

**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Inquiry into the DEEWR Tender Process to award employment service contracts

EEWR_SIH_W23

Senator Siewert provided in writing.

Question

Was there a desire to encourage a diversity of providers?

Answer

Diversity of providers was encouraged. Job Services Australia and associated purchasing arrangements were designed to offer opportunities for a wide range of organisations to be part of the service delivery network including local community based, specialist and Indigenous organisations.

This was achieved through a number of mechanisms including the design and weighting of the selection criteria as well as increasing flexibility in allowing organisations to form different types of 'tendering groups' or sub contracting arrangements and operate in a manner which best suited their needs.

The tender outcomes have seen more partnerships, alliances and subcontracting arrangements than were evident in past contracts.

The selection criteria weightings gave emphasis to the understanding of the new Job Services Australia and the tenderers' ability to translate this into locally tailored strategies. This gave smaller community based organisations greater opportunity to demonstrate their strengths and abilities in these areas.

Tenderers were encouraged to bid as a specialist provider where they were able to demonstrate and quantify the need for a specialist service. Where appropriate, specialist bids were awarded business to ensure diversity of service provision.

The end result has been that the tender process for Job Services Australia has delivered a diverse choice of suitable providers for job seekers consistent with the Request for Tender which included diversity as a factor in determining value for money.