

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry Portfolio
Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing 2013-14
21 November 2013

DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY

TOPIC: Access to VET courses

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Carr

QUESTION No.: SI-139

1. Can the government guarantee that Indigenous students, disadvantaged students and students in rural, regional and remote Australia will continue to be able to access the current range and number of VET course qualifications?
2. Between 2007 and 2010, there was a 37.8 per cent increase in students from remote and regional areas completing VET qualifications - what action is being taken to continue to increase remote and rural access to VET over the next three years?

ANSWER

The Government is committed to improving the access and participation of disadvantaged learners in VET.

The National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform (NP)

(see <http://www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/content/npa/skills.aspx>):

- Provides greater access to VET for all Australians by offering a national training entitlement to a minimum of a first Certificate III qualification and access to income-contingent loans for students studying higher level qualifications.
- All jurisdictions were required to identify a target for Indigenous training commencements or completions and two additional targets (such as AQF qualification commencements, completions or equivalent full time students in rural and remote areas, students with disability or from low SES backgrounds, and other groups of policy focus such as long term unemployed, youth, single and teen parents or mature age workers).

The Government recently announced a Review of Indigenous Training and Employment Programmes, chaired by Mr Andrew Forrest, to ensure that training connects unemployed Indigenous people with real and sustainable jobs.

The Government also supports Industry Skills Councils (ISCs) to facilitate industry leadership in the development of qualifications in the national training system. ISCs undertake some work that specifically relates to Indigenous Australians such as development of nationally recognised qualifications in areas of Indigenous employment/specialisation, Indigenous health care, Indigenous land management, Indigenous cultural and visual arts and governance for Indigenous organisations.