

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

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2011-2012**

**Outcome 3 - Tertiary, Skills, International and Indigenous Strategy**

**DEEWR Question No. EW0635\_12**

**Senator Nash provided in writing.**

**Question**

***National Workforce and Productivity Agency***

"Following up Question on Notice from budget estimates on the National Workforce and Productivity Agency – [http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/eet\\_ctte/estimates/bud\\_1112/answers/EW0185\\_12.pdf](http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/eet_ctte/estimates/bud_1112/answers/EW0185_12.pdf) The dept responded the government has identified that the priority sectors to be targeted in 2011-12 will be construction and aged care in addition to the sectors currently targeted under the Critical Skills Investment Fund (resources, construction, infrastructure and renewable energy industry sectors). There will also be funding available to support occupations in critical shortage as advised by Industry Skills Councils in sectors not covered by the Critical Skills Investment Fund or in the construction and aged care sectors. • Can the dept explain why agriculture is not included given the concerning shortage of labour and graduates within the agriculture sector. "

**Answer**

The government is supporting supply of skills across all industry sectors, including agriculture. This support is provided through the base funding arrangements and through enterprise based funding.

In the first round of NWDF funding priority has been given to sectors related to resources, construction and aged care with a final share of funding available to all sectors for priority occupations and skills. These decisions reflect both the high growth in these sectors and the immediate skills needs. For example Health Care and Social assistance which accounts for 11.4% of the current workforce, has grown by 22.7% over the past five years and is expected to grow 4.5% through to 2015- 16. This compares to agriculture which accounts for 2.8% of the total workforce, has had a 9% decline over the last five years but is expected to increase by 1.4% per annum through to 2015-16.