

**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2009-10**

**Outcome/Agency**        4

**DEEWR Question No. EW0205\_10**

Senator Cash asked on Monday 1 June 2009, EEWHR Hansard page 44.

**Subject Heading**

*Communicating the stopping of referrals with Centrelink*

**Question**

*How did the Department (DEEWR) communicate the stopping of referrals with Centrelink?*

**Answer**

Referral arrangements for the former employment services programs were published in the *Transition Reference Document for Providers* and the *Process for Concluding 2006-2009 Employment Services Contracts - Guideline*. Consistent with the transition principles in the *Request for Tender for Employment Services 2009-12*, these arrangements included that new job seekers who registered for assistance in the period leading up to the commencement of Job Services Australia would be referred wherever possible to 'continuing' providers able to assist them beyond 1 July 2009.

However, to ensure that job seekers did receive employment services as quickly as possible, it may have been necessary to refer job seekers to 'non-continuing' providers in some locations. This was dependent on whether there were 'continuing' providers in the area. These arrangements are also outlined in the reference documents and guidelines mentioned above.

Consistent with these arrangements, from close of business 1 May 2009, DEEWR through its IT system ended the making of referral appointments at those sites where new referrals were to cease but allowed referrals to 'non-continuing' sites where appropriate. This prevented Centrelink from being able to refer job seekers to the sites where referrals were to cease. In addition, the Department on 15 May 2009 provided Centrelink with a data extract providing a consolidated list of sites to which referrals could not be made.

Centrelink was not advised, and no arrangements were made, to cease referrals to non continuing providers prior to 1 May 2009.