

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2011-2012**

Outcome 3 - Tertiary, Skills, International and Indigenous Strategy

DEEWR Question No. EW1180_12

Senator Bernardi asked on 16 February 2012 , Hansard page 20

Critical Skills Investment Fund – Regional Funding

Question

National Workforce Development Fund

"Senator BACK: Of which \$369 million is new funding and \$199 million is through the previously announced Critical Skills Investment Fund. Can you tell me now or can you take on notice the proportion of those funds that are set aside for regional Australia. Ms Taylor: That is now in with the transfer of our skills colleagues to the industry area but having had some involvement in that fund previously I know there is a 30 per cent guarantee for that fund to be directed towards regional. Our skills colleagues can obviously give you more up-to-date detail. But when I was last involved it had exceeded that regional target. Senator BACK: Would that information be available on a state-by-state basis, do you know? Ms Taylor: It should be. It is a project based fund but I am sure one of the difficulties with that might be, without trying to answer for my skills colleagues, in identifying where the actual workers are as opposed to the project. But you might want to refer that to— Senator BACK: Sure. Ms Caldwell: We can take it on notice, if you like. These functions have gone to a different committee now but I am happy to take it on notice and we will follow through. Senator BACK: Yes, thank you. "

Answer

The Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education has provided the following response.

The Critical Skills Investment Fund has been incorporated into the National Workforce Development Fund, making a total of \$558 million Australian Government co-funding over four years for industry training and workforce development projects in areas of current and future skills needs.

Page 9 of the NWDF Guidelines states 'A fair proportion of funding will be available to support the delivery of training in regional areas'. This proportion is at least a population share, or 32 per cent based on the definition of regional and remote areas under the Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA). The proportion will be managed over the whole of the program, and there are no separate allocations by state and territory.