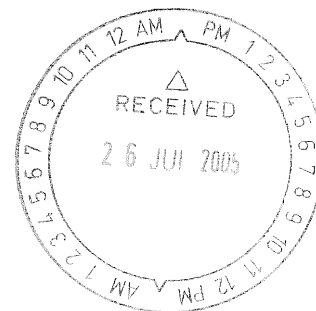


**Senate Economics Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Treasury Portfolio**

Budget Estimates, 31 May to 2 June 2005



**Question: Bud 110**

**Topic: ABS – People not in the Labour Force**

**Hansard Page: E10**

Senator Sherry asked:

I notice, for example, when women were questioned in this survey the main reasons they gave for not actively looking for work were child care, 32 per cent, and attending an educational institution, 15 per cent. Has that been an upward trending reason for women not actively looking for work?

**Mr Trewin** – I am not sure. I would have to get that data for you.

**Senator Sherry** – Perhaps you can give us some historical -

Answer:

In September 1994, for women aged 15-69 years with marginal attachment to the labour force\*, the most commonly reported reasons for not actively looking for work were 'child care' (33%) and 'attending an educational institution' (13%). In September 2004, the proportion who said 'child care' was their main reason for not actively looking for work had fallen slightly (to 32%). The proportion of women who said that 'attending an educational institution' was their main reason for not looking for work had increased (to 15%).

In September 1994, 10% of the women who were without marginal attachment to the labour force wanted to work, but were neither looking nor available for work. Of these, 63% reported their main activity when not in the labour force as 'home duties or childcare', 26% as 'attending an educational institution', and 6% as 'own illness, injury, disability or handicap'. In September 2004, 11% of the women who were without marginal attachment to the labour force wanted to work. Of these, 62% reported their main activity when not in the labour force as 'home duties or child care', 20% as 'attending an educational institution', and 9% as 'own illness, injury, disability or handicap'.

\* People with marginal attachment to the labour force are people who were not in the labour force in the reference week, wanted to work, and:

- were actively looking for work but did not meet the availability criteria to be classified as unemployed; or
- were not actively looking for work but were available to start work within four weeks.