

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace  
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Budget Estimates 2012-2013**

**Outcome 3 – Employment**

**DEEWR Question No.** EW0253\_13

**Senator Marshall asked on 29 May 2012 , Hansard page 49**

**Question**

**Seasonal Worker Program - Remittances and Length of Stay**

CHAIR: Are you able pull out the value of the remittances to each of the countries of origin? Mr Roddam: I can do. I can also let you know that on average it has been \$A5,000. That will differ between countries, so I will provide that on notice. CHAIR: What is the average length of stay? Mr Roddam: Until December 2011, there was a minimum of six-months' stay and up to seven months for the workers who are in for that period. In December 2011 that minimum stay was reduced to four months, so they can be here for between four and seven months. We can provide that on notice but the average will be around that five- to six-months mark.

**Answer**

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations does not record data on the value of remittances seasonal workers send back to their countries of origin.

The amount each seasonal worker remits will depend on a range of factors including:

- earnings;
- accommodation, transport, food, health and incidental costs, and
- lifestyle choices.

A 2011 paper authored by John Gibson (University of Waikato) and David McKenzie (World Bank), entitled *Australia's Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme (PSWPS): Development Impacts in the First Two Years*, estimates that a typical seasonal worker remits approximately AUD\$5,000 to family and friends in their country of origin. It is important to note that this estimate was calculated using self-reported data by seasonal workers (not administrative data from employers), and that the researchers only surveyed the amount of remittances for Tongan and Kiribati seasonal workers.

A seasonal worker's stay in Australia under the Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme depends on their individual employment offer which can range from a minimum of 4 months to 6 months.

As at 31 May 2012, the average length of stay for seasonal workers who had completed employment and returned to their country of origin was 5.6 months.