

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

SENATE ESTIMATES SESSION

Supplementary Budget Estimates 18-22 November 2013

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

**Department/Agency:** Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

**Outcome/Program:** 1.1 Prime Minister and Cabinet

**Topic:** Closing the Gap

**Senator:** Senator McLucas

**Question reference number:** 299

**Type of Question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 17 January 2014

**Number of pages:** 2

**Question:**

I refer to Prime Minister Abbott's Closing the Gap statement to Parliament in February 2013, where he called for school and work attendance figures to be published regularly to check progress.

- (a) How regularly will these figures be published?
- (b) How will this data be collected and who will be responsible for collecting it?
- (c) What figures do the States and Territories currently provide and what additional data will they be required to provide?
- (d) What mechanisms are or will be put in place to obtain these figures from States and Territories?
- (e) What interim measures does the Government have in place to meet its own commitment to report school attendance data more regularly?

**Answer:**

The publication of data on school attendance is a matter for the States and Territories. At the 13 December 2013 COAG meeting states and territories agreed to work towards improving school attendance data reporting, including publishing of attendance data twice yearly.

Data on school attendance is currently provided once a year for each school in Australia on MySchool. Some jurisdictions already publish data more frequently. For example the Northern Territory publishes data on school attendance for individual schools in the NT 8 times per year.

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The Australian Bureau of Statistics provides periodical estimates of Indigenous labour market status and other outcomes through its survey programme and the Census. The ABS is currently reviewing its survey programme for Indigenous Australians. This review will consider the frequency with which data are collected and reported.

The Department of Employment prepares a quarterly report, *Labour Market Assistance Outcomes*. This publication includes employment outcomes achieved for Indigenous Australians through Job Services Australia.