

Question on notice no. 5

Portfolio question number: NIAA005

2024-25 Budget estimates

Finance and Public Administration Committee, Cross Portfolio Indigenous matters

Senator Dorinda Cox: asked the National Indigenous Australians Agency on 11 June 2024—

We understand NIAA workers are facing a lot of stress and many are choosing to leave the agency as reflected in agency attrition rates. July 2023 - NIAA's 12-month separate rate (for ongoing staff) at 16.1% was seen as an improvement from its separation rate of 18.4% in February 2023. With the Indigenous staff separation rate for the 12 months to July 2023 at 19.1%. Does the agency consider these rates to be high? If so, what steps is the agency taking to attract and retain workers, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander workers?

Answer —

Please see attached.

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2024-2025

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: National Indigenous Australians Agency
Topic: Workforce separation rate

Senator: Dorinda Cox

Question reference number: NIAA005

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 25 July 2024

Number of pages: 2

Question:

We understand NIAA workers are facing a lot of stress and many are choosing to leave the agency as reflected in agency attrition rates.

July 2023 – NIAA’s 12-month separate rate (for ongoing staff) at 16.1% was seen as an improvement from its separation rate of 18.4% in February 2023.

With the Indigenous staff separation rate for the 12 months to July 2023 at 19.1%. Does the agency consider these rates to be high?

If so, what steps is the agency taking to attract and retain workers, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander workers?

Answer:

From 31 May 2023 to 31 May 2024, the NIAA's separation rate was 17.0%. The separation rate for First Nations staff for the same period was 16.4%, lower than the overall rate.

The majority of separations from the NIAA are to other APS agencies, rather than separations from the APS, reflecting broader APS mobility. Separation rates are influenced by a number of different factors and currently the NIAA is experiencing a downward trend in separation.

The NIAA is active in attracting and retaining First Nations staff by:

- being a leading participant in the SES100 initiative;
- participating in the review of the Australian Public Service Commission’s Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy;
- conducting a First Nations Staff Forum focussed on wellbeing and career development in conjunction with the Agency’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Network.

The NIAA is committed to supporting First Nations staff recruitment and development through participating in targeted programs including:

- the Indigenous Apprenticeships Program (IAP);
- the Indigenous Development and Employment Program (IDEP);
- the Indigenous Australian Government Development Program (IAGDP);
- the ANU Graduate Certificate in Management Program; and

NIAA recruitment includes many Affirmative Measures recruitment activities and the Agency advertises all positions as 'Identified'.

The NIAA also prioritises uplifting the cultural capability of all staff through:

- Footprints, which is a continuous professional development program linked to the Agency's performance management approach,
- ensuring all staff complete CORE Cultural Learning as part of their mandatory learning; and
- taking proactive steps to promote cultural safety in the workplace, such as signing up for the Racism. It Stops With Me campaign.

Foundational NIAA strategies and frameworks, such as the NIAA People Strategy and the Diversity and Inclusion Framework, outline actions and steps to support the attraction and retention of staff. They include a focus on staff development, by enabling access to a coaching program and using Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for career and performance advice.