

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Additional Estimates

26 February 2014

Question: AET 2983

Topic: Employment change by industry size

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Senator BUSHBY asked:

Dr Gruen: It was. The unemployment rate was around five per cent for several months.

CHAIR: So, since early 2010, it has drifted up from around five per cent to around six per cent?

Dr Gruen: Yes.

CHAIR: So the trend has been up over those last four years?

Dr Gruen: It has— associated with the economy growing a bit below trend.

CHAIR: Particularly for that period, can you break down which industries or sectors that has come from? Is there anything that stands out that shows that it has been borne proportionally, or disproportionately, by any particular sector?

Dr Gruen: It is certainly the case that manufacturing employment has been declining more rapidly over the recent period than it had been before then. We can provide some numbers on employment change by industry. From November 2008 to November 2013 we have the numbers by industry.

CHAIR: The actual change in people numbers as opposed to percentages?

Dr Gruen: Both. Manufacturing has lost 82,000 over the five years from November 2008 to November 2013. That is the sector that has lost more employment than any other.

CHAIR: And after that?

Dr Gruen: Agriculture and information, media and telecommunications have each lost about 35,000 over that period.

CHAIR: What about small business?

Dr Gruen: I do not think the ABS provides a break-up of employment by size. We can check.

Answer:

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) publication 8155.0 – Australian Industry, 2011-12, released on 28 May 2013, presents estimates of the economic and financial performance of Australian industry in 2011-12. The data for 2012-13 will be released on 28 May 2014.

In 2011-12 small businesses were employing 4,649,000 employees, down 133,000 from 2010-11, and down 82,000 since 2009-10.