

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

**2007-2008 BUDGET SENATE ESTIMATES HEARING
28 and 29 MAY 2007
EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO**

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Outcome 1: **Efficient and effective labour market assistance**

Output Group 1.2: **Labour market programme management and delivery**

Output 1.2.2: **Employment Services**

Question Number: **W174-08**

Question:

Senator Wong asked at *Hansard* page 116:

Under the Welfare to Work package, funds were allocated to provide wage subsidies for the very long term unemployed. Please provide an update on:

- a) How much was originally allocated, in total, per year, and per instance
- b) When these funds first became available
- c) How these funds are accessed
- d) How many subsidies under Wage Assist have been provided to date at what total costs and in each instance
- e) To date, have subsidies under Wage Assist exceeded estimates in either number of instances or in cost, and if so, to what extent, or have subsidies under Wage Assist been less than estimates either in number of instances or in cost?

Answer:

(a)-(c) Answers to these questions were previously provided in Question on Notice number W1065-07

(d) As at 30 June 2007, 200 job seekers had completed 13 weeks in their Wage Assist job, at a cost of \$2300 per job seeker at a total cost of \$460 000. Of these, 43 job seekers had already completed 26 weeks in their Wage Assist job by this date, at an additional cost of \$2300 per job seeker, totalling \$98 900. The total cost as at 30 June 2007 is \$558 900.

(e) Of the 3000 places allocated for 2006-2007, there have been 1031 commencements in Wage Assist (as at 30 June 2007). Usage of Wage Assist has increased significantly over time with the majority of Wage Assist places being accessed in the third quarter of the 2007 financial year.

Estimated cost: Using the FOI calculator, to prepare this answer it has taken approximately 3 hours at an estimated cost of \$60.