

**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES 2008-09**

**Outcome/Agency**        7

**DEEWR Question No. EW1008\_09**

Senator Siewert provided in writing.

**Question**

*Indigenous Employment*

What employment and training packages or initiatives are currently available for Aboriginal people?

**Answer**

Indigenous Australian can access both mainstream and specialist programs and initiatives for employment and training assistance.

Job Network is currently the largest employment program for Indigenous Australians. From 1 July 2009, Job Network will cease and Job Services Australia will commence. Job Services Australia will provide tailored assistance and increased training and skills development and work experience opportunities for Indigenous Australians through an individual Employment Pathways Plan and help with vocational and non-vocational needs supported through an Employment Pathways Fund. Job Services Australia will work closely with local communities and employers to develop employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians and build strong connections with local Community Development Employment Program (CDEP) organisations and with the reformed Indigenous Employment Program. In remote areas, Job Services Australia will assist Indigenous Australians to undertake foundation education and language and literacy training, with extra resources to address the costs of delivering quality services in these locations.

The Government has announced a reformed Indigenous Employment Program with increased funding to commence from 1 July 2009. The reformed IEP will be more flexible and responsive to the needs of communities, employers and job seekers and will streamline access to assistance. The reformed IEP will enable the department to work with people to deliver a broad range of projects suited to their own local circumstances, focussing on how to achieve the best employment outcomes. As part of these reforms, on 16 March 2006 the department released a Request for Tender for two panels for the Indigenous Employment Program 2009-2012 (the Employment panel and the Economic Development and Business Support Panel). Further information about the Tender is available at [workplace.gov.au](http://workplace.gov.au).

Current assistance under the Indigenous Employment Program includes::

- *Structured Training and Employment Projects (STEP) and STEP Employment and Related Services (STEP ERS)* that offer structured training, pre-employment support, job placement, and mentoring services for Indigenous job seekers;
- *The Corporate Leaders for Indigenous Employment Project;*
- *Wage Assistance* wage subsidies for employers who recruit Indigenous job seekers;
- *The National Indigenous Cadetship Project* which links Indigenous students in diploma, advanced diploma and undergraduate degree courses with employer work placements;

- The *Community Development and Employment Project Placement Incentive* for CDEP organisations that successfully place participants into off-CDEP employment; and
- The *Aboriginal Employment Strategy* which provides individually tailored assistance to help Indigenous job seekers prepare for, gain and retain jobs.

The department is also working closely to support to Australian Employment Covenant, a private sector led initiative to secure 50,000 lasting jobs for Indigenous Australians.

A number of programs and initiatives also deliver training outcomes specifically for Indigenous Australians. These include:

- The Indigenous Youth Mobility Program (IYMP) which provides opportunities for 200 Indigenous young people from remote and rural areas at any time, to access post secondary qualifications including Apprenticeships, Vocational Education and Training, and higher education in 10 participating major centres. These centres are at: Cairns, Townsville, Toowoomba, Newcastle, Dubbo, Canberra, Shepparton, Adelaide, Perth or Darwin. From July 2009, the number of places available through the IYMP will increase to over 320 and the number of host locations will increase to 17. In 2009, the IYMP will also introduce the capability to work with Industry on location based projects to deliver Apprentice housing and support in areas with skills and or labour shortages;
- Training Initiatives for Indigenous Adults in Regional and Remote Communities (TIFIARRC) provides funding to attract, engage and support Indigenous adults in training that will open up sustainable employment opportunities. Funding is also available for projects to build the capacity of Indigenous training providers or develop new community-based providers to tailor the specific training needs of clients in regional and remote communities. Preference is given to training that results in, or is linked to, Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate II or above qualifications, including additional training places under the the Australian Government's Skilling Australia for the Future policy. TIFIARRC operates in Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory. The Australian Government has committed \$21.4 million over four years, with the participating jurisdictions matching funding. In 2007-08, the states/territory matched the Australian Government's contribution of \$3.5 million. Funds are allocated on an estimated Indigenous resident population distribution basis;
- Indigenous Regional Projects establish and trial innovative initiatives that focus on improving Vocational Education and Training Outcomes for Indigenous participants;
- The Sporting Chance Program provides an option for Indigenous secondary students in many Australian locales. It uses sport and recreation to better engage Indigenous students in learning and to increase retention to Year 12. Some Sporting Chance Program participants access VET in Schools as their pathway to Year 12 attainment and then to further education, training and employment.
- ABSTUDY provides a means-tested living allowance and a range of supplementary benefits for secondary and tertiary students. ABSTUDY is provided to enable Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islander students to complete secondary schooling and move to further education, including higher degrees, or an Australian Apprenticeship.

Indigenous Australians also access assistance through mainstream services including Australian Apprenticeships, the Australian Apprenticeship Access Program, Group Training, the Language Literacy and Numeracy Program, Vocational Education and Training in Schools and Vocational Education and Training delivered through Registered Training Organisations, and through programs offered by State and Territory Governments.

Further details about mainstream and specialist employment and training assistance for Indigenous Australians are also available at the department's website:

<http://www.deewr.gov.au>

<http://www.workplace.gov.au/workplace/Programmes/IndigenousProgs/>