

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE – QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2006-2007 SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome:

Output Group: Audit and Investigations Group

DEST Question No. 589 & 590

During proceedings Senator Wong asked the following questions (Reference Page EWRE 106).

Question:

Senator WONG — Can you tell me what has been happening there since 1 July.

Mr Baker — What I am aware of at the moment is that we have had some audit activity in relation to an organisation in Queensland. Some of our staff visited an organisation the week before last. I am afraid that I do not have any further information and I will have to take that on notice. [589]

[and]

Mr Baker — Every year our audit and business assurance committee approves an annual audit plan. The 2006 annual audit plan was approved in August this year. There is still some work outstanding from previous audit plan for 2005-06 period that may have fallen into the 2006 audit plan. The point I am trying to make is that any visits by DEST officers to organisations in Queensland could be related to the previous audit plan.

Senator WONG — Does the particular organisation still have offices in Victoria as well as Queensland?

Mr Baker — I am not aware of that from the information I have got in front of me.

Senator WONG — Does anyone in the room know anything more about this audit?

Ms Paul — I think we will have to take it on notice. [590]

Answer:

Annual Audit Plan

The Annual Audit Plan for 2006-07 covering planned internal audit work in DEST was approved by the DEST Audit and Business Assurance Committee in August 2006. The plan included audits of four Australian Apprenticeship Centres (AACs) over the course of the year. A program of auditing four AACs/NACs has been part of the annual audit program for some years, although only two audits were conducted in 2005-06 because of the AAC tender process.

The particular AACs to be audited in 2006-07 is determined following consultation with National Office program managers and State Office contract managers and on the basis of consideration of a number of factors including risk and coverage.

As noted at the hearing, a Queensland-based AAC, Employnet & Apprenticeship Traineeship Services [Employnet], was the first AAC audit to be conducted in 2006-07 with auditors undertaking field work at the business's premises in Townsville during the week 9-13

October 2006. The audit was completed in November 2006. Employnet only conducts Australian Apprenticeship business in the North Queensland business area. We believe Employnet is also a Job Network member.

Three other AACs, in three other States/Territories, are scheduled to be audited during 2006-07. We do not normally provide advance notice to the AACs we intend to audit over the course of a coming year. We provide appropriate advice and notice to the individual AAC close to the time of the audit and in accordance with contract arrangements.