

Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace Relations

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Additional Estimates 2012-2013

Outcome 2 - Schools and Youth

DEEWR Question No. EW1014_13

Senator Back asked on 14 February 2013, Hansard page 108

Question

Programs for Young People from Regional Australia

Senator BACK: Are you able to point to any programs that are for young people from regional Australia? Mr Davies: There are a number. The Youth Connections Program that you are probably familiar with targets young people who are at risk of disengaging from school. It has a high proportion of young people from regional and rural Australia. It is probably the easiest if I can give you a table with all of them and their proportions, because there is a heap of them.

Answer

In relation to Outcome 2 (Schools and Youth) there are a number of programs that service young people in regional Australia.

Youth Connections

Youth Connections provides a safety net for young people at risk of not attaining a Year 12 or equivalent qualification. Youth Connections provides flexible and individualised case management to assist young people to remain engaged or re-engage with education and to improve their ability to make positive life choices.

Most recent Youth Connections data show that 70 per cent of participants are located in regional and remote regions (this relates to regions with an average ARIA index value between 0.2 and 10.53 being classified from Inner Regional to Very Remote). There were approximately 28 000 participants in the program in 2012 and funding for the year was \$72.3 million.

The Sporting Chance Program

The Sporting Chance Program is an Australian Government initiative that uses sport and recreation as a vehicle to increase the level of engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in their schooling. The program has been implemented with providers working together with schools, education authorities, sporting bodies, businesses and community groups.

In 2013, 75 projects are operating in Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia, Victoria and the Northern Territory. A total of 59 projects operate in rural, regional or remote Australia which equates to 79 per cent of the total.

Assistance for Isolated Children's Scheme

The Assistance for Isolated Children's Scheme (AIC) helps isolated families of primary, secondary and certain tertiary students with additional support to access schooling because they are unable to attend an appropriate government school on a daily basis primarily due to geographical isolation.

For 2012-2013 there is a budgeted amount of \$64.9 million. From 1 January 2012 to 30 November 2012, a total of 9762 students had received AIC assistance.

The Country Areas Program

The Country Areas Program supports rural and remote students by providing financial assistance to those non-government schools whose students are educationally disadvantaged because of their geographical isolation. The program solely targets regional Australia. Funding for the 2012 calendar year was \$6.3 million.

Parental and Community Engagement Program (PACE)

The Parental and Community Engagement Program is a community driven program for parents and carers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people (generally aged 0-19). It supports initiatives that assist families and communities to 'reach-in' to schools to engage in their children's education through participation in educational decision making, developing partnerships with education providers and supporting and reinforcing their children's learning at home.

PaCE operates in all states and territories, including rural and regional Australia. Since the program commenced in 2009, 494 diverse projects have been initiated. Many of these projects operate in regional Australian and across multiple MCEECDYA geo-locations:

- Metropolitan – 141
- Provincial – 233
- Remote – 76
- Very Remote – 84

Of the total number of projects initiated since 2009, 393 have and/or are operating in regional locations.

Indigenous Education Ambassadors Program

The Indigenous Education Ambassadors Program provides for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to act as role models to promote the importance of education, literacy and numeracy to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, their parents and the wider community. Ambassadors visit all education and training settings (including early childhood centres, preschools, TAFE colleges, trade centres, universities and pre-employment services), including those in regional Australia. Ambassadors are available at no cost to schools and other organisations promoting improved outcomes and efforts in Closing the Gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students and other Australians.

During 2012, Ambassadors attended 50 events throughout Australia and of these 32 were held in regional locations.

Wakakirri

The Australian Government provided funding of \$704 000 (GST inclusive) for 2011 and 2012 to Wakakirri, a non-profit organisation that organises a national story sharing arts festival for schools. The festival provides access for schools to address social issues through creating stories with a community message using dance, song, film, arts and writing.

Wakakirri has implemented separate programs for city, country, and outback schools in remote Indigenous communities. The Wakakirri Outback Program, aimed at secondary students, provides Indigenous and non-Indigenous students from remote and regional areas of Australia the opportunity to participate in a national performing and visual arts festival. Three festivals were held in 2012 in locations in the Northern Territory, Western Australia, and South Australia where approximately 1500 students were involved.

The School Business Community Partnership Brokers (Partnership Brokers)

The Partnership Brokers program, which has national coverage, was put in place to build partnerships that support young people to reach their full educational and social potential. While some schools are already engaging in partnerships, many schools, businesses and communities need support to make connections, build networks and develop partnering skills.

Partnership Brokers are currently supporting over 1500 partnerships involving more than 5000 partner organisations. As at September 2012, approximately 43 per cent of the schools engaged in partnerships supported by Partnership Brokers were located in regional Australia.

The Youth Development and Support Program (YDSP)

The Youth Development and Support Program is an annual national grants program to support small-scale, community-based development projects for young people aged 12 to 25 years in Australia. YDSP is open to organisations across Australia that are non-government, not-for-profit, and a company or an incorporated association.

Of the 15 organisations funded in the 2012-13 round, 20 per cent of the total funding is provided to organisations in a provincial classification and 33 per cent in a rural demographic classification (as defined by the Australian Electoral Commission).

Heywire

Heywire is an annual competition designed to encourage young people aged 16-22 living in rural or regional Australia to submit short stories about life outside the major cities. Each year the winning stories are published throughout the ABC's platforms and winners are flown to Canberra to develop leadership and policy development skills. Heywire is supported by the Australian Government, including the Office for Youth.

The program is specifically targeted at young people from rural and regional areas; therefore, 100 per cent of the program supports this target group.

Rock Eisteddfod Challenge

The Rock Eisteddfod Challenge is an educational and aspirational performing arts and health program giving students (aged 5 to 18) the opportunity to take part in a dance, drama and design spectacular. In 2012, approximately 15 per cent of participating schools were from regional areas.

Rock the Schools

Rock the Schools is a touring education and entertainment initiative designed to inspire secondary students across Australia to pursue a career in the music industry. In 2012 approximately 80 per cent of participating schools were from regional areas.

Indigenous Youth Mobility Program

The Indigenous Youth Mobility Program provides post-school pathways for young Indigenous people aged 16 to 24 to move to a new location to help them gain vocational education and training qualifications or a university degree.

Between 2009 and 2013, 30 per cent of participants were from provincial regions and 68 per cent of participants were from remote/very remote regions.

Indigenous Remote Service Delivery Traineeships

Indigenous Remote Service Delivery Traineeships aim to provide sustainable work and training opportunities for young Indigenous people aged between 15 and 24 in remote areas. Between 2010 and 2013: almost 1 per cent of trainees were from inner regional regions; 38 per cent from outer regional; and 61 per cent were from remote/very remote regions.

Indigenous Youth Leadership Program

The Indigenous Youth Leadership Program is helping to close the gaps in Indigenous educational disadvantage through supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to attend high performing secondary schools and/or universities to complete Year 12 and/or an undergraduate degree.

Thirty of the 75 schools approved to host the scholarships through this program are located in regional Australia. In 2013, 33 per cent of participants are from provincial regions and 57 per cent of participants are from remote/very remote regions.

Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME)

The Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience delivers education programs that give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students the skills and opportunities to finish school and connect students with post-Year 12 pathways, including further education and employment. In 2013, 50 per cent of participants are from regional Australia.

Reach Foundation

The Australian Government supports the Reach Foundation to further develop existing networks of support to assist youth, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, to complete Year 12 and teacher training to support at risk teenagers. Between 2010 and 2014, the Australian Government has contributed \$4 million to the foundation.

The Foundation delivers its secondary school workshops in metropolitan, rural and regional areas of Victoria and New South Wales. Teacher training programs are also delivered in regional locations. In 2013, 58 per cent of participants are from regional and rural Australia.

National Indigenous Youth Leadership Academy (NIYLA)

Managed by the Foundation for Young Australians, the National Indigenous Youth Leadership Academy supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people develop their leadership capacity, complete their schooling and establish post-school pathways. NIYLA will deliver seven workshops (one national and six regional) each year from 2013. In 2013, 20 per cent of participants are from regional and rural Australia.

Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA)

The Transition to Independent Living Allowance is one-off support from the Australian Government to help young people who are leaving Care to meet some of the costs involved in moving to independent living. Approximately 46 per cent of successful TILA applicants in 2011-12 lived in rural/regional/remote locations.

The National Broadband Network (NBN) Enabled Education and Skills Services Program

The Australian Government has provided up to \$27.2 million in a four-year grants program to develop and implement deployment trials that will use the NBN to deliver online and interactive education, training and skills services. Twelve projects are being funded to demonstrate how the NBN can increase the education, training and skills development opportunities for Australians, no matter where they live, work or study, and especially those Australians who find it difficult to attend classes because of their work commitments or family responsibilities. Many of the projects are trialling services in regional areas.

Schools participating in the proposed trials are spread across all states and territories including regional Australia, and include both government and non-government jurisdictions. Teachers and students will have increased access to education material and an improved means of collaborating and communicating with each other. Students will be able to access teachers from home, and students in rural or remote areas will have the opportunity to receive interactive lessons or instruction via live video streaming from specialist teachers or trainers who are not available locally.

One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) initiative

The Australian Government has provided a one-off grant of \$11.7 million to OLPC Australia to support expansion of the initiative to primary school students in regional and remote communities and low SES schools. The initiative supports the learning opportunities of primary school children, particularly those in remote Australia, by providing children with an internet connected custom-designed laptop or tablet with sustainable teacher training and support.

Australia-wide services and programs

The Australian Government supports a number of other awards, services and programs to help young people, including those in regional areas. For these, it is not possible to determine the numbers of regional youth affected:

- *myfuture* is Australia's national career information and exploration service, designed to help people of all ages and life stages to plan their career pathways. The Australian Government in collaboration with the states and territories jointly fund myfuture.
- The Job Guide is funded by the Australian Government and assists young people to explore career, education and training options and make subject choices. Copies are sent to every secondary school with Year 10 enrolments and limited quantities are also provided to universities, TAFEs and Australian Government funded youth programs.

- The Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Studies provides youth organisations, youth workers, policy makers, researchers, and young people themselves with comprehensive and current information about youth issues.
- National Awards for Local Government, which have a Youth Engagement and Participation category.
- Young Australian of the Year Awards.
- The Australian Youth Affairs Coalition (AYAC) is the non-government youth affairs peak body which undertakes a range of activities targeted at all young people including on-line surveys, distribution of an e-newsletter and forums. AYAC supports a number of Young Advocates who come from regional areas of Australia.
- National Youth Week is Australia's single largest event on the youth calendar. It recognises, acknowledges and celebrates the important value and contributions young people bring to the community. Individual events are organised by the states and territories and in 2012, they reported that approximately 350 National Youth Week events took place in regional areas around Australia. A geographic location was not reported for some events so this number may not be comprehensive.
- Australian Youth Forum (AYF) is the formal communication channel between the Australian Government, young people (aged 15-24) and the youth sector. An important element of the AYF is the Youth Engagement Steering Committee, whose main role is to support the youth engagement component of the AYF. This program seeks the views of young Australians who live in rural and remote areas through a range of approaches and engagement activities including youth forums, online engagement activities and via social media. Three of the current Steering Committee is from rural and regional areas including: Driver NT; Kadina SA; Glenorchy TAS.