

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2014-2015**

Outcome 1 - Employment

Department of Employment Question No. EM0751_15

Senator Collins provided in writing.

Question

Changes to volunteer job seeker program

In the 2014-15 Budget the Government announced cuts to the volunteer job seeker program. It was announced that from January 2014, JSA providers will not receive fees or outcome payments for volunteer job seekers who:

- a) Have not attended an appointment with their provider in the last three months; or
- b) Choose not to participate in an activity during the work experience phase;

Saving the Government \$49.3 million over four years.

1. What consultations were done prior to deciding on the changes to this program?
2. What stakeholders/providers were consulted?
3. Where are the savings being redirected to?
4. What is the rationale behind the Government's decision to disadvantage those job seekers who have demonstrated a genuine attempt to seek work?

Answer

1-2. This was a decision of Government.

3. The savings will be returned to the Budget.

4. The premise of this question is false. These changes do not result in a decrease in service for volunteers who remain actively engaged with Job Services Australia. Non-activity tested volunteers who wish to participate and are actively doing so will continue to be serviced as usual.