

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

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

**Outcome 4**

**DEEWR Question No. EW0302\_10**

Senator Adams asked provided in writing.

**Question**

*Programs available to older Australians*

Are there any programs available to older Australians to encourage their return or continuance in the workforce?

**Answer**

As part of Job Services Australia, mature age job seekers will work with their employment services provider to develop their own combination of job search, training, work experience and other assistance, which will best help them find and keep a job. Each job seeker will work with their provider to develop an Employment Pathway Plan. Providers will have access to a flexible pool of funding (the Employment Pathway Fund) to buy a range of goods and services to address the job seeker's personal employment barriers.

Under Job Services Australia, mature age job seekers will have access to Stream Services (including Work Experience), Harvest Labour Services and the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme.

Mature age job seekers may also benefit from Innovation Fund projects and Employer Brokers. Employer Brokers will engage with employers in a skill or labour shortage industry, or a specific location, to broker solutions that meet employers' needs. They will target the efforts of employment services providers to matching the needs of job seekers with the labour requirements of employers. Job Services Australia will promote stronger ties with employers and it is anticipated that this will help to address possible negative employer attitudes that may exist toward mature age people.

Mature age people made redundant as a result of the global recession can access immediate employment assistance to help them get back into the workforce as quickly as possible. Job seekers who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own will be provided with immediate support. This initiative will run for two years and covers all workers made redundant between 24 February 2009 and 31 March 2011.

Mature age job seekers can train or re-skill in areas of skill shortage. The Productivity Places program provides 711 000 training places over five years to ensure that Australians develop the skills that industry needs. Of these places, 392 000 are available to existing workers, including those of mature age, who wish to gain new skills or upgrade their existing skills and 319 000 (including 20 000 places for redundant and recently retrenched workers) are available to job seekers.

A temporary Training Supplement of \$41.60 per fortnight will be available to eligible mature age job seekers on Newstart Allowance or Parenting Payment who do not have year 12 or equivalent or those who would benefit from undertaking training at the Certificate II level or higher to re-skill for the future. The supplement is available to eligible people commencing approved training between 1 July 2009 and 30 June 2011.

Australian Apprenticeships are also able to assist mature age Australians to train or re-train. An employer of a disadvantaged worker (aged 45 years or older) may attract a special Mature Aged Worker Commencement Incentive and a Mature Aged Worker Completion Incentive. In addition, Australians over the age of 25 are eligible for extra financial assistance, through the Support for Adult Apprentices initiative.

In addition, workers who cannot continue in their job due to the impact of disability, injury or health condition can access specialised employment assistance through the Disability Employment Network and Vocational Rehabilitation Services. This assistance includes free workplace assessments and adjustments, and help with job re-design if it is required. These services will be replaced with new demand driven Disability Employment Services from 1 March 2010. Information and advice for mature age people with an injury, disability or health condition is available through JobAccess.