

## EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

### SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2003-2004 SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

**Outcome:** 2  
**Output Group:** 2.2

**DEST Question No.** E478\_04

Senator Crossin asked on 6 November 2003

#### **Question:**

The report *How Young People Are Faring* (Dusseldorp Skills Forum 2003) stated that as of May 2003 an average of 14.9% of young Australians between 15 and 19 were not in school or in full-time work. Does the Department agree with this figure? What plans are there for improving VET and other training programs for young people in this age group?

#### **Answer:**

*Proportion of 15 to 19 year olds not in school or full-time work*

The figure of 14.9% cited in the report from the Dusseldorp Skills Forum (DSF) is drawn from the monthly ABS *Labour Force Australia* publication for May 2003 (Cat. No. 6202.0), and is the proportion of 15 to 19 year olds who are not studying full-time or working full-time. Based on these data, the report states that this group "are likely to be experiencing difficulty in making a successful transition from secondary education, and face a higher level of risk in the labour market over the long-term than their counterparts who are fully engaged in education or training". This use of the ABS data is incorrect for two main reasons.

First, the data used in the DSF report are based on a single point in time and do not reflect the dynamic nature of the process of transition from school to work. The proportion of young people who experience long-term difficulties in making the transition from school to work is likely to be much lower than the figure cited in the DSF report.

Second, many of the 14.9% identified by the DSF report (as not 'actively engaged') are participating actively in their communities or in work. Data from the annual ABS *Survey of Education and Work* (Cat No 6227.0) show that the group of 15 to 19 year olds, who are not studying full-time or working full-time, represented 14.3% of all teenagers and comprised the following groups:

- 6.9% in part-time work, part time study or a combination of both. Teenage part time workers not studying full-time work on average around 22 hours a week and about ¾ of them are not seeking more hours;
- 3.1% neither in study nor in the labour force. This is predominantly for valid reasons. Most of them have caring responsibilities for children or other family members, while others are ill, travelling or having a break from study; and
- 4.3% seeking work but not studying at the same time.

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	Full-time study	Part-time study	Not studying	Total
	<i>% of population aged 15 to 19</i>			
Employed full-time	0.4	5.0	10.6	15.9
Employed part-time	25.3	1.3	5.4	32.0
Unemployed	5.1	0.3	4.3	9.7
Not in the labour force	38.9	0.3	3.1	42.3
Total	69.8	6.9	23.3	100.0

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**Source:** ABS, *Education and Work*, Cat. No. 6227.0, May 2002.

### *Plans for improving VET for young people*

#### *VET in Schools*

The Australian Government is continuing to work with jurisdictions, through MCEETYA and MINCO processes, to continuously improve VET in Schools.

At the ANTA MINCO meeting on 13 June 2003, Training Ministers agreed that the Australian Governments and ANTA, in consultation with the National Training Quality Council and the Transition from School Taskforce, provide advice to the November 2003 meeting of ANTA MINCO, and out of session to MCEETYA, on a comprehensive range of strategies to address perceived or real quality issues associated with VET in Schools programmes, particularly in relation to:

- The implementation of the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) in the schools sector;
- The delivery and assessment of institutional pathways without a workplace component;
- The extent, relevance and quality of work placement and work simulation associated with VET in Schools;
- Current coverage in relation to industry and student needs; and
- Research and data on quality and outcomes.

Ministers at the June ANTA MINCO meetings noted the progress made to date and the Action Plan to progress quality issues for VET in Schools.

#### *New Apprenticeships and School Based New Apprenticeships*

New Apprenticeships are a key element of the Government's approach to maintaining a skilled and flexible workforce. New Apprenticeships combine practical work with structured training and lead to nationally recognised qualifications. Commencements in New Apprenticeships are currently at historically high levels.

Many schools now offer the option for students to start a New Apprenticeship while at school. School-based New Apprenticeships enable young people to gain a national vocational qualification while continuing school studies. They have a number of features including:

- attendance at school and work;
- a training agreement, which links to an industrial award or agreement, signed by the employer and the New Apprentice;
- attainment of a senior secondary certificate and a vocational education and training qualification;

- the student earns a wage for the time spent in productive work.

School Based New Apprenticeships have experienced strong growth over recent years and currently account for 5% of all commencements.