

Economics Legislation Committee  
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio  
Additional Estimates Hearing 2012-13  
13 February 2013

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**AGENCY/DEPARTMENT:** DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

**TOPIC:** National Resources Sector Workforce Strategy

**REFERENCE:** Written Question – Senator Sinodinos

**QUESTION No.:** AI-192

1. What outcomes is the Federal Government hoping the funding will achieve?
2. Have there been noticeable improvements in addressing skill and labour issues in the resource sector? If so what?
3. Over what period of time is the money being spent?
4. What procedures are in place after the program has ended? What opportunities are provided to participants to continue progressing in the workforce? Will there be options for them to stay working with the current body providing the training opportunities?

**ANSWER**

1. The National Resources Sector Workforce Strategy (the Strategy) is a sector wide plan to address the skills and labour needs of the resources sector. The objective of the Strategy is to assist the resources sector to meet its demand for skilled labour, so that new projects can be implemented on time.

The Strategy comprises 31 actions in seven key workforce development areas:

- Promoting Workforce Planning and Sharing of Information
- Increasing the Number of Trade Professionals
- Graduating More Engineers and Geoscientists
- Meeting Temporary Skills Shortages with Temporary Migration
- Strengthening Workforce Participation
- Forging Stronger Ties between Industry and Education
- Addressing the Need for Affordable Housing and Community Infrastructure.

The Strategy does not have a funding allocation. However, the Government has provided co-funding of \$10.8 million for a number of workforce development projects that broadly support implementation of the Strategy. These projects address several of the 31 actions, and are being undertaken by a mix of industry peak bodies, enterprises and tertiary institutions. A list of projects is available on the Strategy's Projects and Initiatives page of the resources workforce website at [www.innovation.gov.au/resourcesworkforce](http://www.innovation.gov.au/resourcesworkforce).

2. Responsibility for implementing the Strategy is shared between industry, state and territory governments and the Commonwealth Government.

Implementation of the 31 actions has progressed significantly. Activities that address 27 of the Strategy's actions are now part of standard business practice for industry and the tertiary education sector. Details of the implementation plan and progress against each action are available on the resources workforce website at [www.innovation.gov.au/resourcesworkforce](http://www.innovation.gov.au/resourcesworkforce).

The workforce requirements of the resources sector have changed over the last 12 to 18 months. The Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency is expected to publish an updated *Resources Sector Skill Needs Report* later in 2013. This should provide an indication of how well current skills and labour requirements are being met.

3. Strategy does not have a funding allocation or a set time period.

The Strategy formally began on 15 March 2011 when the then Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Jobs and Workplace Relations announced that the Government would work with industry and state and territory governments to implement all 31 recommendations from the National Resources Sector Employment Taskforce report - *Resourcing the Future*.

A Steering Committee of senior officials from industry peak bodies, the training sector and state and Commonwealth agencies is overseeing implementation of the strategy. Its next meeting is scheduled for late 2013.

4. The Strategy does not have a funding allocation, a set time period, or individual 'participants'. It is a sector wide plan to address the skills and labour needs of the resources sector, and implementation is shared by industry, state and territory governments, and the Commonwealth Government.

Activities that address the 31 specific actions in the Strategy are increasingly becoming part of standard business practice for industry and governments. This means that they will continue to be implemented by employers, workers, tertiary education organisations and service providers independently of the strategy. More information on the Strategy is available from the resources workforce website at [www.innovation.gov.au/resourcesworkforce](http://www.innovation.gov.au/resourcesworkforce).