

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2014-2015

Outcome 1 - Employment

Department of Employment Question No. EM0761_15

Senator Collins provided in writing.

Question

Work for the Dole

The Government pledged to invest new funding of \$14.9 million over two years to support the phasing in of Work for the Dole, however the 2014-15 Budget only provides the full year figures 2014-15. - Why are the figures for 2015-16 not listed? - What is the funding amount for 2015-16? How does the Department intend to implement mandatory Work for the Dole? Has the Department provided advice to the Minister on the best way to implement mandatory Work for the Dole? Where has the funding for mandatory Work for the Dole come from? Is the Department aware what area has had spending cut in order to realise the Government's election commitment for mandatory Work for the Dole? - Has the funding for Work for the Dole come from JSA funding? - Have other employment services programs be cut or scaled back to fund Work for the Dole? - If so, which programmes have been scaled back/cut? - What consultations with the Department, other agencies and stakeholders have taken place regarding the cutting/scaling back of these other programmes?

Answer

The Work for the Dole programme is being phased in from 1 July 2014 before the national rollout from 1 July 2015. The former will not operate during the 2015–2016 financial year. The majority of the \$14.9 million is for the 2014–15 financial year with a small amount allocated for the 2013–14 financial year to set up the programme.

Under Social Security law, job seekers must meet their mutual obligation requirements. Under the Employment Services Deed, Job Services Australia providers will be required to place eligible job seekers into Work for the Dole places.

From 1 July 2014 providers must ensure that each fully eligible participant who:

- is registered with the Provider in a Work for the Dole Selected Area
- is aged 18 years up to, but not including, 30 years; and
- has a Work Experience Activity Requirement

undertakes Work for the Dole activities for around 15 hours a week for six months .

Work for the Dole Coordinators will be contracted by the department to work in collaboration with Job Service Australia providers in the Selected Areas to help source Work for the Dole places.

The department provides ongoing advice to Ministers on implementation arrangements.

Funding for the Work for the Dole in 2014–15 is sourced from within the existing Employment Services funding. \$14.9 million of funding has been allocated to contract and manage Work for the Dole Coordinators in the selected areas. No areas have been cut.