

## EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

### SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2005-2006 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

**Outcome:** 1 and 2

**Output Group:** 1.2 – Assistance to individuals including those with special needs.  
2.5 – Assistance for post school students including those with special needs.

#### DEST Question No. E038\_06

Senator Crossin asked on 1 June 2005, EWRE Hansard page 36.

#### Question:

I asked in 2003 about the number of secondary school aged children across the Northern Territory, Western Australia and Queensland. The answer to the question was E0104, and I wanted an update of the tables. The tables were, 'persons aged 13 to 17 years', and they were identified at that stage in the 2001 ABS Census, so I am assuming you could use last year's census as a new point of reference.

- (i) Does the department have the number of persons aged 13 to 17 years of secondary school age? Or do you rely on ABS data.
- (ii) My question really goes to the number of secondary school students across the Northern Territory, West Australia and Queensland – Indigenous and non-Indigenous – in relation to the third table which is about the number of ABSTUDY applications that have been received from those three states.

#### Answer:

##### *Secondary School Aged Children*

- (i) *Number of persons aged 13-17 years of secondary school age.*

The department relies on the official population statistics prepared by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to extract data on the number of persons aged 13 to 17 years of age.

Table 1 below provides data for the Indigenous and Total Population for 2004 and equivalent figures from the ABS projections data for 2001.

The table shows that between 2001 and 2004 the population of Indigenous people aged 13 to 17 years is estimated to have increased by 6.4 per cent in the Northern Territory, 10.7 per cent in Western Australia and 14.0 per cent in Queensland.

Table 1 Indigenous Persons and Population aged 13-17 years in Northern Territory, Western Australia and Queensland, 2001 and 2004

		13-17 Years	NT	WA	Qld
2001	<b>Total</b>		15,086	140,390	259,939
	<b>Indigenous</b>		6,158	7,414	13,523
2004	<b>Total</b>		15,227	143,438	274,625
	<b>Indigenous</b>		6,555	8,205	15,412

Sources: Total Population: ABS, 3201.0 Population by Age and Sex, Australian States and Territories, June 30 2001 and 2004; and Indigenous Population: ABS Experimental Indigenous Projections by State and Territories and Age, Low Series, June 30 2001 and 2004, unpublished data provided to DEST

Note: Both low and high series projections are available. Only low series projections have been used in the table above for consistency with the ABS Indigenous population estimates from the 1991 to 1996 and 1996 to 2001 inter-census periods. Low series projections assume no unexplained increase in the Indigenous population while high series projections assume unexplained growth continues at the rate observed between 1996 and 2001.

Note:

For all years, ABS produces estimates of the total population of Australia. For 2001 only, a census year, estimates of the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations are available. For non-census years, such as 2004, the only Indigenous data available are projections (the current series spans 2002-2009). For non-census years, estimates or projections on the non-Indigenous population are not available.

Indigenous projections are based on assumptions and methods whereas total population estimates are based on a method using observed data. For this reason, the ABS does not recommend approximating non-Indigenous estimates for non-census years, such as 2004, by subtracting a disparate projection series from a total population estimate series as the non-Indigenous estimates would contain some unquantifiable error.

(ii) *Total secondary school students*

Table 2 shows the number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous and total secondary school students in the Northern Territory, Western Australia and Queensland in 2001 and 2004. It shows that between 2001 and 2004 the number of full-time Indigenous secondary school students increased by 20.8 per cent in the Northern Territory, 18.4 per cent in Western Australia and 21.6 per cent in Queensland.

Table 2 Full-time Secondary School Students in the Northern Territory, Western Australia and Queensland, 2001 and 2004

		NT	WA	Qld
2001	<b>Non-Indigenous</b>	7,887	121,961	228,552
	<b>Indigenous</b>	3,404	5,301	9,942
	<b>Total</b>	11,291	127,262	238,494
2004	<b>Non-Indigenous</b>	8,004	123,715	240,719
	<b>Indigenous</b>	4,111	6,274	12,092
	<b>Total</b>	12,115	129,989	252,811

Source: Schools, Australia, 2004, table 47, Australian Bureau of Statistics No 4221.0

Table 3 shows applicants for secondary school ABSTUDY received by Centrelink in 2001 and 2004. It shows that between 2001 and 2004 the number of applications for secondary school ABSTUDY increased by 4.6 per cent in the Northern Territory, 9.8 per cent in Western Australia and 19.8 per cent in Queensland. The total number of applications for secondary school ABSTUDY across all eight states and territories increased by 14.9 per cent.

Table 3 Applications received by Centrelink for secondary school ABSTUDY for 2001 and 2004

	NSW	QLD	WA	NT	SA	VIC	TAS	ACT	Not Specified	Total
2001	9,082	7,720	5,040	2,506	1,359	1,658	1,100	146	28	28,639
2004	10,541	9,247	5,535	2,621	1,643	1,844	1,278	201	1	32,911

Source: SuperSTAR data provided by Centrelink

Note: Applications have a determination status of Assessed, Cancelled, Current, New Claim, Rejected, or Suspended.

On June 4 2003 Senator Crossin tabled Question on Notice E001\_04. Part (b) of that question asked "How many applications for ABSTUDY were received for this year of schooling in total and in a breakdown of numbers by each state". The data provided in response to that question was provided in July 2003 and therefore did not include data for the full calendar year. Table 4 below shows data for the full calendar year January 1 to December 31 2003.

Table 4 Applications received by Centrelink for secondary school ABSTUDY for the calendar year 2003

	<b>NSW</b>	<b>QLD</b>	<b>WA</b>	<b>NT</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>VIC</b>	<b>TAS</b>	<b>ACT</b>	<b>Not Specified</b>	<b>Total</b>
2003	10,307	8,800	5,683	2,689	1,651	1,650	1,297	186	1	32,264

Source: SuperSTAR data provided by Centrelink

Note: Applications have a determination status of Assessed, Cancelled, Current, New Claim, Rejected, or Suspended.