

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS

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

Outcome **8**

DEEWR Question No. EW541_09

Senator Watson asked on 2 June 2008, EEWHR Hansard page 4 & 5.

Question

Pg 4 - Senator WATSON—The outcomes of all these inquiries that you have been having, in terms of how you have delivered on your budget commitments, can you give us a paper on this?

Pg 5 - Ms Paul—The No. 1 thing at the moment, which I am sure we will discuss, is the review of employment services. And if I look at the program for today and I see 'Working age policy', that is probably our No. 1. We are happy to give you a summary of each of those and provide that to the committee

Answer

From 1 July 2009, a new employment services system will be introduced in Australia which will provide better, more tailored assistance to disadvantaged job seekers and place greater emphasis on helping employers to fill job vacancies. To support this, a discussion paper was released to seek views on the future framework for employment services, including how participation requirements can be made more flexible and responsive to job seekers' needs. The Government has also announced a Participation Taskforce to examine mature age participation and whether there are better ways of balancing participation requirements for parents with their family and community responsibilities.

The review of employment services, together with the associated departmental reviews of the Job Seeker Classification Instrument (JSCI), Job Capacity Assessments, and Social Security Appeals and Litigation Arrangements, arise out of election commitments to encourage people into work. There is also the National Mental Health and Disability Employment Strategy being developed in consultation with people with disability and/or mental illness, peak bodies, service providers, employers, unions, state and territory governments and experts. The Strategy will outline how policy and programs across portfolios and state, territory and Commonwealth governments can work together to help people with disability and mental illness gain and retain work.