is the Job Seeker Classification Instrument (JSCI)?**

The Job Seeker Classification Instrument (JSCI) is a tool which measures a job seeker's barriers to employment. In 1997 the then Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs, developed the JSCI after conducting research which showed the relative effects of various factors on a person's likelihood of finding work.

The JSCI operates by allocating a score against 18 individual factors relating to a job seeker's difficulty in finding work.

The JSCI is a systems based tool located in DEWRSB's Integrated Employment System (IES).

The JSCI is administered by Centrelink. Wherever possible, job seekers must be interviewed face to face when the JSCI is being applied. Remote job seekers may have to be interviewed by telephone and/or return forms by mail. Job seekers must not be interviewed in group sessions for the purpose of administering the JSCI.

At the JSCI interview, Centrelink staff ask the job seeker a series of questions to collect information relating to these 18 factors (personal characteristics or employment barriers). Each factor is assigned a score indicative of the average contribution the factor makes to the difficulty of a job seeker gaining employment.

This information is collected and recorded in IES. The JSCI then allocates a score (the JSCI score) to each job seeker by adding up the points for the factors so job seekers can be ranked according to their relative likely difficulty in obtaining employment.

When new activity tested job seekers claim income support, or when other eligible job seekers apply for employment assistance, their responses to this series of questions are recorded in IES.

The JSCI is also applied:

at annual periodic reapplications;

at the completion of a job seeker's Intensive Assistance placement;

when a job seeker completes, or is removed from the Community Support Program; and

when a job seeker is removed from Intensive Assistance before completing his or her placement .

Information provided by the job seeker for the JSCI may indicate that a secondary classification is required. This secondary classification is conducted by either a specialist disability officer (CDO), member of the Disability and Carer team, or occupational psychologist. Any required secondary classification must be completed before the JSCI score is finalised.

The JSCI is used to determine:

eligibility for Intensive Assistance;

Intensive Assistance funding level;

eligibility for Indigenous Wage Assistance card ; and

is used by IES to help establish suitability for Job Search Training.

The primary function of the JSCI is to determine eligibility for Intensive Assistance and assign an Intensive Assistance funding level to each suitable job seeker.

JSCI scores within a particular range or 'band' determine whether a job seeker is eligible for Intensive Assistance and also attach a funding level to the job seeker.

The JSCI must be manually reapplied to the job seeker's record:  
when a job seeker's change of circumstances affect the JSCI;  
at the point of referral to a Intensive Assistance member if the job seeker being referred is manually selected and referred;  
when a job seeker leaves Intensive Assistance or Community Support Program;  
at least every 12 months; and  
at any time Centrelink staff consider it necessary.

The JSCI data must be reviewed at least once every 12 months.  
JSCI data is collected by Centrelink on the Looking for Work form (SU489) and the Abridged Looking for Work form (SU506).

Some JSCI data is collected from customers' responses to questions on their claim for income support. Where the customer is also identified as a job seeker in Centrelink's ISIS system, this information is automatically transferred to IES and populates the relevant fields in the JSCI screens.

### **JSCI Factors**

1. Age.
2. Educational attainment.
3. Vocational Qualifications.
4. Duration of Unemployment.
5. Recency of Work Experience.
6. Family Status.
7. Geographic Location & ATSI Status.
8. Geographic Location and Australian-born South Sea Islander Status.
9. Geographic location - other Australians.
10. Transport.
11. Contactability.
12. Proximity to Labour Market.
13. Country of Birth.
14. English Language Proficiency.
15. Disability, Medical Condition, Illness or Addiction.
16. Stability of Residence.
17. Disclosed Ex-Offenders.
18. Disadvantage resulting from Personal Factors - Secondary Classification.