

**EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

**SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
2008-09 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING**

**Outcome**           7

**DEEWR Question No. EW203\_09**

Senator Abetz provided in writing.

**Question**

Program funding and Outcome (Work for the Dole)

In addition Work for the Dole has a 33% increase in its budget but only achieves a 12.5% increase in use of program capacity. Why is the increase in use so much lower than the increase in the budget?

References: Portfolio Budget Statements 2008-09, Budget related paper no. 1.5. Pages 113, 122, 123.

**Answer**

The percentage increase in the budget compared to the percentage increase in program capacity is a direct reflection of the increasing costs associated with setting up Work for the Dole activities. The current labour market skill shortages and low unemployment has placed increased demand on Community Work Coordinators to be more flexible and creative when setting up Work for the Dole activities to meet not only the needs of job seekers but also the local community. For example, while job seeker commencements in Work for the Dole have declined, the number of Work for the Dole activities has increased (with less job seekers, on average, per activity). This has increased the overall costs of the Work for the Dole program.