

**SENATE EMPLOYMENT, WORKPLACE RELATIONS AND EDUCATION  
LEGISLATION COMMITTEE**

**2004-2005 ADDITIONAL SENATE ESTIMATES HEARING  
17 FEBRUARY 2005**

**EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Outcomes 3: Increased Workforce Participation**

**Output Group 3.1: Working Age Policy**

**Output 3.1.1: Working Age Policy and Legislation**

**Question Number: W266-05**

**Question:**

Senator Carr asked in writing:

Please provide an update on progress in the Shepparton Trial and an assessment of the lessons learnt to date?

**Answer:**

As part of the Shepparton trial a number of projects have commenced that have focussed on education and transitions to employment. These projects involve a number of Commonwealth and State agencies working with the local community. Below is a brief update on progress so far.

- In early 2003, an Aboriginal Community Facilitation Group (ACFG) was established. Members are drawn from key local Indigenous organisations including employment, education, health, sporting and community organisations. The Government meets with the ACFG on a monthly basis.
- The local Shepparton business community has demonstrated its commitment to making a difference in partnership with local Indigenous people. Through the *Ladders to Success* Project, around 60 businesses supported by DEWR's Indigenous Employment Programme and the Victorian State Government cooperated to provide 100 jobs over three years, 2003-06. So far 40 local indigenous people have been placed in jobs, well ahead of the target of 20.
- Through the *Indigenous Self Help* programme, five participants have signed loan agreements for businesses in therapeutic massage; arts and craft; and tourism. Another two are in the first stages of the programme and are undertaking financial literacy.

- The Department of Family and Community Services is funding a project for young Indigenous people to further develop Indigenous Leadership roles in Shepparton including involvement in the COAG trial.
- School to work with DEST, Education Victoria.

Two of the key learnings that have emerged from the Shepparton trial are:

- identifying particular projects, where locals are able to have key roles and responsibilities in progressing initiatives. For example, the *Ladders to Success* project was established following agreement to support the project from key stakeholders and involving locals in running the project; and;
- regional word-of-mouth in extending successful projects to other regions. For example, a multi-employer STEP project similar to the *Ladders to Success* project has commenced in Mildura. At least one other Indigenous community has also directly approached DEWR to consider implementation of a COAG style approach to their community issues.