

## EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

### SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2004-2005 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

**Outcome:** 1

**Output Group:** 1.1 – Assistance for quality teaching and learning

#### DEST Question No. E142\_05

Senator Crossin provided in writing.

#### Question:

In a press release (May 17th) by the Australian Secondary Principals Association they say the teacher shortage continues to have a significant effect on schools, and that the situation will only get worse. They are concerned that "...there seems to be little action resulting from research into teacher supply and demand commissioned last year by Minister Nelson."

- a) What in fact is being done to increase the number of teachers at secondary level?
- b) How many university places were there last year for training secondary teachers?
- c) How many this year?
- d) How many applicants were actually turned down in those two years due to lack of university places?

#### Answer:

##### *Teacher Shortage*

- a) For its part, the Australian Government has significantly increased the number of university places in teaching, including: a pipelined total of 770 additional places between 2002 and 2005 allocated under *Backing Australia's Ability*, a pipelined total of 410 additional places between 2005 and 2008 allocated to private higher education institutions; and a further pipelined total of more than 5,000 places between 2005 and 2008. The Government has made teacher education a national higher education priority and is investing an additional \$109.2 million over the period from 2005 to 2008 in recognition of the costs to universities of the teacher practicum. In order to attract students to undertake the national priority courses, the student contribution amounts for education units of study (and nursing units of study) will not be permitted to rise above the existing HECS level (indexed), unlike those for all other higher education courses.

Government education authorities in nearly all States have responded to current teacher shortages by offering a range of scholarships and incentives to current teachers and teacher education students to qualify or retrain in secondary specialist areas of shortage or to teach in hard to staff areas, particularly rural or remote.

- b) Data on equivalent full time student load (EFTSL) provides a measure of university places. The EFTSL for all domestic students enrolled in initial secondary teacher education in 2003 was 14,041.
- c) Full EFTSL data for 2004 will not be available until the end of 2004.
- d) Data on unsuccessful applications for university places in teacher education is not held by the Department and is not readily accessible from other sources.