

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

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

Outcome: 2

Output Group: 2.1 - Funding for vocational education and training

DEST Question No. E498_04

Senator Carr asked on 6 November 2003.

Question:

The Government persists in telling us in these hearings that Abstudy changes in 2000-01 had no impact on Indigenous enrolment. It says that the apparent shift in enrolments from higher education to VET was spontaneous.

Can you explain the trend in Indigenous enrolments in VET as follows:

Year	Number
1999	50,795
2000	51,662
2001	258,046
2002	59,763

What is the reason for the student surge in enrolments in 2001?

Answer:

Trends in Indigenous VET enrolments

The enrolment figure for 2001 on which your question may be premised is incorrect. The actual figure being 58,046, not 258,046. Thus, Indigenous VET enrolment figures were:

Year	Number	Change in numbers*	% change*
1999	50,795	-	-
2000	51,662	+867	+1.70
2001	58,046	+6,384	+12.35
2002	59,763	+1,717	+2.96

*over previous year

Indigenous enrolments in VET have consistently increased since 1996, and continue to do so, with record numbers of Indigenous students enrolled in VET in 2002.

DEST is currently undertaking research to determine the impact of changes to ABSTUDY on Indigenous students' participation in tertiary education. The findings of this research may assist in identifying possible causes for the increase in Indigenous VET enrolments in 2001.