

## EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

### SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2007-2008 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

#### Outcome

#### DEST Question No. E121\_08

Senator Crossin provided in writing.

#### Question:

1. Do you have final data on how many students used these vouchers in 2006, broken down by state and territory?
2. Do have the final amount of funding that actually went to each state and territory?
3. What was the national average take up rate for these vouchers in 2006? By state and territory please.
4. Why have you continued with \$700 per student after two years of this program? Surely the level of tutor payment would have risen in that time and \$700 would not buy as many tutor hours now?
5. What qualifications or experience will be expected of anyone wishing to be a tutor?
6. How do they register as a tutor – with DEST or with state or territory authorities?
7. Do they need to also have police checks?
8. In Budget paper 2 at page 121 under details for this program it says tutor performance will be monitored. Who will do this and how – what instrument(s) of assessment will be used?
9. Is this funding only for out of school tuition or in remote schools where tutors may not be easily available could it be used, as suggested by the NTG Education Minister among others, to get additional support in the classrooms, so that one “tutor” could help several students?
10. My information from the NT Department of Education is that last year 800 year 3 students were eligible for these vouchers. This year they anticipate many more with years 5 and 7 too. How is the grant to the NT department determined – do they have to put in numbers first or is it based on the past year?
11. Do you anticipate this program again being allowed to run through the schools as last year in the NT?
12. Will it still be run by private providers in other states? What is the amount you provide for the provider administration fee and has this changed over the years?
13. I am not sure of other jurisdictions but in the NT the tutor is paid \$42 an hour. This therefore means about 16 hours effective tuition per student. Do you think that is enough to really achieve much?

#### Answer:

## *Reading Assistance Vouchers*

Unless otherwise indicated, it is assumed that all questions relate to the current Year 3 Reading Assistance Voucher programme.

1. There were no vouchers provided in 2006 under the RAV Year 3 programme. Students who were below the Year 3 national reading benchmark in 2006 are receiving tuition in 2007 and final data on how many students receive tuition will not be available until the completion of the programme.
2. Funding for the RAV Year 3 programme is managed through a National Programme Manager. It is therefore not possible to calculate the funding amount for states and territories. Funding has not been fully expended as tuition for eligible students will continue until the end of the 2007 school year.
3. Tuition for students eligible for the Reading Assistance Voucher (RAV) programme for Year 3 is being delivered in the 2007 school year. Final take-up rates by state and territory will not be known until the completion of the programme.
4. Level of assistance was decided by Government based on information such as the programme evaluation.
5. The RAV Year 3 Programme Guidelines require that prospective tutors must demonstrate capacity, through formal academic qualifications, to provide tuition. The qualifications required are equivalent to those that the State or Territory Government recognise when employing teachers.

In some instances, where no qualified tutors are available, tutors without formal qualifications may be suitable, subject to National Programme Manager approval. In these cases the National Programme Manager will consider the prospective tutor's depth of relevant experience and any cultural sensitivities.

6. People interested in becoming tutors for the current RAV Year 3 programme can register their details on the online database available through the RAV website at [www.readingtuition.edu.au](http://www.readingtuition.edu.au).
7. Prospective tutors will be required to satisfy the criminal history checks (working with children checks) applicable for registered teachers in the state or territory in which they will work.
8. Monitoring and assessment arrangements will finalised for the new Literacy and Numeracy Tuition Assistance initiative before tutoring commences.
9. Arrangements for individual circumstances will be determined on the basis of exercising effective personalised tuition. The current RAV Year 3 programme allows for flexibility regarding tuition delivery to accommodate individual circumstances.
10. There is no grant to the Northern Territory Department of Employment, Education and Training under the RAV Year 3 programme.

Under the new Literacy and Numeracy Tuition Assistance initiative, assistance will be provided for all eligible students across Australia.

11. Administrative details are still being developed for the new Literacy and Numeracy Tuition Assistance initiative.

12. Administrative arrangements for the new Literacy and Numeracy Tuition Assistance initiative will ensure cost effective provision in different locations across Australia. This may involve working with education authorities, schools, parents and tuition providers to ensure tuition is delivered in the most effective way.
13. The tutor payment for the RAV Year 3 programme in the Northern Territory is \$42.70 per hour to provide a minimum of 15 hours of tuition.

The Erebus evaluation of the pilot TVI showed that the majority of parents were satisfied with the impact \$700 worth of tuition provided to their children. Final outcomes of the RAV Year 3 programme will not be known until the programme is completed at the end of the 2007 school year.