

Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace Relations

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

Outcome 4 - Employment

DEEWR Question No. EW0653_12

Senator Payne provided in writing.

Question

Suspensions and Participation Reports for Indigenous job seekers

I understand new rules came into effect this financial year with respect to clients who miss JSA appointments.

Can you please provide any figures available so far in relation to breaches for Indigenous clients, and the number of these clients that no longer receive income benefits as a result?

Can you please also provide the number of Participation Reports that were lodged and upheld in the last financial year, broken down by Centrelink benefit, type of breach and gender?

Answer

Between 1 July 2011, when the new compliance arrangements for job seekers were introduced, and 30 September 2011, 20 020 income support payment suspensions were incurred by 13 768 Indigenous job seekers for not attending an appointment with a Job Services Australia or Disability Employment Services provider. This does not include instances where the job seeker's income support payment was already suspended by Centrelink at the time for another non-related reason, such as a failure to attend a Personal Contact Interview.

The Department does not have data on the number of these Indigenous job seekers who "are now no longer receiving income support payments as a result" of the new rules.

However, job seekers who are suspended have their income support payment restored, with full back payment, once they agree to attend a reconnection appointment with their employment services provider. Job seekers who lose payment as a result of failing to attend this reconnection appointment without reasonable excuse have their payment restored, without back payment, once they attend a further reconnection appointment.

The number of Participation Reports (PRs) submitted and applied for Indigenous job seekers connected to Job Services Australia or Disability Employment Services in the 2010-11 financial year, broken down as requested, is provided in the following tables.

Table 1: Indigenous Job Seekers – PRs submitted/applied for 2010-11 Financial Year by Allowance Type

Allowance Type	Newstart Allowance	Youth Allowance (other)	Parenting Payment Partnered	Parenting Payment Single	Total
Total PRs submitted	87 184	31 775	616	5 744	125 319
Total PRs applied	42 974	17 970	278	2 529	63 751

Table 2: Indigenous Job Seekers – PRs Submitted/Applied for 2010-11 Financial Year by Compliance Failure Type

PR Type	Connection	No Show No Pay	Reconnection	Serious	Total
Total PRs submitted	88 041	19 081	17 468	456	125 319
Total PRs applied	48 293	9 149	6 180	129	63 751

Table 3: Indigenous Job Seekers – PRs Submitted/Applied for 2010-11 Financial Year by Gender

Gender	Male	Female	Total
Total PRs submitted	77 893	47 426	125 319
Total PRs applied	40 553	23 198	63 751

Source: DEEWR administrative data