

## **Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment**

### **QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016**

#### **Outcome 1 - Employment**

**Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ16-000081**

**Senator Cameron asked on 11 February 2016 on proof Hansard page 60**

#### **Question**

##### **Work for the Dole - priority activities**

Senator CAMERON: Why is Work for the Dole compulsory for all job seekers up to the age of 50 and not just young job seekers and other job seekers who do not have the skills and experience?

Mr. Hehir: Work for the Dole itself is not compulsory. Work for the Dole is a priority activity under the Work for the Dole activity phase. As we have mentioned earlier, there are other activities that are able to be undertaken during that phase. We can provide you with a list of those other activities. An important component of that is, of course, there are different time requirements depending on your age. So there are 25 hours for younger job seekers and 15 hours for older job seekers. One of the reasons that it is a broad program measure is because it is an activation measure. I have talked previously about the importance of activation measures. As are the other activities available within the phase, they are predominately activation measures. The majority of modern employment assistance programs around the world have an activation approach. The research around it shows that that is actually important to undertake as part of your suite of programs. There is good evidence both within activation programs and prior—particularly in the lead-up to activation programs—of increased motivation for job seekers to look for work.

#### **Answer**

Aside from Work for the Dole, job seekers may undertake other approved activities or a combination of approved activities while they are in the Work for the Dole phase to meet their Annual Activity Requirement. The other approved activities are:

- part-time employment
- National Work Experience Programme placements
- voluntary work
- part-time study / training at :
  - Certificate III level or higher if commenced after a job seeker becomes subject to this activity requirement
  - Certificate I or II level if commenced prior to a job seeker becoming subject to this activity requirement
- the Skills for Education and Employment programme, Adult Migrant English Programme or other accredited language, literacy and numeracy courses
- Defence Reserves
- other government programmes, including state government programmes, the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme or the Green Army Programme
- work-focused non-government programmes approved by the Department for the purposes of the Annual Activity Requirement.