

**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 3: Increased workforce participation

Output Group 3.1: Working age policy

Output 3.1.1: Working age policy and legislation

Question Number: W258-08

Question:

Senator Wong asked in writing:

What strategies does DEWR use to manage activity requirements for individuals receiving payments who are currently, or at risk of, homelessness?

Answer:

DEWR does not directly manage activity requirements. Centrelink and Providers of Australian Government Employment Services (PAGES) manage activity requirements in accordance with legislation and DEWR policy. This policy is outlined in the Guide to Social Security Law and guidelines for PAGES.

Centrelink and PAGES are required to be alert to a job seeker's accommodation situation when setting requirements or taking compliance action. PAGES and Centrelink are required to ensure that requirements are reasonable. If a job seeker's accommodation situation is likely to impede their ability to comply then those requirements should be adjusted accordingly or the job seeker should be referred to a more appropriate service or given a temporary exemption from the activity test.

When determining whether or not a job seeker had a reasonable excuse for failing to meet their activity test requirements, Centrelink officers are required to take into account the job seeker's accommodation situation.

Assessment tools such as the Job Seeker Classification Instrument and the Vulnerability Indicator are designed to assist Centrelink and PAGES in managing activity test requirements for job seekers who are currently, or at risk of, homelessness.

Estimated cost: Using the FOI calculator, to prepare this answer it has taken approximately half an hour at an estimated cost of \$10.