

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

**2004-2005 BUDGET SENATE ESTIMATES HEARING
31 MAY AND 1 JUNE 2004**

EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Outcome 1: An effectively functioning labour market

Output Group 1.2: Labour market programme management and delivery

Output 1.2.4: Mutual Obligation Initiatives

Question Number: W046-05

Question:

Senator Webber asked in writing:

Please advise the Committee how many Work for the Dole Projects have been undertaken in the Yanchep area of Western Australia?

- (a) How many of those projects have operated on the former Defence Department Firing range?
- (b) What investigation into possible risk was undertaken?
- (c) Who undertook that investigation?
- (d) Were any of the participants on the project(s) advised that they would be working on a former Defence Department Firing Range?
- (e) Are participants allowed to refuse to participate on a Work for the Dole project if they are concerned about their safety?
- (f) Did any of the participants actually refuse to be involved in a project in the Yanchep area?
- (g) Are you aware that the Western Australian Fire and Emergency Services Agency or FESA will not fight bushfires in the Yanchep area with ground personnel?
- (h) Why would it be alright to have a Work for the Dole Project operating in an area that FESA is not prepared to work in?
- (i) Does this mean that the Department has made an assessment that is at cross purposes with FESA?

Answer:

There have been 25 Work for the Dole (WfD) activities operating in the Yanchep/Two Rocks area since the Commonwealth contracted Community Work Coordinators (CWCs) to manage the programme in 2000.

- (a) Two WfD activities were located on the former Defence Department Firing range. Both occurred at a beach carpark at “The Spot”, halfway between Yanchep and Two Rocks.
- (b) It is a contractual obligation that risk assessments are undertaken on each site on which participants undertake WfD work experience. Any risks identified are rectified or steps taken to manage such risks. No remnants were reported and the area found safe to work.
- (c) The City of Wanneroo contracted a qualified organisation, Fire and Emergency Services Authority of WA, to conduct a survey of the area for any remnant ordnance.
- (d) Participants on the activities were advised that the activities were located on the old firing range, after the sponsor received the report from the City of Wanneroo. The activities were located in a carpark accessible by the public, and surrounding areas.
- (e) Should a WfD participant express concerns about safety issues on a particular site, it is likely that they would be given the opportunity to participate in a different activity. In addition, if WfD participants have any concerns about their safety, they can either raise the matter with their CWC or they can bring the matter to the attention of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, via the Customer Service Line. The Department takes issues of participant safety very seriously.
- (f) No participants refused to work on the site.
- (g), (h), (i) The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations is not in a position to comment on decisions made by FESA. However, as noted above, FESA was contracted to conduct a survey of the area for remnant ordnance.