

Audit report of the 2024–25
annual performance statements

Department of Employment and
Workplace Relations



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT on the 2024-25 Annual Performance Statements of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

To the Minister for Finance

Conclusion

In my opinion, the 2024-25 Annual Performance Statements of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR):

- present fairly DEWR's performance in achieving its purpose for the year ended 30 June 2025; and
- are prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the requirements of Division 3 of Part 2-3 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (the PGPA Act).

Audit criteria

To assess whether DEWR's annual performance statements complied with Division 3 of Part 2-3 of the PGPA Act, I applied the following criteria:

- whether the entity's key activities, performance measures and specified targets are appropriate to measure and assess the entity's performance in achieving its purposes.
- whether the performance statements are prepared based upon appropriate records that properly record and explain the entity's performance.
- whether the annual performance statements present fairly the entity's performance in achieving the entity's purposes in the reporting period.

Accountable Authority's responsibilities

As the Accountable Authority of DEWR, the Secretary is responsible under the PGPA Act for:

- the preparation of annual performance statements that accurately present DEWR's performance in the reporting period and comply with the requirements of the PGPA Act and any requirements prescribed by the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014* (the Rule).
- keeping records about DEWR's performance as required by the PGPA Act, and
- establishing internal controls that the Accountable Authority determines are appropriate to enable the preparation of annual performance statements.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the performance statements

My responsibility is to conduct a reasonable assurance engagement to express an independent opinion on DEWR's annual performance statements.

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing

Standards, which include the relevant Standard on Assurance Engagements (ASAE) 3000 *Assurance Engagements Other than Audits or Reviews of Historical Financial Information* issued by the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board.

Procedures were planned and performed to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the annual performance statements of the entity present fairly the entity's performance in achieving its purposes and comply, in all material respects, with the PGPA Act and Rule.

The nature, timing and extent of audit procedures depend on my judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, in the annual performance statements. In making these risk assessments, I obtain an understanding of internal controls relevant to the preparation of the annual performance statements in order to design procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my conclusion.

Independence and quality control

I have complied with the independence and other relevant ethical requirements relating to assurance engagements, and applied Auditing Standard ASQM 1 *Quality Management for Firms that Perform Audits or Reviews of Financial Reports and Other Financial Information, or Other Assurance or Related Services Engagements* in undertaking this assurance engagement.

Inherent limitations

Because of the inherent limitations of an assurance engagement, it is possible that fraud, error or non-compliance may occur and not be detected. An assurance engagement is not designed to detect all instances of non-compliance of the annual performance statements with the PGPA Act and the Rule as it is not performed continuously throughout the period and the assurance procedures performed are undertaken on a test basis. The reasonable assurance conclusion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Australian National Audit Office



George Sotiropoulos

Group Executive Director

Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra

9 October 2025

2

Performance statements

| | |
|--|----|
| Statement by the accountable authority | 20 |
| Purpose, outcomes and programs | 21 |
| Analysis | 22 |
| Results | 28 |

Statement by the accountable authority

I, as the accountable authority of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, present the 2024–25 Annual Performance Statements of the department, as required under paragraph 39(1)(a) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).

In my opinion, these annual performance statements are based on properly maintained records, accurately reflect the performance of the entity, and comply with subsection 39(2) of the PGPA Act.



Natalie James
Secretary
Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
24 September 2025

Purpose, outcomes and programs

We support people in Australia to have safe, secure and well-paid work with the skills for a sustainable future

Outcome 1

Outcome 2

Outcome 3

OUR OUTCOME STATEMENTS

Foster a productive and competitive labour market through policies and programs that assist job seekers into work, including secure work, and meet employer and industry needs.

Promote growth in economic productivity and social wellbeing through access to quality skills and training.

Facilitate jobs growth, including secure work, through policies and programs that promote fair, productive and safe workplaces.

OUR PROGRAMS AND KEY ACTIVITIES

Program 1.1 – Employment Services

- Provide quality services to job seekers and employers
- Support job seekers to achieve sustainable employment
- Support target groups to improve their work readiness and prepare for employment

Program 2.1 – Building Skills and Capability

- Enhance the quality of vocational education and training (VET)
- Respond to national future skills needs through access to VET graduates with the required skills
- Improve language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy (LLND) skills for target groups

Program 2.2 – VET Student Loans

- Reduce barriers to undertaking quality VET

Program 2.3 – Nuclear-powered Submarine Program

- Respond to national future skills needs through access to VET graduates with the required skills

Program 3.1 – Workplace Support

- Promote fair, productive and safe workplaces through policies and programs
- Support the protection of workers' entitlements

Note: Program 3.2 listed in the Employment and Workplace Relations 2024–25 Portfolio Budget Statements covers the Comcare workers' compensation scheme and is managed by Comcare. Comcare reports against this program and associated performance measures in its annual report.

The Tuition Protection Service (TPS) is managed by the TPS Director, an independent statutory office holder operating within the Department of Education and appointed by the Minister for Education. A component of the TPS's work relates to VET Student Loans, and for this work the Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations is the accountable authority. Information on the TPS can be found on the [TPS website](#).

Analysis

Employment and workforce

Employment programs and service delivery

The past year has highlighted challenges in the changing Australian labour market. The proportion of extremely long-term participants (those on the caseload for 5 years or more) has increased over the past decade. Lower skill, entry level jobs have fallen from 45% of employment in 1995 to 38% in 2025, and growth in low-skill jobs lags behind growth in high and middle skill level jobs.

A decline in low-skilled job advertisements contrasts with the education profile of employment services participants – more than half of whom have Year 12 or less attainment (56.2%).^{1,2,3} This has created challenges in achieving employment outcomes for participants, despite overall unemployment remaining low by historical standards (4.3%) and participation high (67.1%).⁴ Despite this, participant satisfaction with services has increased with 78% of Workforce Australia Services participants between 30 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 being satisfied or very satisfied with the overall quality of service they received.⁵

In 2024–25 the department conducted the first comprehensive review of all 176 Workforce Australia Services licences since the introduction of Workforce Australia. This review resulted in the cessation of 10 licences, while 166 licences were extended from 1 July 2025 – 2 conditionally for one year, and 164 for 2 years, including 15 conditional extensions.

Our activities also focused on supporting people to improve their work readiness and prepare for employment. Parent Pathways⁶ replaced ParentsNext on 1 November 2024, reflecting a shift toward voluntary, personalised support for parents and carers of young children to better prepare them for the labour market.

Extensive consultation helped shape the design and implementation of the program, including through the establishment of a dedicated Parents Advisory Group. Through direct engagement with parents and carers, the department gained valuable insights into their aspirations and circumstances, recognising their individual needs and affirming the value of their caring responsibilities. Members from the group continue to play a vital role in guiding the ongoing refinement and continuous improvement of the service. The department continues to grow the connections to the program with 17,890 participants engaged as at 30 June 2025.

¹ Low-skill jobs refers to jobs requiring Certificate II or Certificate III (Skill Level 4), or jobs requiring Certificate I or secondary education (Skill Level 5).

² Online advertisements for Skill Level 4 jobs fell by 9.9%, and those for Skill Level 5 jobs fell by 5.1% over the year to June 2025.

³ Of the Workplace Australia Services caseload, 52.6% have completed Year 12 or a lower education level. Data as at 30 June 2025 includes education groups: Year 1 to 9, Year 10 to 11, Completed Secondary School, and None.

⁴ The Australian Bureau of Statistics June 2025 Labour Force data reported that the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 4.3%, and the participation rate was 67.1%.

⁵ Further analysis of the proportion of participants who are satisfied with the overall quality of services delivered is available on page 32.

⁶ Further information on the Parent Pathways program is available on www.dewr.gov.au.

Assuring the integrity of the Targeted Compliance Framework

The Targeted Compliance Framework (TCF) applies to people required to meet mutual obligations in return for receiving income support. The TCF can lead to outcomes to reduce or cancel a person's social security payment, which can have a profound impact on people, and on their experience of the employment services system. The Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations is responsible, under social security law, for administering mutual obligations and the TCF.

In 2024–25 it became clear there were examples where the TCF was not operating in alignment with the law and as intended. The Secretary paused those parts of the system, and the department commenced and commissioned reviews to assure the integrity of the administration of the TCF, to ensure decisions are being made in a lawful and robust manner.

The department is taking a proactive and transparent approach to examining the operations of the TCF acknowledging the critical impact it has on people's lives. The department has also begun reviewing and, where relevant, compensating people affected by cancellation decisions as a result of some of the decisions under the TCF.

Strengthening the integrity of employment services and testing new approaches

On 31 October 2024 the department delivered on a key commitment from the government to launch a new user-centred in-house complaints service. In 2024–25 the service received 8,320 complaints about employment and pre-employment services, most of which were resolved at first contact. This user-centred service is an important source of information about the servicing experiences of our participants and helps drive improvements to program performance and the accountability of employment services providers.

The department also implemented changes to mutual obligations and compliance settings in its employment services to provide stronger safeguards and better reflect individuals' circumstances, including more equitable recognition of people's study and voluntary work towards meeting participation requirements.

Another key focus was the design and planning of new initiatives to support people into sustainable employment, through the Real Jobs, Real Wages and WorkFoundations pilots. In 2024–25 the department collaborated with employer and provider stakeholders to co-design the pilots and progressed key implementation tasks and communication strategies. The pilots commenced in July 2025 to provide paid employment pathways through partnerships with employers and social enterprises. The trialling of these new approaches will assist people to develop their workplace skills and meet the needs of business. People participating in these programs will be employed and paid at award or enterprise agreement rates, with legal entitlements including superannuation.

Place-based and workforce participation initiatives

The department continues to deliver programs and place-based initiatives that strengthen workforce participation. The Broome Employment Services trial,⁷ extended to June 2027, is continuing its community-led model, delivered in partnership with a First Nations provider. The Local Jobs Program was also extended for 2 years from June 2025, consolidating funding streams into the Local Jobs Local People grant. In 2024–25, over 3,000 participants have engaged in Local Recovery Fund activities, and more than 4,000 people have been supported through the National Priority Fund since July 2021.

The Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme continued to respond to regional labour shortages while supporting Australia's strategic interests in the Pacific. In 2024–25, the department commenced a review of the PALM scheme deed and guidelines to examine the impact of key PALM settings – implemented on 26 June 2023 – to determine if they meet the government's priorities. Employer participation in the scheme grew from 478 to 513 approved employers.⁸

⁷ This trial is also contributing to Outcome 8 (Employment) of Closing the Gap.

⁸ PALM scheme data is publicly available on <https://www.palmscheme.gov.au/palm-scheme-data>.

The department supported workers and communities affected by industry change through the Transition Support Network. Across 2024–25, 37,683 retrenchments were reported to the Australian Government via formal Notifications of Dismissal (from employers intending to dismiss 15 or more employees). Affected individuals were connected to training, career advice, and employment support, including immediate access to Workforce Australia Services.

The department also progressed a suite of foundational activities to support workers and communities in the transition to a net zero economy. Regional Workforce Transition Officers provided on-the-ground leadership in the Hunter, Gippsland, Central Queensland and the South West region of Western Australia, identifying future employment pathways and facilitating local engagement to inform transition planning.

Skills and training

The department has continued to steward the VET system with state and territory governments, employers, unions and the VET and Higher Education sectors. Together we seek to deliver a high-quality, responsive and accessible VET system that boosts productivity whilst also supporting Australians to obtain the skills they need to prosper.

In 2024–25, the department continued to support VET students to overcome barriers to participate in skills and training, including through fee relief, foundation skills and reducing systemic barriers to participation. Commencing on 1 January 2023 to 31 March 2025, Free TAFE has supported over 650,000 enrolments nationally, including over 224,000 enrolments by young people (24 and under), over 160,000 enrolments by job seekers, over 53,000 enrolments by people with disability and over 39,000 enrolments by First Nations people. Women make up the majority (over 62%) of enrolments, with over 404,000 enrolments by women taking on a qualification under the program. In 2025 the government legislated Free TAFE with 100,000 places prioritised to cohorts who typically face barriers to education and training. Free TAFE will be offered in fields of study in high demand and of national and state priority.

Through the government's commitment to increasing access to foundation skills, the department rolled out the reformed Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) Program from 1 July 2024. Focused on providing students with English language, literacy, numeracy and digital skills, the program seeks to support students to participate more fully in their place of work, family and community. In addition to addressing their foundation skills needs, the SEE Program provides one-on-one wraparound support to participants via the participant support officer role.

The department recognises the barriers many women face in male-dominated trades and sectors. Through the government's Future Made in Australia initiative, the department is working with tripartite partners to enable increased female participation through systemic change in male-dominated trades and sectors. Through the **Building Women's Careers (BWC)** grant opportunity, 20 successful partnership projects were announced in March 2025 which aim to drive systemic structural and cultural change in training and work environments. The BWC program is a leading gender equality commitment highlighted under the Commonwealth's Skills and Training Jurisdictional Action Plan.

In 2023–24 the establishment of key system architecture including Jobs and Skills Australia and Jobs and Skills Councils (JSCs) was a key focus of the department. In 2024–25 the department continued to deliver reformed skills and training system architecture and levers. The department engaged in extensive consultation with the VET sector, states and territories and the regulator to design and implement the revised **Standards for Registered Training Organisations** (the Standards). Taking effect from 1 July 2025 the revised Standards better reflect the diversity of the VET sector and ensure requirements are fit for purpose across different registered training organisation (RTO) settings. The Standards also provide a clearer link between the requirements RTOs are expected to meet and the outcomes they are expected to deliver.

In addition to the reform of the Standards, in 2025 the **Skills and Workforce Ministerial Council agreed to the updated Training Package Organising Framework**.

Developed by the tripartite Qualification Reform Design Group and developed in close consultation with the VET sector, the updated Training Package Organising Framework (effective from 1 July 2025) embeds a new purpose-led, principles-based approach to qualification design and aims to improve quality, simplify training package product design and reduce complexity. This is a significant reform that ensures training packages – as a core part of the VET system architecture – are fit for purpose in a rapidly changing world.

The department worked with states and territories to deliver 10 TAFE Centres of Excellence. The TAFE Centres of Excellence will increase collaboration between TAFEs, through partnerships with employers, unions, universities and other stakeholders, and deliver the skills people need for good, secure work and careers. In addition, Skills and Workforce Ministers released the VET Workforce Blueprint recognising the VET workforce as a key to delivering on governments' ambitions for the VET system. Developed in collaboration with the sector, the VET Workforce Blueprint provides a roadmap to grow, support and sustain the VET workforce. Noting the importance

of data in the VET system, in 2025 the department has worked closely with key skills and training data custodians including the National Centre for Vocational Education Research and the Student Identifiers Registrar to ensure that they are operating effectively to support reform in the sector.

The apprenticeship system is key to delivering a range of government commitments including on net zero, construction, early childhood and Future Made in Australia. Commencing in 2024, the department supported the independent **Strategic Review of the Australian Apprenticeship Incentive System** (Strategic Review) to better understand how to help people start and complete apprenticeships and traineeships. A national consultation process heard from **600 stakeholders across 90 engagements** with apprentices, employers, industry, unions, state and territory governments and JSCs. In 2024–25, in response to the most urgent recommendations of the Strategic Review, the government announced several measures which commenced on 1 July 2025, including an extension of current incentive settings for apprentices in priority occupations and their employers to 31 December 2025, increases in the Living Away from Home Allowance, increases in the Disability Australian Apprentice Wage Support payment, introduction of the Key Apprenticeship Program and Housing Construction stream and amendments to the Group Training Organisation Reimbursement Pilot.

The department continues to lay the foundations of a more joined-up tertiary education system to support Australia's skills needs. We partner closely with the Department of Education and Jobs and Skills Australia on a range of reforms including the establishment of the interim **Australian Tertiary Education Commission**, and the progression of multiple tertiary harmonisation measures including a pilot led by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) to delegate course accreditation to selected TAFEs. The department undertook activities to amend the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), which enables VET providers to deliver AQF Level 7 qualifications. Skills and Education Ministers then formally endorsed the Vocational Degree qualification type specifications, which will help leverage the VET system to address the increasing need for higher levels of advanced technical skills, and employability skills, to meet the demands of rapid economic and social changes.

Workplace relations

The department continued to deliver on the government's workplace relations agenda in 2024–25. In promoting fair, productive and safe workplaces, the department aided reform of the construction industry, undertook several reviews of important aspects of the workplace relations system, enabled tripartite consultation, and progressed health and safety measures, including through international commitments.

In August 2024 the department facilitated the passage of the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Amendment (Administration) Act 2024*. The principal effect of those amendments was to allow for a scheme of administration to be determined and an administrator to be appointed to the Construction and General Division of the Construction, Forestry and Maritime Employees Union (CFMEU). Subsequently, during 2024–25, the department led the Commonwealth's successful defence of the High Court challenge to the legislation and scheme for the administration of the Construction and General Division of the CFMEU. With the High Court unanimously dismissing the challenge, the department continues to monitor and support the administration to facilitate lasting change within the division and the industry. In convening the National Construction Industry Forum, and engaging government, union and business representatives, the department facilitated the development of the Blueprint for the Future. Released as a draft on 27 March 2025, the Blueprint for the Future identifies key challenges in the industry and sets out a forward work plan to address them.⁹

The department's implementation and review of workplace relations reforms included developing the Digital Labour Platform Deactivation Code and Road Transport Industry Termination Code to prevent digital platform workers and regulated road transport contractors from being unfairly dismissed from work. The department also continued to support the government as it participated in the process to finalise the first supported bargaining agreement in the early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector. The landmark agreement, approved by the Fair Work Commission on 10 December 2024, has expanded from its original coverage of 60 employers, employing around 12,000 employees, to cover 494 employers, employing more than 45,500 ECEC workers, all of whom have received a pay rise of 10%, with another 5% to come in December 2025.

⁹ The Blueprint for the Future was formally endorsed in September 2025. For more information see <https://www.dewr.gov.au/australian-building-and-construction-industry/resources/blueprint-future>.

The department led the preparation of the government's submission to the Fair Work Commission's 2024–25 Annual Wage Review, which recommended that the Expert Panel award an economically sustainable real wage increase to Australia's award workers. On 3 June 2025, the Expert Panel announced an increase to minimum and award wages of 3.5%, effective 1 July 2025.¹⁰ Also related to wages, the department played an important role in the Commonwealth's engagement with the Fair Work Commission's Gender-based undervaluation – priority awards review.¹¹ The review's initial decision found that several care sector occupations have been the subject of gender undervaluation and there are work value reasons for wage rises.

In addition, the department supported 3 independent statutory reviews – of the *Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Secure Jobs, Better Pay) Act 2022*, the entitlement to 10 days paid family and domestic violence leave, and the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRC Act). In its final report to the minister, the Secure Jobs, Better Pay Review Panel found that the reforms are achieving their intent, with minimal unintended consequences, and offered 21 recommendations.¹² The paid family and domestic violence leave review reported that surveyed workers who accessed the entitlement found it beneficial in maintaining their income and their employment, and would recommend others use the leave if needed.¹³ The SRC Act Review Panel is due to report to government in September 2025. The department has supported the panel's consultations for the review of the legislation which underpins the Comcare workers' compensation scheme, encompassing over 700 public responses and regular engagement with a tripartite reference group.

Working groups, meetings and grants are other means through which the department facilitated cooperative dialogue and collaboration on workplace relations matters. The department continued to support employer and employee representative organisations to engage proactively and collaboratively with workplace relations reforms through such tripartite grants as the Productivity, Education and Training Fund. In 2024–25 the department established the Advancing Gender Equality in Gender Segregated Industries pilot grant program to drive development of innovative solutions to address gender inequality and industry segregation.

The department also convened and supported a range of consultations, including ministerial meetings, the Committee on Industrial Legislation, the Family and Injured Workers Advisory Committee and the First Responder Mental Health Working Group. Reflecting the significance of AI to work and workplaces, the department also facilitated the establishment of the AI Employment and Workplace Relations Working Group, under the National Workplace Relations Consultative Council.

Engaging stakeholders on work health and safety matters, the department delivered a Health and Safety Representative Train-the-Trainer Program. The training provided 100 participants with the opportunity to strengthen capabilities to identify and support management of psychosocial hazards in the workplace. The program included e-learning modules, trainer guides, fact sheets, and in-person workshops in each state and territory.

On 29 October 2024, Australia ratified the International Labour Organization (ILO) Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187) in a tripartite ceremony in Geneva, Switzerland, with representatives of the Australian Council of Trade Unions and the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The convention promotes nationwide policies, systems and programs to support a safe and healthy working environment, and prevent occupational injuries, diseases and deaths.

With this latest ratification, Australia became the first country in the Asia-Pacific region to ratify all 10 fundamental ILO conventions. Ratifying these conventions demonstrates Australia's commitment to upholding fundamental principles and rights at work and ensures Australia is a fair, safe and secure place to work and do business.

¹⁰ For more information see

<https://www.fwc.gov.au/hearings-decisions/major-cases/annual-wage-reviews/annual-wage-review-2025>.

¹¹ The review is expected to be finalised by the end of 2025. For more information, see

<https://www.fwc.gov.au/hearings-decisions/major-cases/gender-undervaluation-priority-awards-review>.

¹² For more information see <https://www.dewr.gov.au/workplace-relations-australia/review-secure-jobs-better-pay-act>.

¹³ For more information see <https://www.dewr.gov.au/workplace-relations-australia/resources/research-findings-independent-review-fair-work-amendment-paid-family-and-domestic-violence-leave-act>.

Closing the Gap

Contributing to the Closing the Gap Employment Target¹⁴

The department is helping to close the gap in employment for First Nations people by supporting employment opportunities and economic development around support services. The Launch into Work Program supports the delivery of pre-employment projects to prepare people for entry-level roles through training, practical activities in the workplace and mentoring. During 2024–25, the department developed and implemented 6 Launch into Work projects specifically tailored to First Nations people. The projects were co-designed with First Nations organisations that deliver life and work readiness training and mentoring services, and Indigenous Employment Officers employed within the hiring business. The program is achieving strong results for First Nations people with 89% of participants securing employment following participation in the program in 2024–25.

In 2024–25, the department undertook consultations on the Reconnection, Employment and Learning (REAL) program,¹⁵ which aims to provide personalised support and mentoring to help First Nations people transition out of the justice system. The program's design and delivery was informed and refined by insights gained from these consultations with First Nations communities, organisations and people with lived experience to better align supports with the needs of participants. The department is preparing to progressively roll out the program in early 2026.

Contributing to Closing the Gap skills and training targets¹⁶

The Remote Training Hubs Network was announced as part of the Australian Government's A Better, Safer Future for Central Australia plan. Throughout 2024–25, the department has worked in close collaboration with the Northern Territory Government and the National Indigenous Australians Agency and in partnership with Central Australian Aboriginal peoples to establish the Remote Training Hubs Network. The aim of the program is to create on-Country training opportunities across Central Australia, in up to 7 remote community

clusters, that lead to local, sustainable jobs. Guided by the Central Australia Plan Aboriginal Leadership Group, the hubs will be implemented in a staged approach to ensure remote communities can shape their training hub and engage in VET in a way that works for them and meets their needs. Hubs in Yuendumu and Ntaria (Hermannsburg) are among the first communities to begin, with early development underway in 2025.

Developed in consultation with First Nations experts and community members, the redesigned SEE Program commenced on 1 July 2024 and included a new stream focused on helping First Nations communities. The SEE Program provides participants with the opportunity to improve their LLND skills, which may lead to experiencing other benefits such as participating in work or further study; improving cultural, social and emotional wellbeing; higher levels of empowerment and self-actualisation; and improving the capacity and economic development of their community.

Contributions to Closing the Gap by the Workplace Relations Group

To support the department's contribution to advancing Closing the Gap Target 8, the Federal Safety Commissioner launched a new process to support and fast-track applications for accreditation from First Nations builders under the Work Health and Safety Accreditation Scheme in 2024–25. This is expected to assist more First Nations-owned builders to be ready to undertake government-funded building work. Most fast-tracked builders achieved accreditation in around 4 to 5 months, down from around 12 months before the fast-track process commenced.

Notes:

Further information about Closing the Gap can be found in Part 1: Overview of this annual report.

For information about the performance of the Student Identifiers Registrar, see Part 5, Appendix G of this annual report.

For information about the performance of Jobs and Skills Australia, see Part 5, Appendix H of this annual report.

¹⁴ At the Commonwealth level, DEWR shares responsibility with the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) and the Department of Social Services (DSS) for outcome area **8 – Strong economic participation and development of people and their communities**, with DEWR responsible for a range of employment support and policy activities, NIAA responsible for Indigenous-specific employment and remote area employment activities, and DSS responsible for disability employment activities.

¹⁵ Further information on the REAL program is available at www.dewr.gov.au.

¹⁶ At the Commonwealth level, the department shares responsibility for Closing the Gap socio-economic outcome areas with the Department of Education (DE), including **5 – Students achieve their full learning potential**, **6 – Students reach their full potential through further education pathways**, and **7 – Youth are engaged in employment or education**, with the department responsible for skills and training actions and DE responsible for schools, youth and higher education actions.

Results



Overview of performance results

In 2024–25 the department reported against 18 performance measures (excluding SK004, which is based on a biennial survey and does not have data available). Of these performance measures, 16 had defined targets (excluding SK009, which is new and did not have a target set; and SK010, which does not have a target). Across these measures, a total of 24 individual targets were assessed.

Of the 24 targets:

- **20 were achieved, and 1 was achieved within the margin of error,**¹⁷ demonstrating good performance across a range of programs and services.
- **3 were not achieved,** which reflects the impact of employment demand shifting toward higher-skilled roles and the mismatch between participant skills and available jobs. This shift also impacted the targeted investment in those that may be disadvantaged or at higher risk of long-term unemployment on the employment caseload.

Note: To visually present meaningful data and support data interpretation, the ranges of vertical axes for some charts throughout the annual performance statements have been adjusted.

¹⁷ Margin of error is a statistical term often used to indicate the amount of uncertainty in a result when surveying a sample of a population rather than the whole population. A smaller margin of error suggests higher confidence that the result is representative of the actual population value, while a larger margin of error, often due to small sample sizes, signifies less confidence that the result is representative of the actual population value.

Margin of error is linked to a confidence interval. If the confidence interval is 95%, this means that the department is 95% confident that the true population value falls within the result range.

Where margin of error impacts the result, the margin of error along with the relevant confidence interval is disclosed in this document to support interpretation of the result. The department has considered results to be 'achieved within the margin of error' where the result falls below a target but is within the margin of error of the target.

Annual performance results

Outcome 1

Foster a productive and competitive labour market through policies and programs that assist job seekers into work, including secure work, and meet employer and industry needs.

| Outcome 1 performance summary | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------|---|----------------|
| Performance measure | Program | DEWR reference code | Result rating | Page reference |
| Proportion of Workforce Australia Services participants who are satisfied or very satisfied with the overall quality of services delivered by their provider | 1.1 – Employment Services | EM002 | a) Workforce Australia Online: Achieved b) Workforce Australia Services: Achieved c) Workforce Australia – Transition to Work: Achieved | 32 |
| Proportion of Workforce Australia Services participants who achieve a 26-week employment outcome | 1.1 – Employment Services | EM005 | Not achieved | 36 |
| Proportion of participants in work or study three months after exiting services | 1.1 – Employment Services | EM006 | a) Workforce Australia Online: Not achieved b) Workforce Australia Services: Achieved c) Workforce Australia – Transition to Work: Achieved | 38 |
| Proportion of Workforce Australia Services participants who believe working with their provider has improved their chances of getting a job | 1.1 – Employment Services | EM009 | Achieved | 42 |
| Proportion of employers who are satisfied with the assistance from Australian Government employment services | 1.1 – Employment Services | EM010 | Achieved target within margin of error | 44 |
| Investment per employment outcome | 1.1 – Employment Services | EM011 | Not achieved | 46 |
| Average time to process decision-ready employer applications to join the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme | 1.1 – Employment Services | EM012 | Achieved | 49 |

Outcome 2

Promote growth in economic productivity and social wellbeing through access to quality skills and training.

| Outcome 2 performance summary | | | | |
|--|---|---------------------|--|----------------|
| Performance measure | Program | DEWR reference code | Result rating | Page reference |
| Proportion of VET graduates who are satisfied with the overall quality of the training | 2.1 – Building Skills and Capability | SK001 | a) Achieved b) Achieved c) Achieved | 51 |
| Proportion of VET graduates who are employed or enrolled in further study after training | 2.1 – Building Skills and Capability | SK002 | a) Achieved b) Achieved c) Achieved | 54 |
| Proportion of employers that report use of the VET system | 2.1 – Building Skills and Capability | SK004 | Not applicable for 2024–25 | 57 |
| Proportion of participant assessments in the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) program that show language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy skills improvements | 2.1 – Building Skills and Capability | SK005 | Achieved | 58 |
| Proportion of units of study successfully completed by VET Student Loans (VSL) students | 2.2 – VET Student Loans | SK007 | Achieved | 59 |
| Proportion of students who report that financial barriers to training were removed by participation in the VSL program | 2.2 – VET Student Loans | SK009 | Not applicable – no target set for 2024–25 | 61 |
| Support to the Nuclear-powered Submarine Program is provided through engagement and advice on workforce and training | 2.3 – Nuclear-powered Submarine Program | SK010 | Not applicable – no target set | 62 |
| Proportion of apprenticeship commencements in priority occupations | 2.1 – Building Skills and Capability | SK011 | Achieved | 64 |

Outcome 3

Facilitate jobs growth, including secure work, through policies and programs that promote fair, productive and safe workplaces.

| Outcome 3 performance summary | | | | |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Performance measure | Program | DEWR reference code | Result rating | Page reference |
| Proportion of assessed economic data and analysis to support the effective operation of the workplace relations system that is timely | 3.1 – Workplace Support | WR001 | Achieved | 67 |
| Average processing time for initial claims under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee program | 3.1 – Workplace Support | WR002 | Achieved | 68 |
| Proportion of claim payments made under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee program that are correct | 3.1 – Workplace Support | WR003 | Achieved | 70 |
| Total Recorded Injury Frequency Rate (TRIFR) collectively reported by companies accredited under the Work Health and Safety Accreditation Scheme | 3.1 – Workplace Support | WR004 | Achieved | 72 |

Performance measure results

Outcome 1

Foster a productive and competitive labour market through policies and programs that assist job seekers into work, including secure work, and meet employer and industry needs.

| Measure EM002 | Proportion of participants who are satisfied with the overall quality of services delivered ¹⁸ |
|-----------------------|--|
| Targets | a) Workforce Australia Online: 60% or higher ¹⁹ b) Workforce Australia Services: 66% or higher ¹⁹ c) Workforce Australia – Transition to Work: 75% or higher ¹⁹ |
| Result ratings | a) Workforce Australia Online: Achieved b) Workforce Australia Services: Achieved c) Workforce Australia – Transition to Work: Achieved |
| Result values | a) Workforce Australia Online: 64.5% b) Workforce Australia Services: 78.0% c) Workforce Australia – Transition to Work: 83.7% |
| Analysis | <p>This measure demonstrates how well the department is delivering the Workforce Australia program, by measuring participant satisfaction with the overall quality of Workforce Australia. Workforce Australia is the Australian Government’s primary employment program designed to upskill individuals, prepare them for employment, and achieve employment outcomes. The results exceeded the minimum targets for this measure by between 4.5 and 12.0 percentage points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Workforce Australia Online – from 63.1% for the 30 June 2023 to 31 March 2024 reporting period²⁰ to 64.5% for the 31 March 2024 to 28 February 2025 reporting period (see Figure 2.1). |

¹⁸ In 2024–25, this performance measure was updated to incorporate additional targets for Workforce Australia Online and Workforce Australia – Transition to Work. The measure text and methodology have been updated to reflect this.

¹⁹ Reference periods: the targets reflect different time periods. For Workforce Australia Online results, the reference period is 31 March 2024 to 28 February 2025. For Workforce Australia Services and Workforce Australia – Transition to Work results, the reference period is 30 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

²⁰ The Online Services Satisfaction Survey began to transition from a quarterly to a monthly survey cycle in October 2024, to align with other post-program monitoring surveys conducted by the department and to better account for seasonal variation. This means that results up to October 2024 comprise 4 surveys conducted quarterly over 10 months, and results after that point comprise a combination of quarterly and monthly surveys conducted over 12 months.

| Measure EM002 | Proportion of participants who are satisfied with the overall quality of services delivered ¹⁸ |
|--------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Australia Services – from 73.4% for the 30 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 reporting period²¹ to 78.0% for the 30 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 reporting period (see Figure 2.2). • Transition to Work – from 83.0% for the 30 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 reporting period to 83.7% for the 30 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 reporting period (see Figure 2.2). <p>Increases in participant satisfaction with overall quality of services may be a reflection of an improvement in service quality with maturation of Workforce Australia employment services over time.</p> <p>Since its commencement on 4 July 2022, there has been improvement in Workforce Australia participant satisfaction across most domains of servicing.</p> <p>For Workforce Australia Online these included improved participant satisfaction with using the flexible Points Based Activation System (PBAS) to set goals, having information and access to education and training opportunities, and using tools available on the Workforce Australia homepage.</p> <p>For Workforce Australia Services these included improved participant satisfaction with connecting to support services, offering support that matched their needs, and providing services that will help them further into the future.</p> <p>For Transition to Work, satisfaction rates have stabilised over the last few quarters; however, since the commencement of Workforce Australia there has been improvement in various domains of servicing. These included improved participant satisfaction with giving advice on how to look for work, connecting to support services, and offering support that matched their needs.²²</p> |
| Methodology | <p>This measure relies on 2 surveys. The Quality and Progress Survey seeks information on participant satisfaction with their service provider and their progress to employment in 2 Workforce Australia employment programs – Workforce Australia Services and Transition to Work. The Online Services Satisfaction Survey provides information on participant satisfaction and their progress to employment in Workforce Australia Online.²³</p> |

²¹ [DEWR Quality and Progress Survey detailed results \(Workforce Australia Services\)](#) – 30 September 2022 to 31 August 2023, DEWR website, accessed 25 August 2025.

²² The Quality and Progress Survey and the Online Services Satisfaction Survey capture satisfaction with various domains of servicing. Domains of servicing are derived from the Quality and Progress Survey for Workforce Australia Services and Transition to Work, and from the Online Services Satisfaction Survey for Workforce Australia Online. Presented below are the survey questions that capture the domains of servicing mentioned in the analysis:

Quality and Progress Survey:

Question 1: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with provider (site) with regard to:

- Giving you advice on how to look for work?
- Connecting you to support services?

Question 3: Thinking about provider (site), to what extent do you agree that:

- The support they offer matches your needs?
- The services you are getting from them will help you further into the future?

Online Services Satisfaction Survey:

Question 1: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Workforce Australia Online with regard to:

- Information and access to education and training options
- Using the flexible PBAS to set goals, look for work and meet mutual obligations
- Using the tools available on your Workforce Australia homepage (eg. recommended jobs, tasks, PBAS targets).

²³ For targets b) and c), participants can only be surveyed if they have been commenced with a Workforce Australia Services or Transition to Work provider for at least 91 days. For Target a), there is no business rule on length of time in servicing. For 2024–25, the response rates were:

- Workforce Australia Online: 26.4%
- Workforce Australia Services: 20.6%
- Workforce Australia – Transition to Work: 24.3%.

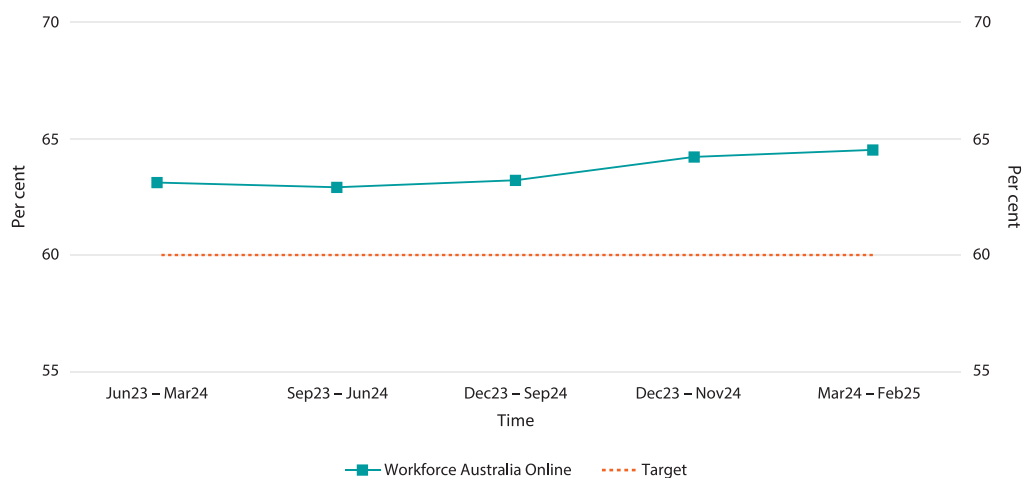
| Measure EM002 | Proportion of participants who are satisfied with the overall quality of services delivered ¹⁸ |
|----------------------|--|
| | <p>The Quality and Progress Survey operates over a rolling 12-month data collection period²⁴ to account for potential seasonal effects. Data relates to the reporting period of 30 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.²⁵</p> <p>The Online Services Satisfaction Survey operates over a rolling 12-month data collection period²⁴ to account for potential seasonal effects. Data relates to the reporting period of 31 March 2024 to 28 February 2025.²⁵</p> <p>Proportion of a representative sample of participants, who indicate they are either ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the services received from Workforce Australia during the reference period (a rolling 12-month period).²⁶</p> <p>Responses are weighted relative to their significance in the total caseload population to maintain representation.²⁷</p> <p>Numerator: Weighted responses reporting that participants are satisfied or very satisfied with the overall quality of services</p> <p><u>Over</u></p> <p>Denominator: Weighted number of responses to the survey question.</p> |
| Source | Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Post-Program Monitoring – Online Services Satisfaction Survey and Quality and Progress Survey |
| Contributing program | 1.1 – Employment Services |
| Key activity | Provide quality services to job seekers and employers |

²⁴ A 12-month rolling period means the results are from the most recent available 12 months. As the 12-month period rolls forward each quarter, the survey results from the last 3 months are added and those from the 3 months over a year ago are removed.

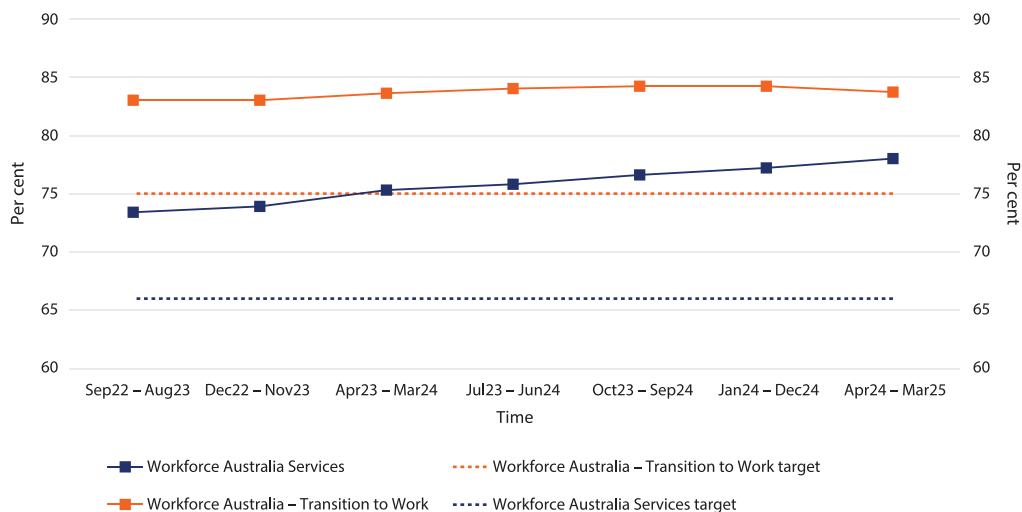
²⁵ Data availability: as the Quality and Progress Survey cycle runs for around 3 months, the period ending March 2025 is the nearest available period for Workforce Australia Services and Workforce Australia – Transition to Work results. The Workforce Australia Online – Online Services Satisfaction Survey cycle also runs for around 3 months, so the period ending February 2025 is the nearest available period for 2024–25 reporting.

²⁶ The survey question is: ‘How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with provider (site)/Workforce Australia Online with regard to overall quality of service?’

²⁷ Weighting: results are weighted to ensure relevant cohorts or groups are reflected relative to their significance within the total population. This ensures that variations in quality of service that may affect or coincide with cohorts of interest do not bias the results.

Figure 2.1: Participant satisfaction with overall quality of service – Workforce Australia Online²³

Source: Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Post-Program Monitoring – Online Services Satisfaction Survey.

Figure 2.2: Participant satisfaction with overall quality of service – Workforce Australia Services and Workforce Australia – Transition to Work

Source: Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Post-Program Monitoring Surveys – Quality and Progress Survey, DEWR website, accessed 25 August 2025.

| Measure EM005 | Proportion of Workforce Australia Services participants who achieve a 26-week employment outcome |
|---------------|---|
| Target | 15% or higher |
| Result rating | Not achieved |
| Result value | 11.7% |
| Analysis | <p>This measure tracks how well Workforce Australia Services supports its participants to achieve job placements, and for those job placements to result in secure and sustained employment.²⁸ It reports on the proportion of participants that achieved a 26-week employment outcome.²⁹ The target for this measure was not achieved.</p> <p>The 26-week employment outcome rate was 11.7% for the 12-month period to 30 June 2025. This was 3.3 percentage points lower than the 15% performance target. This measure has not been achieved since it was first reported. The result for the 12-month period to 30 June 2024 was 13.2%. Further, results over 2 years show a declining trend in the outcome rate.</p> <p>This measure is influenced by underlying labour market conditions. Throughout the reporting period, the Australian labour market remained resilient, characterised by historically low unemployment rates and sound participation.³⁰ However, changes in the demand for labour may have driven a growing skills mismatch between unemployed people (such as those on the Workforce Australia Services caseload) and job vacancies.</p> <p>Throughout the reporting period, the labour market reflected demand for higher skilled jobs, rather than low skilled jobs that are most accessible to participants in Workforce Australia Services.^{31 32} The March 2025 Jobs and Skills Australia Labour Market update shows that more than two-thirds of employment growth over the 12 months to March 2025 was in Skill Level 2 to 4 occupations which are typically associated with a VET pathway.</p> <p>This skills mismatch made it harder to achieve job placements for participants. The March 2025 Jobs and Skills Australia Labour Market update reported employment growth over the year was concentrated in jobs that require post-secondary school qualifications (such as a bachelor's degree). National Occupation trend data from Jobs and Skills Australia showed employment growth for jobs that typically require post-school education increased by at least 1.2% over the year to May 2025, while employment for the lowest skill level jobs only increased by 0.3%.³³ Additionally, the Jobs and Skills Australia Vacancy Report showed online job advertisements for the lower skilled jobs decreased over the year to June 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online advertisements for jobs requiring a Certificate II or Certificate III fell by 9.9% (Skill Level 4). • Online advertisements for jobs requiring Certificate I or secondary education fell by 5.1% (Skill Level 5). |

²⁸ Outcome payments are only relevant to provider-serviced participants in Workforce Australia Services. Therefore, Workforce Australia Online participants are outside the scope of this measure. Similarly, participants in Transition to Work are not included in this measure.

²⁹ This measure assesses commenced periods of assistance where the participant recorded at least one job placement that later converted to a 26-week outcome, during the 12-month period.

³⁰ The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) June 2025 Labour Force data reported that the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 4.3%, and the participation rate was 67.1%.

³¹ 'Low skill jobs' refers to jobs requiring Certificate II or Certificate III (Skill Level 4), or jobs requiring Certificate I or secondary education (Skill Level 5).

³² Of the Workforce Australia Services caseload, 52.6% have completed Year 12 or a lower education level. **Workforce Australia Services Caseload by selected Cohorts – 30 June 2025**, DEWR website.

³³ Skill Levels 1 to 4 – which includes jobs requiring at least Certificate II or Certificate III (Skill Level 4) and at most a Bachelor degree or higher (Skill Level 1).

| Measure EM005 | Proportion of Workforce Australia Services participants who achieve a 26-week employment outcome |
|------------------|--|
| | <p>This is in contrast to the skills possessed by 52.6% of the Workforce Australia Services caseload, where the highest level of education completed was Year 12 or less.³⁴</p> <p>The department encourages Workforce Australia Services providers to assist their participants into sustained employment using licensing incentives. Employment outcome rates form a key component of the Workforce Australia Services Provider Performance Framework results, which were considered during the department's <u>2025 Workforce Australia Services Licence Review</u>. The review was used to determine whether Workforce Australia Services licences should be extended or not. As a result of the review, 10 Workforce Australia Services licences were not extended beyond 30 June 2025. This outcome will drive improvement over the short to medium term and further incentivise providers to assist participants into employment.</p> <p>Over the longer term the department can influence an improvement in sustained employment outcomes through reforms to employment services. The Australian Government has outlined intentions for employment services reform through its <u>White Paper on Jobs and Opportunities</u> and its response to the findings of the <u>House Select Committee on Workforce Australia Employment Services</u> to assist participants into sustained employment.</p> <p>The department will continue to implement policies and programs that support job seekers to achieve secure and sustained employment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <u>Real Jobs Real Wages</u> program, which commenced on 1 July 2025, will connect employers to job seekers at risk of long-term unemployment. • The <u>WorkFoundations</u> initiative, which commenced on 1 July 2025, will invest \$10 million to assist job seekers with complex barriers to employment to build their work readiness, with funding for social enterprises and businesses to deliver paid employment placements of up to 6 months with tailored, wrap-around services. • The Skills for Education and Employment Program delivers free language, literacy, numeracy and digital skills training to eligible Australians. This program can help participants to improve skills and build pathways to employment. • The Free TAFE program, in partnership with state and territory governments, is delivering over 500,000 Free TAFE and VET places across Australia over 2023 to 2026. This investment will support Australians to gain the skills and capabilities they need to obtain well-paid, secure jobs. The government has also committed to making Free TAFE an ongoing program, supporting at least 100,000 Free TAFE and VET places per year from 2027 onwards. |
| Methodology | <p>The proportion of participants in Workforce Australia Provider Services who recorded at least one job placement which converted to a 26-week outcome, over a 12-month period.</p> <p>Numerator: Commenced periods of assistance in Workforce Australia Services where the participant recorded at least one job placement which converted to a 26-week outcome, over a 12-month period.</p> <p>Denominator: Commenced periods of assistance in Workforce Australia Services, over a 12-month period.</p> |

³⁴ [Workforce Australia Services Caseload by selected Cohorts – 30 June 2025](#), DEWR website.

| Measure EM005 | Proportion of Workforce Australia Services participants who achieve a 26-week employment outcome |
|----------------------|--|
| | <p>Participants are only included in the denominator if enough time has passed for them to achieve a 26-week outcome. Therefore, any participant who was not in Workforce Australia Services more than 26 weeks before the end of the 12-month period is excluded.</p> <p>The measure is calculated at the 'period of assistance' (POA) level which means that participants are only counted once in the denominator per POA. A POA begins when a participant commences in employment services and ends if a participant exits employment services for longer than 91 days. This aligns more closely with a participant's experience in employment services.</p> |
| Source | DEWR; program administrative data from the Workforce Australia Online for Providers system, which is used to administer employment services. |
| Contributing program | 1.1 – Employment Services |
| Key activity | Support job seekers to achieve sustainable employment |

| Measure EM006 | Proportion of participants in work or study three months after exiting services |
|------------------|---|
| Targets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Workforce Australia Online: 80% or higher b) Workforce Australia Services: 60% or higher c) Workforce Australia – Transition to Work: 60% or higher |
| Result ratings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Workforce Australia Online: Not achieved b) Workforce Australia Services: Achieved c) Workforce Australia – Transition to Work: Achieved |
| Result values | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Workforce Australia Online: 77.4% b) Workforce Australia Services: 60.3% c) Workforce Australia – Transition to Work: 62.6% |
| Analysis | <p>This measure demonstrates how well Workforce Australia programs are supporting participants to achieve positive outcomes – being employed and/or in study or training programs.</p> <p>Workforce Australia is the Australian Government's primary employment program designed to upskill individuals, prepare them for employment, and achieve employment outcomes. It supports people to access services and find work.</p> <p>The target for this measure was achieved for Workforce Australia Services and Transition to Work but not for Workforce Australia Online.</p> |

| Measure EM006 | Proportion of participants in work or study three months after exiting services |
|------------------|--|
| | <p>There has been a decline in positive outcome rates for all 3 programs since the commencement of Workforce Australia in July 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Australia Online – from 79.5% for the 4 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 reporting period to 77.4% for the 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 reporting period • Workforce Australia Services – from 64.4% for the 4 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 reporting period to 60.3% for the 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 reporting period • Transition to Work – from 65.8% for the 4 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 reporting period to 62.6% for the 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 reporting period. <p>These declines were driven largely by a reduction in the proportion of employed participants across all 3 programs (shown in Figure 2.3). There has also been a reduction in the proportion of participants in study or training programs (shown in Figure 2.4) since the commencement of Workforce Australia.</p> <p>Although the labour market throughout 2024 remained tight and unemployment low, labour market conditions did not favour disadvantaged cohorts.</p> <p>The reduction in employment rates across all 3 programs could be attributed to a mismatch between jobs available and the skills that Workforce Australia participants have, as the job vacancies most accessible to disadvantaged participants are in decline. According to the Jobs and Skills Australia Vacancy Report – December 2024, Skill Level 3 and 4 job vacancies experienced large 15.5% and 19.9% decreases over the year respectively.³⁵ For Workforce Australia Online specifically, around 40% of those who exited between 1 January 2024 and 31 December 2024, that did not move to another Workforce Australia program, were people with a trade or VET qualification.</p> <p>The reduction in study rates for exited Transition to Work participants is driven by a large decline in youth participants studying in Year 10 or Year 12. This trend aligns with the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Schools, 2024 data, which shows a steeper than usual decline in retention rate (number of secondary students who were enrolled in Year 12 in 2024, as a proportion of student enrolments from Year 7 or Year 8, 5 or 4 years prior), over the past few years, with some improvement in 2024.³⁶ For Workforce Australia Services, the largest decline is in participants completing a Certificate I or II, or a degree, while for Workforce Australia Online, the largest decline is in participants studying for a degree.</p> <p>Decisions already taken by government and actions taken by the department are expected to drive improvement over the short to medium term. For example, as a result of a Workforce Australia Services Licensing review in 2024–25, 10 low-performing Workforce Australia Services licences ceased on 30 June 2025. A further 17 licences were extended with conditions including the development of a performance improvement plan. Performance against this measure could also be improved by placing more people into study/training in high-demand areas or appropriate programs such as Skills for Education and Employment.</p> |

³⁵ Data is seasonally adjusted. According to the ABS, Skill Level 3 jobs have a level of skill commensurate with one of the following:

- New Zealand Register of Quality Assured Qualifications Level 4 qualification
- Australian Qualifications Framework Certificate IV
- Australian Qualifications Framework Certificate III including at least 2 years of on-the-job training.

At least 3 years of relevant experience may substitute for the formal qualifications listed above. In some instances, relevant experience and/or on-the-job training may be required in addition to the formal qualification. Skill Level 4 jobs have a level of skill commensurate with one of the following:

- New Zealand Register of Quality Assured Qualifications Level 2 or 3 qualification
- Australian Qualifications Framework Certificate II or III.

At least one year of relevant experience may substitute for these formal qualifications. In some instances, relevant experience may be required in addition to the formal qualification.

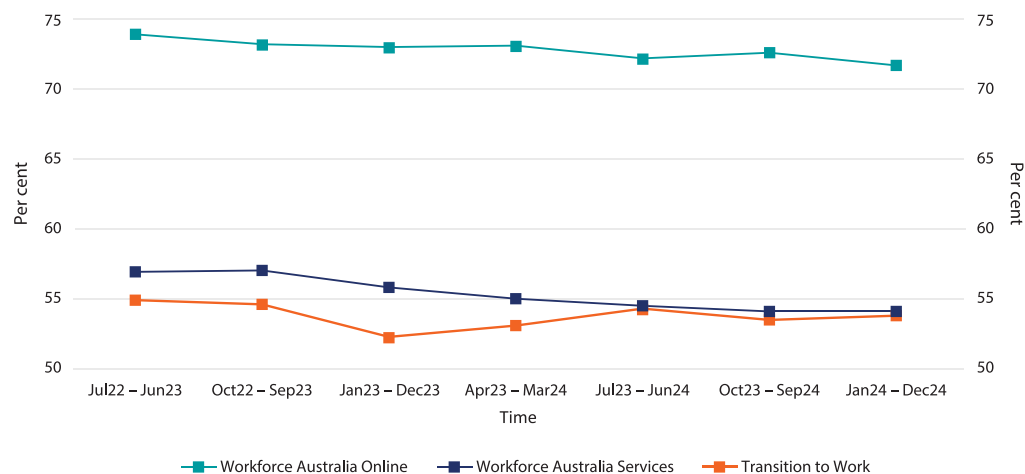
³⁶ Data obtained from ABS, **Schools, 2024**.

| Measure EM006 | Proportion of participants in work or study three months after exiting services |
|----------------------|---|
| Methodology | <p>The department monitors positive outcomes for employment services participants through the Workforce Australia Labour Force Survey.³⁷ This survey operates over a rolling 12-month data collection period²⁴ to account for potential seasonal effects and assesses positive outcomes for participants 3 months after exiting employment services. Due to the length of the survey process, and additional quality assurance requirements, results are produced around 4 months after the end of the relevant reporting period – these results relate to the reporting period of 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024.</p> <p>Proportion of a representative sample of participants, who indicate they are in work and/or study about 3 months after exiting employment services during the reference period (a rolling 12-month period).</p> <p>Responses are weighted relative to their significance in the total population to maintain representation.³⁸</p> <p>Numerator: Weighted responses reporting participants are employed and/or studying</p> <p><u>Over</u></p> <p>Denominator: Weighted number of responses to the survey question (asked of participants who have exited employment services).³⁷</p> |
| Source | Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Post-Program Monitoring – Labour Force Survey |
| Contributing program | 1.1 – Employment Services |
| Key activity | Support job seekers to achieve sustainable employment |

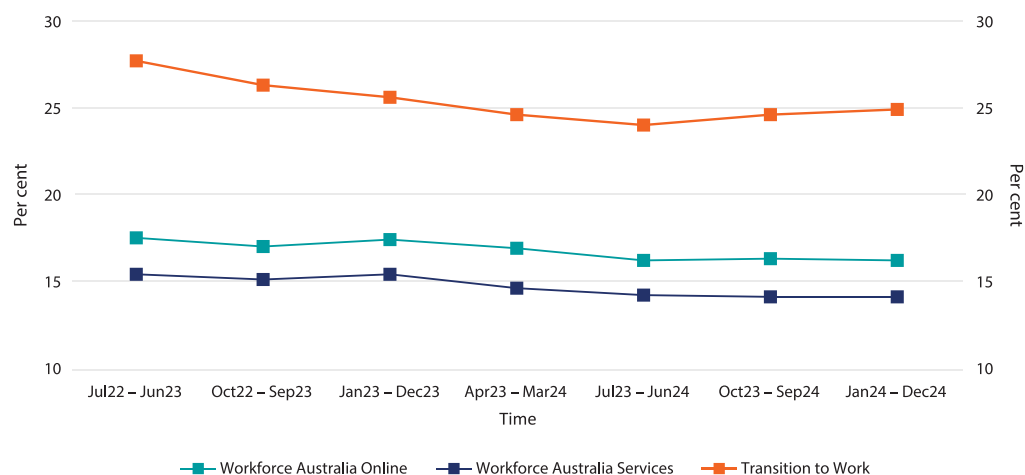
³⁷ The department’s Post Program Monitoring – Labour Force Survey provides information on the employment and education status of participants in 3 Workforce Australia employment programs – Workforce Australia Online, Workforce Australia Services and Transition to Work. Participants who have exited any of the 3 programs in the reference period can receive the survey, with the following response rates for 2024–25:

- a) Workforce Australia Online: 19.5%
- b) Workforce Australia Services: 19.5%
- c) Workforce Australia – Transition to Work: 20.3%.

³⁸ Results are weighted to ensure relevant cohorts or groups are reflected relative to their significance within the total population. This ensures that variations in labour force or education outcomes that may affect or coincide with cohorts of interest do not bias the results.

Figure 2.3: Employment rates for Workforce Australia programs

Source: Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Post-Program Monitoring Surveys – Labour Force Survey, DEWR website, accessed 25 July 2025.

Figure 2.4: Study and/or training rates for Workforce Australia programs

Source: Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Post-Program Monitoring Surveys – Labour Force Survey, DEWR website, accessed 25 July 2025.

| Measure EM009 | Proportion of Workforce Australia Services participants who believe working with their provider has improved their chances of getting a job ³⁹ |
|---------------|---|
| Target | 66% or higher |
| Result rating | Achieved |
| Result value | 71.6% |
| Analysis | <p>This measure assesses whether Workforce Australia Services, as delivered by the department's contracted providers, help participants move closer to employment. Improving participants' chances of finding a job is a critical activity for the department's role and commitments.</p> <p>Workforce Australia is the Australian Government's primary employment program designed to upskill individuals, prepare them for employment, and achieve employment outcomes.</p> <p>The results exceeded the minimum target for this measure by 5.6 percentage points and is an increase from previous results – from 68.1% for the 30 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 reporting period to 71.6% for the 30 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 reporting period (see Figure 2.5).</p> <p>Similar to performance measure EM002 – <i>Proportion of participants who are satisfied with the overall quality of services delivered</i> (page 32 refers), an increase in the proportion of participants who believed working with their provider improved their chances of getting a job may be a reflection of an improvement in service quality and the maturation of Workforce Australia employment services over time. Since commencement on 4 July 2022, there has been an improvement in Workforce Australia participant views on service provision across all domains of servicing. This includes improvements in providers offering participants services that help the participant further into the future, providers offering support that matches participants' needs, and providers connecting participants to support services.⁴⁰</p> |
| Methodology | <p>The Quality and Progress Survey seeks information on participant satisfaction with their service provider and their progress to employment in 2 Workforce Australia employment programs – Workforce Australia Services and Transition to Work.⁴¹</p> <p>The Quality and Progress Survey operates over a rolling 12-month data collection period²⁴ to account for potential seasonal effects. Data relates to the reporting period of 30 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.⁴²</p> |

³⁹ This is a new measure for 2024–25 and reflects evolving government priorities. The intent of this measure is to address **the government's response to the House Select Committee on Workforce Australia Employment Services** final reports, *Your Future Planning and Rebuilding Employment Services*. Recommendations on services delivery (in particular Recommendation 8) recognise diverse participant pathways to employment. Measuring participant feedback on progress allows the department to track if employment services are improving employment prospects for participants and ultimately achieving labour force outcomes.

⁴⁰ The Quality and Progress Survey captures satisfaction with various domains of servicing. Presented below are the survey questions that capture the domains of servicing mentioned in the analysis:

Question 1: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with provider (site) with regard to:

- Connecting you to support services?

Question 3: Thinking about provider (site), to what extent do you agree that:

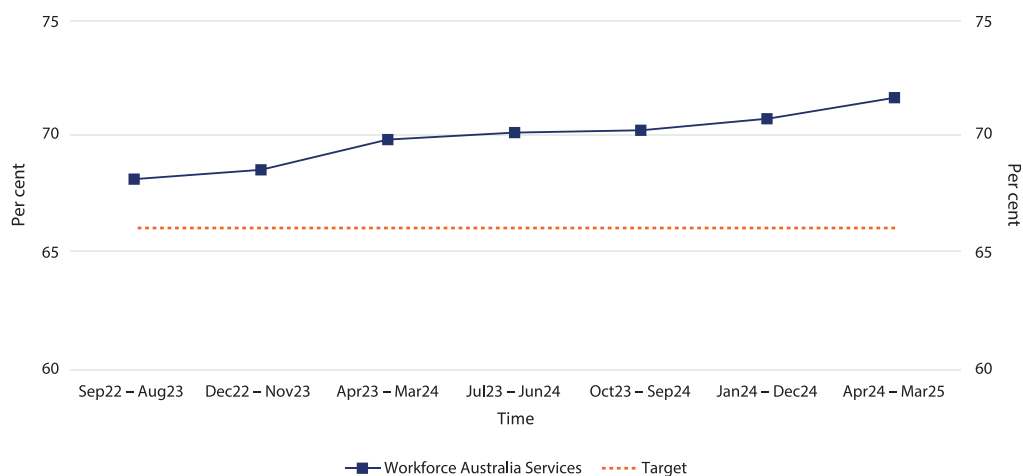
- The support they offer matches your needs?
- The services you are getting from them will help you further into the future?

⁴¹ Participants can only be surveyed if they have been commenced with a Workforce Australia Services provider for at least 91 days. For 2024–25, the response rate was 20.6%.

⁴² Data availability: as the Quality and Progress Survey cycle runs for around 3 months, the period ending March 2025 is the nearest available period for Workforce Australia Services results.

| Measure EM009 | Proportion of Workforce Australia Services participants who believe working with their provider has improved their chances of getting a job ³⁹ |
|----------------------|--|
| | <p>Proportion of a representative sample of participants, who indicate that services received improved their chances of getting a job either 'a lot' or 'a little' during the reference period (a rolling 12-month period).⁴³</p> <p>Responses are weighted relative to their significance in the total population to maintain representation.⁴⁴</p> <p>Numerator: Weighted responses reporting that services received by participants improved their chances of getting a job by a <i>little</i> or a <i>lot</i>.</p> <p><u>Over</u></p> <p>Denominator: Weighted number of responses to the survey question.</p> |
| Source | Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Post-Program Monitoring – Quality and Progress Survey |
| Contributing program | 1.1 – Employment Services |
| Key activity | Support target groups to improve their work readiness and prepare for employment |

Figure 2.5: Proportion of participants who believed working with their provider improved their chances of getting a job



Source: Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Post-Program Monitoring Surveys – Quality and Progress Survey, DEWR website, accessed 25 June 2025.

⁴³ The survey question is: 'Do you feel that working with *provider (site)* has improved your chances of getting a job?'

⁴⁴ Results are weighted to ensure relevant cohorts or groups are reflected relative to their significance within the total population of employment services participants. This ensures that variations in improved job chances that may affect or coincide with cohorts of interest do not bias the results.

| Measure EM010 | Proportion of employers who are satisfied with the assistance from Australian Government employment services |
|------------------|--|
| Target | 80% or higher |
| Result rating | Achieved target within margin of error The margin of error for this measure is 8.7 percentage points at the 95% confidence interval. This means there was a 95% chance that the true value was in the range of 68.1% and 85.5%. |
| Result value | 76.8% |
| Analysis | <p>This measure helps assess whether the assistance delivered by the department’s contracted employment services providers is of a high quality. The measure reflects satisfaction with the assistance provided by the Australian Government employment service to the employer in their attempt to fill their most recent vacancies. Results are taken from the Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey, conducted by Jobs and Skills Australia.</p> <p>For the 12-month period to May 2025, 76.8% of employers were satisfied with the assistance from Australian Government employment services. This result was based on a sample of employers who indicated they had used Australian Government employment services in their most recent recruitment round.⁴⁵</p> <p>While the performance target for this measure is within the margin of error, there was a decline in the result from the previous quarterly results. Quarterly results for this measure have been in the 80–82% range (Figure 2.6 refers). Due to declines in the overall recruitment activity across the Australian labour market, fewer employers have been seeking assistance from Australian Government employment services.⁴⁶ The number of responses used in this measure has declined over the year to May 2025. For the 12-month period to May 2025, 10,890 employers were surveyed in the Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey. Of these respondents, 139 responded to the question relevant to this measure. The decline in the number of responses resulted in a larger standard error and therefore a higher margin of error for the result.</p> <p>Results may include employment services programs not administered by the department – for example, state or territory linked employment services providers, Disability Employment Services, and Community Development Program providers.</p> |
| Methodology | <p>The proportion of employers that are satisfied with the assistance from Australian Government employment services,⁴⁷ based on their most recent recruitment experience, over a 12-month period.</p> <p>Jobs and Skills Australia provides independent advice to government on the labour market, workforce skills and training needs, and priorities to assist with government policy development and program delivery.</p> <p>Results for this measure are sourced from the Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey conducted by Jobs and Skills Australia. They are based on responses from employers who have used Australian Government employment services in their most recent recruitment round, rather than all employers who responded to the Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey.</p> <p>The survey collects information on employer recruitment activity, recruitment difficulty and staffing outlook.</p> |

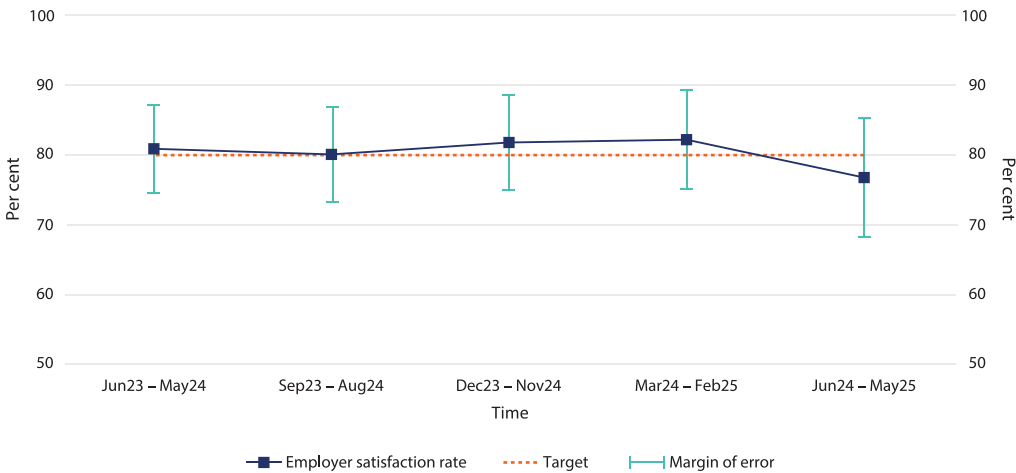
⁴⁵ Where employers are categorised as ‘used a government employment service’ and are categorised as ‘employment services not further defined’, this is due to responses received that indicate the service used was free of charge, such as ‘free’ or ‘unpaid’.

⁴⁶ The number of responses used in this measure has declined over the year to May 2025, resulting in a larger standard error and therefore a higher margin of error for the result.

⁴⁷ This measure captures a subset of employers who respond to the Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey. The subset includes those employers who are categorised as ‘used a government employment service’. This is employers who reported using either a government employment service provider or a recruitment agency, and where the service used was free of charge.

| Measure EM010 | Proportion of employers who are satisfied with the assistance from Australian Government employment services |
|-------------------------|---|
| Source | Jobs and Skills Australia, Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey |
| Contributing program | 1.1 – Employment Services |
| Key activity | Provide quality services to job seekers and employers |

Figure 2.6: Quarterly result for employer satisfaction with Australian Government employment services, including margin of error (95% confidence interval)



Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey.

| Measure EM011 | |
|------------------|--|
| Target | \$3,500 or lower per employment outcome |
| Result rating | Not achieved |
| Result value | \$3,575 |
| Analysis | <p>This measure helps assess the department's efficiency in service delivery through the contracted Workforce Australia Services providers. Delivering efficient employment services helps ensure value for money.</p> <p>Workforce Australia is the Australian Government's primary employment program. It supports people to access services and find work. Workforce Australia Services, delivered by contracted providers, is aimed at individuals who need, or would like, greater support, and are at a higher risk of long-term unemployment.</p> <p>The target for this measure was not achieved. There has been an increase in the investment per employment outcome since the 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 reporting period – from \$3,399 to \$3,575.</p> <p>This increase over time has been driven by both a lower estimated number of employed participants, and an increase in variable expenditure (shown in Figure 2.7).</p> <p>The increase in variable expenditure has mostly been driven by an increase in Employment Fund expenditure, as well as in engagement payments. Part of this increase has been offset by a decline in employment outcomes and associated outcome payments made to providers. Some types of variable expenditure, such as the cost of items paid for through the Employment Fund, are affected by inflation, but this is unlikely to have been a major factor over the year.</p> <p>Although the labour market throughout 2024 remained tight with low unemployment, labour market conditions were difficult for more disadvantaged people, such as Workforce Australia Services participants.</p> <p>A mismatch between jobs available and the skills of Workforce Australia Services participants may explain the general decline in the estimated number of employed participants, as the job vacancies most accessible to disadvantaged participants are in decline. According to the Jobs and Skills Australia Vacancy Report – December 2024, Skill Level 3 and 4 job vacancies experienced a large 15.5% and 19.9% decrease over the year respectively.⁴⁸ Of the Workforce Australia Services participants on the caseload at 30 June 2025, 52.6% had a highest level of education completed of Year 12 equivalent or less.⁴⁹</p> <p>From January 2024 to December 2024, there were increases in the proportion of Workforce Australia Services participants from disadvantaged cohorts, including homeless people, refugees, and First Nations.</p> <p>A more disadvantaged caseload tends to make it more costly for providers to find jobs for participants. For example, providers may need to increase the amount of Employment Fund they spend or more frequently offer wage subsidies to employers. When the most disadvantaged participants do find sustained employment, providers are entitled to bonuses on their ordinary outcome payments.</p> <p>The department continues to encourage Workforce Australia Services providers to assist their participants into employment using both financial and licensing incentives.</p> |

⁴⁸ Skill Level 3 is equivalent to Certificate IV or III (Skilled VET); Skill Level 4 is equivalent to Certificate II or III. Further detail can be found in the Jobs and Skills Australia **Vacancy Report – December 2024**.

⁴⁹ **Workforce Australia Caseload by selected Cohorts – 30 June 2025**, DEWR website.

| Measure EM011 | Investment per employment outcome |
|------------------|--|
| | <p>Workforce Australia Services providers receive a payment when participants achieve an employment outcome. Employment outcome rates form a key component of the Workforce Australia Services Provider Performance Framework, which drives provider licensing decisions. As a result of a Workforce Australia Services Licensing review, 10 out of 176 Workforce Australia licences ceased on 30 June 2025 and participants will transition to new and ongoing licences. A further 17 licences were extended with conditions including development of a performance improvement plan. This intervention covers 15% of all licences and will drive improvement over the short to medium term and further incentivise providers to assist participants into employment.</p> <p>Over the longer term the department can influence an improvement in outcomes by implementing reforms to employment services. The Australian Government has outlined a program of reform for employment services through its <u>White Paper on Jobs and Opportunities</u> and its <u>response to the findings of the House Select Committee on Workforce Australia Employment Services</u>.</p> |
| Methodology | <p>This measure relies on the Workforce Australia Labour Force Survey, undertaken by the department. This survey operates over a rolling 12-month data collection period²⁴ to account for potential seasonal effects and assesses employment outcomes for participants. Due to the length of the survey process, and additional quality assurance requirements, results are produced around 4 months after the end of the relevant reporting period. These results relate to the reporting period of 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024.</p> <p>A measure of the ratio between the aggregated actual variable expenditure in providing Workforce Australia Services and the estimated number of employed participants using Workforce Australia Services.⁵⁰</p> <p>Responses used for the denominator are weighted relative to their significance in the total population to maintain representation.⁵¹</p> <p>Numerator: The aggregated actual variable expenditure in providing Workforce Australia Services over a reporting period.⁵²</p> <p><u>Over</u></p> <p>Denominator: The estimated number of employed participants using Workforce Australia Services over the reporting period.^{53 54}</p> |

⁵⁰ Changing employment outcome rates create a lag in the result for the investment per employment outcome. Any jobs that were found in late 2023 that matured into paid outcomes in early 2024 would count towards the investment in the numerator, but not the outcomes in the denominator. Therefore, recent declining outcome rates pull the result for this measure up.

⁵¹ Post-program monitoring employment rate results used for the denominator are weighted to ensure relevant cohorts or groups are reflected relative to their significance within the total population. This ensures that variations in labour force that may affect or coincide with cohorts of interest do not bias the results.

⁵² Variable expenditure includes: engagement fees; outcome payments; progress fees; transfer between provider fees; Employment Fund; Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy; Employability Skills Training; Career Transition Assistance; and Work for the Dole. Fixed expenditure is not included in this measure as it stays reasonably static by its nature and does not respond to changes in performance. Limiting the measure to expenditure that naturally varies in response to caseload size and outcome payments makes the measure responsive to changes in costs.

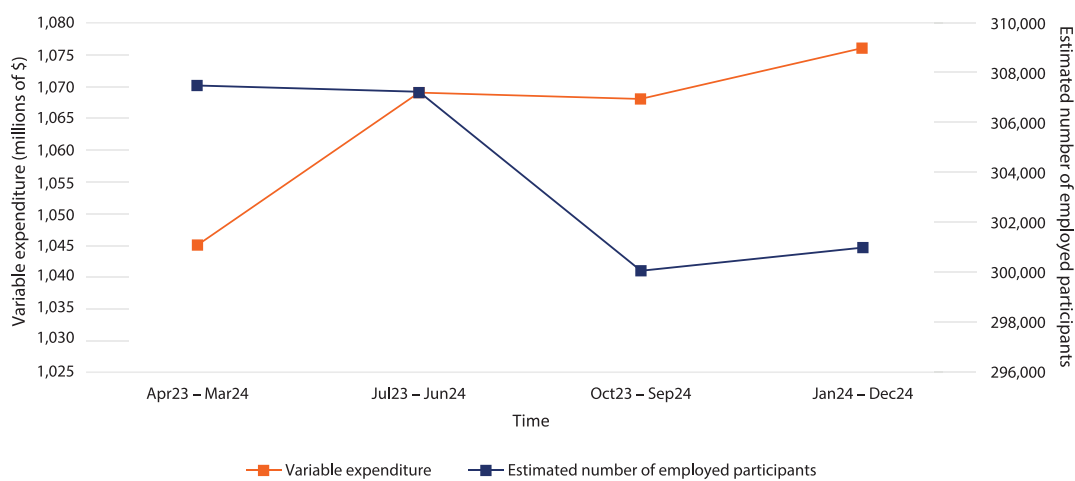
⁵³ Employment data from the Labour Force Survey is used for the denominator since all employment should be considered, not just employment that results in a 26-week outcome, which only captures certain types of work.

⁵⁴ The number of employed participants is estimated by taking the post-program monitoring employment rates in each reporting period from the Labour Force Survey and applying these rates to the Workforce Australia Services caseload and exit populations over the same reporting period. Over the reporting period:

- The number of unique participants on the Workforce Australia Services caseload is multiplied by the caseload post-program monitoring employment rate from the Labour Force Survey.
- The number of participant exits from Workforce Australia Services is multiplied by the exit post-program monitoring employment rate from the Labour Force Survey.
- These 2 figures are then added together to derive the estimated number of employed participants.

| Measure EM011 | Investment per employment outcome |
|----------------------|---|
| Source | Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Post-Program Monitoring – Workforce Australia Labour Force Survey. Department of Employment and Workplace Relations program administrative data from the Employment Business Intelligence Warehouse and the Employment Services Program Reports. Department of Employment and Workplace Relations administrative data from systems for Workforce Australia Services program expenditure. |
| Contributing program | 1.1 – Employment Services |
| Key activity | Provide quality services to job seekers and employers |

Figure 2.7: Variable expenditure and estimated number of employed participants



Source:

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Post-Program Monitoring – Workforce Australia Labour Force Survey.
Department of Employment and Workplace Relations program administrative data from the Employment Business Intelligence Warehouse and the Employment Services Program Reports.
Department of Employment and Workplace Relations administrative data from systems for Workforce Australia Services program expenditure.

| Measure EM012 | Average time to process decision-ready employer applications to join the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme |
|------------------|--|
| Target | 12 weeks or less |
| Result rating | Achieved |
| Result value | 6.8 weeks |
| Analysis | <p>The PALM scheme is a demand-driven program that allows Australian employers to hire workers from 9 Pacific islands and Timor-Leste when there are not enough local workers available.</p> <p>The quality of services of the PALM scheme is balanced from 2 perspectives – the needs of PALM employers and a strong assurance framework to provide adequate protections for PALM workers.</p> <p>Adopting a balanced approach, in 2024–25 the department completed over 200 site visits to ensure compliance with the PALM scheme deed and guidelines. Checks were undertaken in relation to worker accommodation, worker remuneration and worker wellbeing. Site visits also enabled the department to build and maintain relationships with employers. There has been an increase in PALM scheme employers during the reporting period, with 513 approved employers engaged with the scheme in June 2025, compared to 493 in December 2024, and 481 in July 2024. This PALM scheme data is published in data.gov.au.</p> <p>Efficient processing of employer applications allows a wider range of placements for workers from Pacific countries and addresses domestic needs of employers in Australia. Over the 2024–25 reporting period, 69 decision-ready applications were processed at an average of 6.8 weeks which was considerably lower than the target of 12 weeks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average processing time for the 22 decision-ready applications in Quarter 1 of 2024–25 was 8.7 weeks. • Average processing time for the 13 decision-ready applications in Quarter 2 of 2024–25 was 5.4 weeks. • Average processing time for the 17 decision-ready applications in Quarter 3 of 2024–25 was 6.1 weeks. • Average processing time for the 17 decision-ready applications in Quarter 4 of 2024–25 was 6.2 weeks. <p>The 2024–25 financial year is the first reporting period for this performance measure, with the program not yet achieving maturity after the in-sourcing of delivery functions. As the program matures, the target will be reviewed in context of quality and performance of the overall program.</p> <p>This performance measure captures the average time DEWR takes to process new ‘decision-ready’ employer applications for the PALM scheme, excluding pre-assessment stages and financial viability assessments as well as external checks conducted by other agencies such as the Department of Home Affairs and the Fair Work Ombudsman.</p> <p>Timely approval of employers for the PALM scheme ensures Australian businesses can make informed decisions to address workforce shortages. DEWR is committed to continuously improving its service delivery through enhanced systems, stakeholder engagement, refined methodologies, and workforce development, all supported by internal processes like checklists to assess eligibility and compliance with scheme requirements.</p> <p>Timeliness is an appropriate and critical factor in determining the quality of a service; timely services build trust and reliability. PALM employers are more likely to trust the department if decisions on applications to join the PALM scheme are made efficiently.</p> |

| Measure EM012 | Average time to process decision-ready employer applications to join the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Methodology | <p>Processing time is measured from when a new PALM scheme application is considered decision ready until that application is finalised.⁵⁵ A 'decision-ready' application refers to the department receiving all information and supporting documentation from the applicant and other government entities required for assessment. A 'decision-ready' application is finalised when the delegate signs off that the application is provisionally approved or not approved to join the PALM scheme.^{56 57}</p> <p>The calculation for the performance measure is the sum of the total time to process 'decision-ready' PALM scheme applications finalised in the reporting period over the total number of 'decision-ready' applications finalised in the reporting period.</p> |
| Source | Pacific Australia Labour Mobility Information System and Department of Employment and Workplace Relations program administrative data |
| Contributing program | 1.1 – Employment Services |
| Key activity | Provide quality services to job seekers and employers |

⁵⁵ This measure assesses the average time to process new 'decision-ready' employer applications to join the scheme and does not take into consideration any recruitment processes.

⁵⁶ The measure begins at the point of new applications being 'decision-ready'. The process to arrive at being decision ready includes requesting and receiving integrity checks from the Department of Home Affairs and the Fair Work Ombudsman, and a Department of Employment and Workplace Relations financial viability assessment. The end point of the measure is at the point of delegate sign-off (approved or not approved).

⁵⁷ Delegate sign-off is selected as the end point for this performance measure because it marks the formal conclusion of the department's internal decision-making process. It provides a consistent, auditable milestone that reflects the department's accountability for assessing applications, without being influenced by external factors such as deed execution timelines, which fall outside the department's direct control. This measure accurately captures internal processing efficiency and supports timely decision-making.

Outcome 2

Promote growth in economic productivity and social wellbeing through access to quality skills and training

| Measure SK001 | Proportion of VET graduates ⁵⁸ who are satisfied with the overall quality of the training |
|---------------|---|
| Target | a) All graduates: 85% or higher b) First Nations graduates: 85% or higher c) Female graduates: 85% or higher |
| Result rating | a) All graduates: Achieved b) First Nations graduates: Achieved c) Female graduates: Achieved |
| Result value | a) All graduates: 89.5% b) First Nations graduates: 91.4% c) Female graduates: 89.4% |
| Analysis | <p>In 2024, the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) sent⁵⁹ the <u>National Student Outcomes Survey</u> to 533,154 VET graduates, who completed their VET in Australia during 2023.⁶⁰</p> <p>NCVER received responses from 243,778 VET graduates, with 154,474 VET graduates responding to a question seeking their overall level of satisfaction with the training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of those VET graduates, the proportion who reported as 'Satisfied' or 'Very Satisfied' with the training they received was 89.5%, which is an increase from 89.0% of VET graduates who responded to the same survey question in the 2023 National Student Outcomes Survey.⁶¹ • For VET graduates who identified as First Nations (5,774 respondents) in the 2024 survey, the proportion who reported as 'Satisfied' or 'Very Satisfied' with the training they received was 91.4%, which is similar to the 91.2% of First Nations graduates who responded to the same question in the 2023 National Student Outcomes Survey.⁶¹ • For VET graduates who identified as female (87,143 respondents) in the 2024 survey, the proportion who reported as 'Satisfied' or 'Very Satisfied' with the training they received was 89.4%, which is an increase from 88.9% of female graduates who responded to the same question in the 2023 National Student Outcomes Survey.⁶¹ <p>These results are consistent with the results of students who completed VET in the years 2018 to 2022 (see Figure 2.8). Student satisfaction with VET has remained consistent over the past 5 years. This appears to reflect stable quality standards, effective training delivery, and strong alignment with student expectations.</p> |

⁵⁸ Graduates in this context refer to VET students who have completed a qualification.

⁵⁹ Survey invitations are sent via email, SMS and personalised postal letters.

⁶⁰ In 2023, 638,816 students were known to have completed a VET qualification at the time of sampling. Of these, 533,154 had valid contact details and were sent the National Student Outcomes Survey.

⁶¹ NCVER, VET student outcomes 2023, NCVER website, accessed 8 July 2025.

| Measure SK001 | Proportion of VET graduates ⁵⁸ who are satisfied with the overall quality of the training |
|----------------------|--|
| | <p>Australia's VET system is a complex, shared responsibility between the Commonwealth and state and territory governments, with each level of government holding different levers that influence student outcomes. The department has access to levers that are indirect but system wide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding shapes access and affordability.• Regulation affects quality and consistency.• Data informs continuous improvement and accountability. <p>In 2023, the period covered by this outcome, the Commonwealth provided funding for a number of programs targeting students from priority groups. These programs included Skills for Education and Employment, Free TAFE and incentives and programs supporting apprentices and trainees. Benefits of such support include removal of barriers to training via affordability and reducing financial stress, as well as access to courses aligned with labour market demand, both of which can improve relevance, student engagement and completion rates with a flow-on positive effect on satisfaction rates.</p> |
| Methodology | <p>The NCVER is the official national professional body responsible for collecting, managing, analysing and communicating research and statistics on the Australian VET sector.</p> <p>The National Student Outcomes Survey is an annual survey carried out by the NCVER, which surveys students who undertook nationally recognised VET in the previous calendar year. The VET student outcomes presents a summary of the results and survey data specifically relating to the outcomes of Australian students⁶² who completed their VET in Australia in the previous calendar year.</p> <p>Professional statistical experts are employed by the NCVER to manage, analyse and prepare data for public dissemination. These experts are also responsible for verifying data for publication.</p> <p>For the 2024 survey, data was collected between June and August. Only a sample of the population of students who undertook a VET qualification, program or subject in 2023 were eligible to receive an invitation to take part.⁶³</p> <p>This performance measure is based on the 2024 National Student Outcomes Survey and relates to the specific survey question 'Overall, how satisfied are you with your training?'</p> <p>The 3 sub-measures are calculated as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Number of VET graduates who were satisfied or very satisfied with the overall quality of their training, over the total number of VET graduates.b) Number of First Nations VET graduates who were satisfied or very satisfied with the overall quality of their training, over the total number of First Nations VET graduates.c) Number of female VET graduates who were satisfied or very satisfied with the overall quality of their training, over the total number of female VET graduates. |
| Source | NCVER National Student Outcomes Survey |
| Contributing program | 2.1 – Building Skills and Capability |
| Key activity | Enhance the quality of vocational education and training (VET) |

⁶² In 2024, international onshore students were not included in the survey.

⁶³ The NCVER uses a confidence level of 95% for the National Student Outcomes Survey. This means the probability that the confidence interval contains the true population value is 95% or, if the survey were to be repeated 100 times, the confidence interval would contain the true population value in 95 cases.

Figure 2.8: Proportion of VET graduates satisfied with the training overall

Source: NCVER, National Student Outcomes Survey, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024.

Note: The target of this measure has undergone minor change in recent reporting years. In 2018, it was 'at least 85%'; during 2019 and 2020, the target was 85% and changed to '85% or higher' in 2021. From 2022 onwards, cohort targets, comprising 'All graduates', 'First Nations graduates' and 'Female graduates', all set at '85% or higher' were introduced.

| Measure SK002 | Proportion of VET graduates ⁵⁸ who are employed or enrolled in further study after training |
|---------------|---|
| Target | a) All graduates: 80% or higher b) First Nations graduates: 80% or higher c) Female graduates: 80% or higher |
| Result rating | a) All graduates: Achieved b) First Nations graduates: Achieved c) Female graduates: Achieved |
| Result value | a) All graduates: 85.4% b) First Nations graduates: 81.8% c) Female graduates: 85.3% |
| Analysis | <p>In 2024, the NCVER sent the <u>National Student Outcomes Survey</u> to 533,154 VET graduates, who completed their VET in Australia during 2023.⁶⁴</p> <p>The NCVER received responses from 243,778 VET graduates, with 152,836 VET graduates responding to a question seeking their post-training status:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Of those VET graduates, the proportion who were employed or in further study after training was 85.4%, which is a decrease from 87.1% of VET graduates who responded to the same survey question in the 2023 National Student Outcomes Survey.⁶¹• For VET graduates who identified as First Nations (5,719 respondents) in the 2024 survey, the proportion who were employed or in further study after training was 81.8%, which is a decrease from 84.0% of First Nations graduates who responded to the same question in the 2023 National Student Outcomes Survey.⁶¹• For VET graduates who identified as female (86,237 respondents) in the 2024 survey, the proportion who were employed or in further study after training was 85.3%, which is a decrease from 86.8% of female graduates who responded to the same question in the 2023 National Student Outcomes Survey.⁶¹ <p>Although a decrease from the 2023 survey, these 2024 survey results are consistent across cohorts with the level of students who completed VET in the years 2018 to 2022 and reported being employed or in further study after training at the time (as shown in Figure 2.9).</p> |

⁶⁴ In 2023, 638,816 students were known to have completed a VET qualification at the time of sampling. Of these, 533,154 had valid contact details and were sent the National Student Outcomes Survey.

| Measure SK002 | Proportion of VET graduates ⁵⁸ who are employed or enrolled in further study after training |
|------------------|---|
| | <p>These decreases in the proportion of VET graduates who were employed or in further study after training can be related to overall employment conditions in Australia. Australia's labour market saw a slowdown in employment growth in early 2024 compared to the strong growth experienced in 2023. In 2023, the labour market was particularly tight with strong growth in filled jobs⁶⁵ and hours worked, following a post-pandemic surge. In early 2024, filled jobs continued to rise into the March quarter, maintaining the average quarterly growth seen in 2023, but the annual growth slowed to 2.4% (around half the rate recorded a year earlier when the market was particularly tight). Hours worked rose just 0.1% in the March quarter and 1.1% over the year, marking the slowest annual growth since early 2021. Further, in the June quarter of 2024, the number of people working multiple jobs fell by 1.2% coinciding with a drop in secondary jobs in the labour market that quarter. That represented the largest fall in secondary jobs since public health measures were introduced in response to the COVID-19 Delta variant.⁶⁶</p> <p>Australia's VET system is a complex, shared responsibility between the Commonwealth and state and territory governments, with each level of government holding different levers that influence student outcomes. DEWR has access to levers that are indirect but system wide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding shapes access and affordability. • Regulation affects quality and consistency. • Data informs continuous improvement and accountability. <p>In 2023, the period covered by this outcome, the Commonwealth provided funding for a number of programs targeting students from priority groups. These programs included Skills for Education and Employment, Free TAFE and incentives and programs supporting apprentices and trainees. Benefits of such support include removal of barriers to training via affordability and reducing financial stress, as well as access to courses aligned with labour market demand, both of which can improve relevance, student engagement and completion rates with a flow-on positive effect on satisfaction rates and the likelihood of students being employed or in further study after training.</p> |
| Methodology | <p>The NCVER is the official national professional body responsible for collecting, managing, analysing and communicating research and statistics on the Australian VET sector.</p> <p>The National Student Outcomes Survey is an annual survey carried out by the NCVER, which surveys students who undertook nationally recognised VET in the previous calendar year. The VET student outcomes presents a summary of the results and survey data specifically relating to the outcomes of Australian students⁶² who completed their VET in Australia in the previous calendar year.</p> <p>Professional statistical experts are employed by the NCVER to manage, analyse and prepare data for public dissemination. These experts are also responsible for verifying data for publication.</p> <p>For the 2024 survey, data was collected between June and August. Only a sample of the population of students who undertook a VET qualification, program or subject in 2023 were eligible to receive an invitation to take part.⁶⁷</p> |

⁶⁵ The term 'filled jobs' highlights that these positions are actively staffed, meaning someone is currently employed in them, as opposed to 'current vacancies', which are positions currently available and actively being recruited for.

⁶⁶ Sources: ABS media release (7 June 2024), '**Labour market growth continued to slow into early 2024**', abs.gov.au, accessed 10 July 2025; and ABS media release (6 September 2024), '**Multiple job-holding falls in the June quarter, from record high**', abs.gov.au, accessed 10 July 2025.

⁶⁷ The NCVER uses a confidence level of 95% for the National Student Outcomes Survey. This means the probability that the confidence interval contains the true population value is 95%, or, if the survey were to be repeated 100 times, the confidence interval would contain the true population value in 95 cases.

| Measure SK002 | Proportion of VET graduates ⁵⁸ who are employed or enrolled in further study after training |
|----------------------|--|
| | <p>This performance measure is based on the 2024 National Student Outcomes Survey and results are derived from the following survey questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Did you have a job of any kind on 31st May 2024?• Have you commenced another course or further study since undertaking the training? <p>The 3 sub-measures are calculated as follows:</p> <p>a) Number of VET graduates who had a labour force status of 'employed' or were enrolled in further study at the time of the survey, over the total number of VET graduates.</p> <p>b) Number of First Nations VET graduates who had a labour force status of 'employed' or were enrolled in further study at the time of the survey, over the total number of First Nations VET graduates.</p> <p>c) Number of female VET graduates who had a labour force status of 'employed' or were enrolled in further study at the time of the survey, over the total number of female VET graduates.</p> |
| Source | NCVER National Student Outcomes Survey |
| Contributing program | 2.1 – Building Skills and Capability |
| Key activity | Enhance the quality of vocational education and training (VET) |

Figure 2.9: Proportion of VET graduates employed or in further study after training



Source: NCVER, National Student Outcomes Survey, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024.

Note: The target of this measure has undergone minor change in recent reporting years. In 2018, it was 'at least 80%'; during 2019 and 2020, the target was 80% and changed to '80% or higher' in 2021. From 2022 onwards, cohort targets, comprising 'All graduates', 'First Nations graduates' and 'Female graduates', all set at '80% or higher' were introduced.

| Measure SK004 | Proportion of employers that report use of the VET system |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Target | 50% or higher |
| Result rating | Not applicable for 2024–25 |
| Result value | Not applicable for 2024–25 |
| Analysis | <p>The DEWR 2024–25 Corporate Plan indicated this performance measure is reported by the department every second year in line with the availability of new data. The result will be included in the Annual Performance Statements for the 2025–26 and 2027–28 reporting years, following the next release of the Survey of Employers' Use and Views of the VET System (SEUV) which is carried out biennially.</p> <p>The most recent survey ran from March to June 2025 and asked about employers' use of, and satisfaction with, accredited and unaccredited training in the previous 12 months. The NCVER are expected to release the results in late 2025, after the publication of this annual report, and these will be available via ncver.edu.au along with the results of previous surveys.</p> <p>The department's most recent reporting against this performance measure is available in the 2023–24 Annual Performance Statements via dewr.gov.au and shows 56.8% of employers used accredited training in 2023.</p> |
| Methodology | Number of businesses with employees that, in the previous 12 months, have used nationally recognised training, have had apprentices/trainees, or have had jobs that require a vocational qualification, over the total number of businesses with employees. |
| Source | NCVER, SEUV |
| Contributing program | 2.1 – Building Skills and Capability |
| Key activity | Respond to national future skills needs through access to VET graduates with the required skills |

| Measure SK005 ⁶⁸ | Proportion of participant assessments in the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) program that show language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy skills improvements ⁶⁹ |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Target | 80% or higher |
| Result rating | Achieved |
| Result value | 84.9% |
| Analysis | <p>According to the OECD Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies, around 3 million adult Australians lack basic literacy and/or numeracy skills,⁷⁰ which can result in exclusion from education, training and secure work, and challenges with engaging in society more broadly. The SEE Program provides free foundation skills training for all Australians aged 15 years and over seeking to improve their English language, literacy, numeracy and digital (LLND) skills, enabling them to actively participate in the economy and society. The SEE Program is delivered by a national network of training providers and assisted more than 25,400 participants in 2024–25.</p> <p>This measure helps to determine whether participants receiving training in the SEE Program are developing the LLND skills they need to achieve their goals, secure sustainable employment, undertake further education and training or better engage in society. Assessments against the <u>Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF)</u> and <u>Digital Literacy Skills Framework (DLSF)</u> are used to determine SEE participants' progress in improving their LLND skills.</p> <p>The ACSF is a tool that assists practitioners to describe an individual's performance in the 5 core skills of learning, reading, writing, oral communication and numeracy. Digital skills are described using the DLSF. Together they provide a consistent approach to identifying and developing the core skills in 3 diverse contexts: personal and community, workplace and employment, and education and training.</p> <p>SEE participants receive an initial assessment before commencing and undergo progressive assessments periodically during SEE training. Note that it is not mandatory for participants to be assessed against the DLSF unless the training has a digital literacy focus. Progression for digital literacy is included where digital literacy was assessed at the initial assessment.</p> <p>For 2024–25, 84.9% of assessments achieved an increase of one or more levels of the 5 core skills of the ACSF or the DLSF as a result of undertaking SEE training. While still above the 80.0% target, this result is lower than the 2023–24 result (93.4%). The lower result is likely linked to the transition to new contract arrangements from 1 July 2024, with the key performance indicators for SEE providers subject to consultation during the year. From 2025–26, this measure will be aligned with the new progression key performance indicators in the SEE provider performance framework.</p> |
| Methodology | Number of assessments undertaken by SEE participants which achieve an increase to their ACSF or DLSF level in one or more indicators over the total number of assessments completed by SEE participants after completing 200+ hours of training or completion of a project. |
| Source | ACSF/DLSF assessments completed by service providers and entered into the Workforce Australia Online for Providers IT system. |
| Contributing program | 2.1 – Building Skills and Capability |
| Key activity | Improve language, literacy, and numeracy and digital (LLND) skills for target groups |

⁶⁸ This performance measure also contributes to the key activity 'Reduce barriers to undertaking quality VET'.

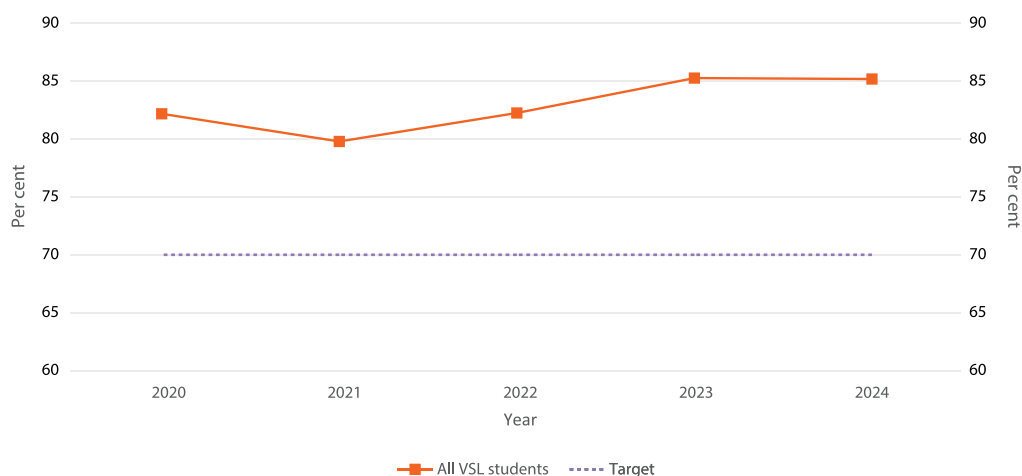
⁶⁹ The performance measure text and scope have been updated to reflect the conditions of the redesigned SEE Program which began on 1 July 2024. It will be further refined in 2025–26.

⁷⁰ OECD (2017), Building Skills for All in Australia: Policy Insights from the Survey of Adult Skills – OECD Skills Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris, data from 2011–12.

| Measure SK007 | Proportion of units of study successfully completed by VET student loans (VSL) students |
|------------------|---|
| Target | 70% or higher |
| Result rating | Achieved |
| Result value | 85.1% |
| Analysis | <p>The unit of study completion rate for the 2024–25 reporting period is 85.1%. This is consistent with the 2023–24 reporting period figure of 85.2% and shows an improvement over the 2020 to 2022 completion rates, which ranged between 79.7% and 82.2%.</p> <p>Successful completion of units of study undertaken by students accessing VSL to pay their tuition fees correlates with the key activity of the VSL Program (Program 2.2) and broader Outcome Statement 2, the main aims of which are to provide individuals with access to quality skills and training.</p> <p>The Australian Government in collaboration with state and territory governments provides a range of activities and policies to meet Outcome Statement 2. The VSL program complements other programs like Free TAFE in assisting to remove barriers to undertaking VET. The VSL program identifies courses approved for VSL that are linked to state and territory skills lists; are science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and agriculture-related; or are tied to occupancy licensing requirements.</p> <p>This measure is an indicator of successful delivery of learning activities by VSL approved providers and students gaining increased skills and qualifications that they need for employment opportunities.</p> <p>The department subjects registered training organisations (RTOs) to an extensive approval and re-approval process, to ensure only quality RTOs are approved. Further, the department develops and implements monitoring of VSL providers to further strengthen the integrity of the VSL program and subsequently protect the Commonwealth outlay.</p> <p>VSL students continue to have strong units of study completion. To continue these consistently strong outcomes, the department will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue its focus on approving/re-approving only high-quality providers for participation in the VSL program, i.e. those providers in a sound financial position with acceptable student completion rates, ensuring quality outcomes for students • continue to set and monitor provider annual fee limits. The fee limits allow the department to control VSL provider activity to ensure it remains within acceptable risk parameters • continue to set appropriate course fee limits to ensure students are not taking out excessive loans for the study being undertaken • monitor providers, including their data reporting, financial performance outcomes and student outcomes to reduce risk to students and the department • initiate provider discussions, performance reviews and compliance audits as required. |

| Measure SK007 | Proportion of units of study successfully completed by VET student loans (VSL) students |
|----------------------|--|
| Methodology | <p>Number of reported equivalent full time study load (EFTSL) units of study passed, over the total number of EFTSL units of study attempted.</p> <p>The calculation is:</p> $\frac{\text{Passed EFTSL in calendar year}}{\text{Attempted EFTSL in calendar year}}$ <p>The term 'Attempted' is determined by the sum of unit of study outcomes reported as (withdrawn, plus failed, plus passed, plus medical withdrawn).⁷¹</p> <p>The 'not reported' units of study indicates the late reporting and administrative errors from providers. These are monitored by the department to ensure providers are compliant with their data reporting obligations. For example, currently no 'not reported' units are observed with census dates in 2024.</p> <p>The data for this performance measure is sourced from the Tertiary Collection of Student Information system (TCSI). It involves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providers report student, course and enrolment data into TCSI. For this performance measure the focus is on the:<ul style="list-style-type: none">› unit of study outcome› EFTSL for each unit (i.e. a unit could be 1 EFTSL for full time study, or a fraction of an EFTSL for part time study).• Providers select from a predefined list of values for unit outcomes, but the EFTSL calculation is self-calculated by the provider based on guidance in the VSL provider manual.• Providers are to update the unit of study outcome within 14 days of when the outcome is known.• Once reported to the TCSI database, VSL Payments (VPAYS) receives a copy of the TCSI data nightly.• The data is then extracted by a VSL data analyst from VPAYS for reporting against the performance measure. |
| Source | DEWR program VPAYS, interfacing with TCSI |
| Contributing program | 2.2 – VET Student Loans |
| Key activity | Reduce barriers to undertaking quality VET |

⁷¹ The calculation excludes ongoing units and units reported as not undertaken due to recognition of prior learning (RPL).

Figure 2.10: Successful completions of study by VSL students in previous years

Source: Department of Education, Skills and Employment, program administrative data, 2020 and 2021; Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, program administrative data, 2022, 2023 and 2024.

Note: The target of this measure has undergone minor change in recent reporting years. In 2020, the target was 70%. From 2021 and onwards, a target of '70% or higher' was introduced.

| Measure SK009 | Proportion of students who report that financial barriers to training were removed by participation in the VSL program |
|----------------------|---|
| Target | No target ⁷² |
| Result rating | Not applicable |
| Result value | 93.1% |
| Analysis | <p>The VET Student Loans (VSL) program assists eligible students, enrolled in approved higher level (diploma and above) VET courses at approved course providers, to pay their tuition fees through income-contingent loans, repaid when their income exceeds the threshold. The program is designed to provide financial support to students undertaking higher level training in courses that address workplace and industry needs, creating better opportunities for employment.</p> <p>Nine in 10 students (93.1%) agreed that they would not have undertaken training without VSL access for the 2024–25 reporting period.</p> <p>This is the first time this measure has been reported. So far, almost all the respondents have agreed that the VSL program has reduced their barriers to training.</p> <p>The department will continue:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to monitor, analyse and evaluate students' responses to this question 2. to encourage providers to discuss the VSL loans option in cases where a student would otherwise miss out due to financial constraint 3. to work closely with external stakeholders to ensure vulnerable students are not targeted with loans for a course that they might have been eligible for in other programs like Free TAFE. |

⁷² As the 2024–25 reporting period is the first time this measure has existed, no target has been set until more data is available.

| Measure SK009 | Proportion of students who report that financial barriers to training were removed by participation in the VSL program |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Methodology | <p>Proportion of students who say they would not have undertaken training without VSL access.</p> <p>After the student is enrolled for a VSL loan to study an approved course, students are required to respond to student electronic Commonwealth Assistance Form (eCAF) progression checks where they are asked the question relating to this measure on the first eCAF progression for each course enrolment.⁷³</p> <p>The response is mandatory and the choice is binary, 'Agree' and 'Disagree'.</p> <p>A response of 'Agree' is recorded as 1 and 'Disagree' is recorded as 2 in the eCAF database.</p> <p>The calculation is:</p> <p><u>Agreed responses</u></p> <p><u>*Total responses</u></p> <p>*Total responses = sum of (Agree and Disagree).</p> |
| Source | Student electronic Commonwealth Assistance Form (eCAF) survey results |
| Contributing program | 2.2 – VET Student Loans |
| Key activity | Reduce barriers to undertaking quality VET |

| Measure SK010 | Support to the Nuclear-powered Submarine Program is provided through engagement and advice on workforce and training |
|----------------------|---|
| Target | No target ⁷⁴ |
| Result rating | Not applicable |
| Result value | Not applicable |
| Analysis | <p>The planned performance for this project is to support the Australian Submarine Agency (ASA) to effectively leverage the national vocational education and training system to address the enterprise workforce and skills challenges of the Nuclear-Powered Submarine (NPS) Program.</p> <p>The success of the NPS program will be heavily dependent on Australia establishing a workforce supply-line with the capability to build and maintain NPSs over coming decades. This includes hosting and maintaining AUKUS-partner NPSs, acquiring and maintaining US-built NPSs, and building and maintaining our own NPSs.</p> |

⁷³ The response rate for 2024–25 is 99.8%.

⁷⁴ The advice and support provided by the department to the ASA assists the ASA in its decision-making on program design and workforce arrangements. The ASA Corporate Plan sets out the ASA's responsibilities for enabling the necessary workforce arrangements for the nuclear-powered submarine program. Performance measures and targets related to those responsibilities sit outside the portfolio responsibilities of DEWR.

| Measure SK010 | Support to the Nuclear-powered Submarine Program is provided through engagement and advice on workforce and training |
|-----------------------------|--|
| | <p>In 2024–25 the taskforce supported the NPS Program through the provision of technical advice and data, participation in deep-dive discussions, and feedback on policy proposals. Specific examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing advice on the design and development of the Skills and Training Academy • providing data to support ‘Train the Trainer’ placement candidates • supporting the Manufacturing Industry Skills Alliance (MISA) Jobs and Skills Council’s ‘Building a defence manufacturing workforce’ research project • facilitating workshops with the ASA on opportunities and challenges chronicled in the Jobs and Skills Australia and MISA defence industry workforce readiness research projects • attending interdepartmental committees and working groups on various defence industry workforce uplift initiatives at national and local jurisdictional levels • developing and publishing resources to promote young Australians’ interest in STEM careers • providing advice and facilitating stakeholder engagement to support the ASA’s workforce planning for the NPS Program • participating in discussions regarding the recognition of the skills of NPS workers returning from placements at American shipyards. <p>The taskforce was established in 2023–24 and is currently funded to continue supporting the NPS Program through 2025–26.⁷⁵</p> |
| Methodology | Reporting on engagement and advice activities that have been undertaken under this program during 2024–25 which is supported by departmental attendance and correspondence records. |
| Source | Departmental record |
| Contributing program | 2.3 – Nuclear-powered Submarine Program |
| Key activity | Respond to national future skills needs through access to VET graduates with the required skills |

⁷⁵ There are nil administered funds under this measure. Departmental funding maintains staff within the taskforce in 2024–25. Activities reported reflect relevant key instances of departmental officers engaging and providing advice.

| Measure SK011 Proportion of apprenticeship commencements in priority occupations | |
|--|---|
| Target | Maintain or increase compared to previous year |
| Result rating | Achieved |
| Result value | 3.5 percentage point increase |
| Analysis | <p>Government support provided through the Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System (the Incentive System) is strategically targeted to encourage commencements in priority occupations, as determined by the Australian Apprenticeships Priority List (Priority List).⁷⁶ By directing financial support to apprentices and employers in these identified areas, the system is actively incentivising take-up in occupations critical to Australia's workforce needs.</p> <p>In the years prior to 2022, apprentice support was provided through the Australian Apprenticeship Incentive Program (AAIP) and a series of temporary initiatives introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic-era incentives came to an end on 30 June 2022.</p> <p>On 1 July 2022 the government introduced the Incentive System, replacing the broad-based COVID-era support. Under this new model, incentives were recalibrated: priority occupations – defined by the government based on workforce need and strategic importance to Australia's economy – received higher incentives than non-priority occupations, but overall payments were reduced.</p> <p>On 1 July 2024 incentives for non-priority occupations were removed. Currently, about 80% of apprentices in training are in a priority occupation – these are defined by the government based on workforce need and strategic importance to Australia's economy.</p> <p>Rebalancing financial support provided through the Incentive System to focus on priority occupations only and to provide financial support to both employers and apprentices has had varied impact on commencements across occupations. Apprenticeship commencements in several occupations have continued to increase. Occupations that experienced the largest decline in commencements are primarily non-priority occupations, which are mainly non-trade occupations.</p> <p>The Australian Apprenticeships system is influenced by both economic and behavioural factors. Economic factors are important as an Australian Apprenticeship is an employment relationship, and economic conditions influence employers' hiring decisions and willingness to commit to the 3 to 4 years required for a trade apprenticeship. The Incentive System influences behavioural factors through the choice of who to pay financial incentives to.</p> <p>In 2024–25 compared to 2023–24, there was a decrease in overall commencements in both priority and non-priority occupations. This is an indication there has been a change in economic conditions that affected Australian Apprenticeships generally. There was a smaller decrease in commencements in priority occupations than non-priority occupations. This suggests economic conditions affected the 2 groups differently and/or the Incentive System was successfully influencing behavioural factors. Importantly, there was an increase in the proportion of commencements in priority occupations from 62.7% to 66.2%, an increase of 3.5 percentage points. This increase suggests the policy of incentivising commencements in priority occupations is rebalancing apprenticeship numbers to increase the focus on priority occupations.</p> |

⁷⁶ The Priority List is updated on 1 January each year and underpins eligibility to access financial supports through the Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System. There are revisions throughout the year to account for changes to qualifications during the calendar year. The current and previous Priority Lists are available via the department's website, www.dewr.gov.au.

| Measure SK011 | Proportion of apprenticeship commencements in priority occupations |
|--------------------|---|
| | <p>The Australian Apprenticeships system is a federated system in which the Commonwealth, states and territories, and the NCVER have different roles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commonwealth Government provides support to the Australian Apprenticeships system, supporting employers and apprentices through grant programs as well as Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans (formerly Trade Support Loans), which are income-contingent loans. • States and territories are the regulators of Australian Apprenticeships and are responsible for approving training contracts and providing relevant training associated with the apprenticeship. • The NCVER is the national VET data custodian and source of official Australian Apprenticeships data. For information on commencements, completions and completion rates please see www.ncver.edu.au. <p>Employers and industry shape occupational standards and provide on-the-job training. Strengthening partnerships between government, industry bodies, and employers is essential to align training with current and future industry requirements.</p> <p>Information flows through the system are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commonwealth Government is the primary collector of data and contracts Apprentice Connect Australia providers to provide national coverage and complete all sign-ups. • The Commonwealth and state training authorities (STAs) (the administrative units of states and territories responsible for regulating Australian Apprenticeships) exchange information daily. • STAs provide apprentice and trainee information to the NCVER quarterly according to the Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standards (AVETMISS), which is a nationally consistent framework for the collection of VET data in Australia. • The NCVER produces the National Apprentice and Trainee Collection quarterly, and 6 months in arrears. These collections are used to produce apprentice and trainee statistics. <p>On 25 January 2025, the Strategic Review of the Australian Apprenticeship Incentive System was released. This report makes 34 recommendations to support high-quality apprenticeships and ensure the Incentive System is effective and responsive to the needs of the labour market, apprentices and government.</p> <p>The government has implemented key recommendations from the Strategic Review, introducing measures from 1 July 2025 such as extending incentives for apprentices and employers in priority occupations, increasing the Living Away from Home Allowance and Disability Wage Support payments, and launching targeted programs like the Key Apprenticeship Program, Housing Construction stream, and amendments to the Group Training Organisation Reimbursement Pilot.</p> |
| Methodology | <p>In order to assess the department's performance for the 2024–25 reporting period, the number of Priority List commencements in priority occupations that occurred in the first 6 months⁷⁷ of the 2024–25 financial year (July–December 2024) as a proportion of total number of commencements in 2024–25 is compared to the number of Priority List commencements in priority occupations in the first 6 months of the 2023–24 financial year (July–December 2023) as a proportion of total number of commencements in 2023–24.</p> |

⁷⁷ The first 6 months of the 2024–25 financial year is the latest available information for 2024–25.

| Measure SK011 | Proportion of apprenticeship commencements in priority occupations |
|----------------------|--|
| | <p>This is calculated by first determining the 2024 Priority List proportion, and the 2023 Priority List proportion by using the following formula:</p> $a/b \times 100 = p\%$ <p>a = Number of commencements in priority occupations for period b = Total number of commencements for period p = Priority List proportion for period</p> <p>Calculation for 2024 Priority List proportion:</p> <p>a = 36,200 from the <u>NCVER December Quarter 2024</u> publication for the period 1 July–31 December 2024 for Priority List commencements.</p> <p>b = 54,690 from the <u>NCVER December Quarter 2024</u> publication for the period 1 July–31 December 2024 for total commencements.</p> <p>p = Priority List proportion for 2024 = $36,200 / 54,690 \times 100 = 66.2\%$</p> <p>Calculation for 2023 Priority List proportion:</p> <p>a = 43,140 from the <u>NCVER December Quarter 2024</u> publication for the period 1 July–31 December 2023 for Priority List commencements.</p> <p>b = 68,835 from the <u>NCVER December Quarter 2024</u> publication for the period 1 July–31 December 2023 for total commencements.</p> <p>p = $43,140 / 68,835 \times 100 = 62.7\%$</p> <p>The difference between the 2024 Priority List proportion and the 2023 Priority List proportion is then used to determine this performance measure result:</p> $66.2\% - 62.7\% = 3.5\%$ |
| Source | <p>NCVER 2025, <u>Australian vocational education and training statistics: apprentices and trainees 2024, December quarter</u>, NCVER Adelaide⁷⁸</p> <p><u>Australian Apprenticeships Priority List – 15 October 2024</u></p> <p><u>Australian Apprenticeships Priority List – 11 September 2023</u></p> |
| Contributing program | 2.1 – Building Skills and Capability |
| Key activity | Respond to national future skills needs through access to VET graduates with the required skills |

⁷⁸ Available via <https://www.ncver.edu.au>, with further granular commencement and completion data. The most recent data in an NCVER apprentices and trainees publication is approximately 6 months prior to the publication date. This means the full 2024–25 financial year data will not be available until December 2025. The NCVER reviews data for 7 quarters after release; therefore historical numbers may vary slightly in different releases.

Outcome 3

Facilitate jobs growth, including secure work, through policies and programs that promote fair, productive and safe workplaces.

| Measure WR001 | Proportion of assessed economic data and analysis to support the effective operation of the workplace relations system that is timely |
|------------------|--|
| Target | 100% |
| Result rating | Achieved |
| Result value | 100% |
| Analysis | <p>The department met the timeliness targets for the Annual Wage Review (AWR) and quarterly Trends in Federal Enterprise Bargaining reports in 2024–25.</p> <p>All deliverables are complete and were released on the following dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Trends in Federal Enterprise Bargaining June quarter 2024</i> report – released 27 September 2024. <i>Trends in Federal Enterprise Bargaining September quarter 2024</i> report – released 12 December 2024. <i>Trends in Federal Enterprise Bargaining December quarter 2024</i> report – released 27 March 2025. <i>Government submission to the Annual Wage Review</i> – submitted 16 May 2025. <i>Trends in Federal Enterprise Bargaining March quarter 2025</i> report – released 27 June 2025. <p>This output measure is a proxy for the department's effectiveness in promoting fair, productive and safe workplaces through policies and programs. The department's ability to provide timely, high-quality, evidence-based advice to government supports robust, data-enabled policy development and decision-making, which impacts the experience of Australian workers.</p> <p>DEWR is responsible for the timely development and publication of Trends in Federal Enterprise Bargaining reports. Failure to deliver the report negatively affects the ability of government, employees and employers to monitor and effectively respond to labour market conditions.</p> <p>DEWR is responsible for the timely development and submission of the Australian Government's submission to the AWR. Failure to lodge the Australian Government's submission on time would result in the Fair Work Commission (FWC) deliberating on issues relating to minimum and award wages without a federal government position. The FWC would also miss key information and analysis on macroeconomic policy to inform its deliberations.</p> |
| Methodology | <p>Timeliness is assessed based on meeting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The government's submission to the FWC's AWR submitted by the deadline. Each quarterly Trends in Federal Enterprise Bargaining report published on the department's website prior to the end of the subsequent quarter.⁷⁹ <p>Annual Wage Review</p> <p>The government submission to the AWR includes economic and labour market data and forecasts and addresses the modern awards and the minimum wages objectives of the <i>Fair Work Act 2009</i>. DEWR is the lead agency for the submission, with development undertaken by subject matter experts from DEWR and Treasury and in consultation with officials from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, including the Office for Women, and the Department of Finance.</p> |

⁷⁹ This measure is unweighted. That is, each of the 5 deliverables is weighted evenly (20%) in determining whether the target of 100% is met.

| Measure WR001 | Proportion of assessed economic data and analysis to support the effective operation of the workplace relations system that is timely |
|----------------------|--|
| | <p>The FWC determines the timetable for the AWR. For the 2025 AWR, the FWC deadline for the government's submission was 16 May 2025. The government's submission is available via www.fwc.gov.au.</p> <p>Trends in Federal Enterprise Bargaining report</p> <p>Trends in Federal Enterprise Bargaining is a quarterly report containing data about the number of enterprise agreements made in the federal workplace relations system, as well as data about the number of employees covered and the level of wage increases included in these agreements.</p> <p>The quarterly Trends in Federal Enterprise Bargaining report has an internally determined deadline to be published on the department's website (available via: www.dewr.gov.au) by the end of the subsequent quarter. For example, the September quarter report is due by the end of December. This deadline has been set having regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• complete coding of enterprise agreements for the quarter just ended• the creation and analysis of data tables, preparation of report for the responsible minister's office and clearance through departmental executives• provision of report and summary briefing to the responsible minister's office. |
| Source | DEWR program administrative data |
| Contributing program | 3.1 – Workplace Support |
| Key activity | Promote fair, productive and safe workplaces through policies and programs |

| Measure WR002 | Average processing time for initial claims under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee program ⁸⁰ |
|------------------|--|
| Target | 14 weeks or less |
| Result rating | Achieved |
| Result value | 13.8 weeks |
| Analysis | <p>The Fair Entitlements Guarantee (FEG) is a legislative safety net scheme that covers certain unpaid employee entitlements when a person loses their job due to the insolvency of their employer. Ensuring workers who are made redundant by their employer receive an accurate and timely FEG payment contributes to the department's role of providing a safety net of pay and conditions and providing people with certainty.</p> <p>Assessing claims for FEG entitlements involves working with insolvency practitioners and claimants, which often requires multiple points of contact to clarify and verify information provided. This impacts on the time it takes to finalise an individual claim, which often is outside the department's control. The <i>Fair Entitlements Guarantee Act 2012</i> makes payments not payable where a dividend will be declared within 16 weeks. The 14-week average processing target reflects an internal priority to maintain a reasonable overall processing time for initial effective claims.</p> |

⁸⁰ This performance measure title has been updated in the department's [2025–26 Corporate Plan](#) to read as: 'Average processing time for initial effective claims under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee program'. This is not a change to the methodology, but rather clarification that only 'initial effective claims' are being used to measure the result.

| Measure WR002 | Average processing time for initial claims under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee program ⁸⁰ |
|-----------------------------|--|
| | <p>Measuring the timeliness of FEG payments is a proxy for measuring the efficiency of FEG claim processing. Reporting on the timeliness of FEG payments, with the performance measure WR003 – <i>Proportion of claim payments made under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee program that are correct</i> (page 70 refers), provides an overview of the effectiveness of the program by showing how timely and accurate the department is in paying outstanding entitlements to FEG claimants.</p> <p>In 2024–25 the department achieved an average processing time of 13.8 weeks, which is a significant improvement compared to the published 17.3 weeks in 2023–24.⁸¹ The department implemented a number of strategies that contributed to this improvement, including proactive early engagement with insolvency practitioners on larger cases to support the receipt of more timely and higher quality entitlements data and internal revisions to the operational oversight, processes, management and assessment of claims.</p> |
| Methodology | <p>Claims are managed in the eFEG system which continuously records all relevant information relating to each claim, including lodgement, processing and payments. Claims that are made effective are processed through the respective stages and are recorded by the system. Data is collected continuously and internally reported monthly. The 14-week key performance indicator is measured from when an initial claim is made effective to when a claim decision is made in relation to the initial claim.⁸²</p> <p>The time to process a claim is calculated by determining the period (in weeks) between the initial claim effective date and the decision-maker approved date for each initial claim. Outliers are included in the 14-week performance measure result calculation.</p> <p>The processed month is drawn from the decision-maker approved date and the average time to process is then calculated using the sum of the days to process each claim divided by the number of claims processed within the period, reflected in weeks (by dividing the result by 7 days).</p> |
| Source | eFEG system (Angular based, Cloud hosted system) |
| Contributing program | 3.1 – Workplace Support |
| Key activity | Support the protection of workers' entitlements |

⁸¹ Minor updates to the previously published timeliness results are 11.4 weeks (from 11.1 weeks) for 2022–23 and 17.2 weeks (from 17.3 weeks) for 2023–24.

⁸² This is a proxy measure of efficiency.

| Measure WR003 | | Proportion of claim payments made under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee program that are correct |
|------------------|--|---|
| Target | | 95% or higher |
| Result rating | | Achieved |
| Result value | | 95.6% |
| Analysis | | <p>The FEG is a legislative safety net scheme that covers certain unpaid employee entitlements when a person loses their job due to the insolvency of their employer. Ensuring workers who are made redundant by their employer receive an accurate and timely FEG payment contributes to the department's role of providing a safety net of pay and conditions and providing people with certainty.</p> <p>It is important that FEG claim decisions are accurate to ensure claimants receive the correct payments they are entitled to under the <i>Fair Entitlements Guarantee Act 2012</i> (FEG Act).</p> <p>The proxy measure assesses the effectiveness and quality of claim decisions. Accuracy results inform best practice claim assessment processes and ensure the correct payments are made to eligible claimants.</p> <p>Measuring the proportion of correct FEG payments is a proxy for measuring the accuracy of FEG claim processing. Reporting on this performance measure, with WR002 – <i>Average processing time for initial claims under the FEG program</i> (page 68 refers), provides an overview of the effectiveness of the program by showing how timely and accurate the department is in paying outstanding entitlements to FEG claimants.</p> <p>An audit of the FEG program conducted by the Australian National Audit Office in 2015 noted that accurate payments contribute to the efficiency of the FEG scheme by reducing costs associated with reviews, re-work and pursuit of debts due to overpayments.</p> <p>When demand for FEG is high, there is increased pressure to ensure claims are assessed and payments are made in a timely manner. This has the potential to impact the accuracy of FEG payments. The number of claims finalised in 2024–25 (17,826) represents a 32% increase in the number of claims finalised in 2023–24 (13,481).</p> <p>Despite this, the department has continued to meet the target for this performance measure. In 2024–25, 480 out of the total 17,826 claim decisions were tested and the results showed that 95.6% (459) of the claim decisions tested were accurate. This process has been further improved since September 2024 with the implementation of additional quality assurance, where 10% of the claims assessed as accurate are independently reviewed by another staff member within the team.</p> <p>An analysis of the sample of inaccurate claims assessed to the end of June 2025 did not identify any systematic errors or repeated errors made by one claim assessor or the same error being made across multiple claims or cases pointing to a systematic issue in the assessment of claims. Feedback on inaccurate claims has been provided to teams monthly to ensure issues are not repeated.</p> |

| Measure WR003 | Proportion of claim payments made under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee program that are correct |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Methodology | <p>To ensure results are provided to claim assessors in a timely manner to prevent any recurrences of inaccurate decisions, a random sample of 40 FEG claim decisions are assessed for accuracy each month by the FEG Compliance team. Over the course of 2024–25, the results of these monthly assessments (a total of 480 reviewed claim decisions) provides an annual result of FEG claim payment accuracy.⁸³</p> <p>Each month, after the random sample is generated, the testing officer assesses each claim against 27 test criteria in 4 broad categories: determining eligibility, case administration, governing instruments, and claim assessment.</p> <p>Only information available to the claim assessor and decision-maker at the time of the claim decision is considered relevant evidence in determining the decision's accuracy.</p> <p>When examining a claim decision against the test criteria, the accuracy tester considers whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the evidence shows a certain fact was readily identifiable • there was sufficient evidence to justify the decision (having regard to approaches outlined in FEG procedures) • the error would result in a material inaccuracy for the claim decision when considering the quantum impacts of an error. <p>The threshold of materiality applies to each error and each entitlement in a claim decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unpaid wages • annual leave • redundancy • payment in lieu of notice • long service leave. <p>For a claim decision to be determined to be inaccurate, the monetary impact for a particular entitlement must be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. more than +/- 10% of what the claimant was entitled to receive, and 2. more than +/- \$200 of what the claimant was entitled to receive.⁸⁴ <p>When the monetary impact for a particular entitlement is less than \$200, the error represents a minor finding. In all other instances the error represents a noncompliance issue. When there are no identifiable compliance issues or material errors, the claim decision will be determined to be fully compliant.</p> |
| Source | Data is extracted from the eFEG system (Angular based, Cloud hosted system) using a Microsoft Excel audit sample tool. |
| Contributing program | 3.1 – Workplace Support |
| Key activity | Support the protection of workers' entitlements |

⁸³ This is a proxy measure of effectiveness.

⁸⁴ Inaccuracies and noncompliance issues are documented in claim accuracy reports with follow-up actions. For example, follow-up action may indicate that the department may undertake an internal review to rectify a payment error.

| Measure WR004 | | Total Recorded Injury Frequency Rate (TRIFR) collectively reported by companies accredited under the Work Health and Safety Accreditation Scheme |
|------------------|--|---|
| Target | | Rate is lower than the previous calendar year |
| Result rating | | Achieved |
| Result value | | 6.49 injuries per million hours of work |
| Analysis | | <p>This performance measure compares the most recent calendar year's TRIFR for companies accredited under the Work Health and Safety Accreditation Scheme with the TRIFR of accredited companies for the prior calendar year.</p> <p>In the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Annual Report 2023–24 (page 58 refers) the 2023 TRIFR result for civil, commercial and residential construction was 6.72 injuries per 1 million hours of work.</p> <p>As the 2024 TRIFR value for civil, commercial and residential construction of 6.49 injuries per 1 million hours of work is lower than the corresponding value for 2023, this performance target has been achieved.</p> <p>This target is a proxy measure for effectiveness. The Federal Safety Commissioner works to improve workplace safety outcomes, such as reducing the rate of workplace injuries of accredited companies in the building and construction industry, through undertaking their legislated functions established in the <i>Federal Safety Commissioner Act 2022</i>. These functions include auditing the Work Health and Safety (WHS) systems and onsite practices of builders seeking accreditation or who are accredited under the scheme.</p> <p>Jurisdictional WHS regulators also enforce legislation aimed at reducing the rate of injuries at workplaces, including those of accredited companies. It is not possible to apportion the extent of improvement in the TRIFR to actions of the Federal Safety Commissioner or jurisdictional regulators.</p> |
| Methodology | | Accredited companies report to the Office of the Federal Safety Commissioner twice annually on the aggregate number of safety incidents that have occurred on their sites and on the number of work hours performed. ⁸⁵ |

⁸⁵ This result has been calculated using safety incident and hours worked data from 98.4% of expected data inputs. Of the 893 biannual reports expected, 879 were received and passed internal quality assurance. These biannual reports come from 467 of an expected 474 accreditations active for the duration of one or both of the 2024 reporting periods. The remaining 1.6% of expected reports were outstanding either because the data were not received by the time this measure was calculated or because quality assurance of the data detected anomalies that could not be resolved with the reporting company by the time the measure was calculated. The safety incident and hours work data are reported by accredited companies for their Work Health and Safety Accreditation Scheme and non-scheme projects valued at \$4 million or more. Prior to 20 January 2025, accredited companies primarily reported this information to the department through an online portal into the System Tracking Organisation Reporting Mechanism database. From this date, accredited companies reported through an online portal into the Scheme Tracking and Accreditation Reporting database.

| Measure WR004 | | Total Recorded Injury Frequency Rate (TRIFR) collectively reported by companies accredited under the Work Health and Safety Accreditation Scheme |
|----------------------|--|---|
| | | <p>The collective TRIFR for accredited companies is calculated by dividing the total number of safety incidents that have occurred on accredited companies' sites by the total number of work hours performed by accredited companies. The result is multiplied by 1 million to give a TRIFR per 1 million work hours.⁸⁶</p> <p>Due to the reporting timeframes for accredited companies, this target is measured over the calendar year rather than the financial year.</p> |
| Source | | Directly from accredited companies |
| Contributing program | | 3.1 – Workplace Support |
| Key activity | | Promote fair, productive and safe workplaces through policies and programs |

⁸⁶ As flagged in the Corporate Plan 2024–25, the way this measure is assessed has changed for this reporting period. This measure calculates the TRIFR for companies accredited under the Work Health and Safety Accreditation Scheme based on reported safety incidents and activity related to civil, commercial and residential building work. In 2023–24, the measure was based only on civil and commercial building.

In preparation for this change, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Annual Report 2023–24 published TRIFR results including and excluding residential building activity to enable 'like-for-like' comparison with this report. In the 2023–24 Annual Report, the 2023 TRIFR for civil, commercial and residential building work was 6.72 injuries per 1 million hours of work. As the result published in this report is lower than 6.72, the measure has been achieved.

Highlight:

Supporting the net zero transformation

The department is working collaboratively across governments, across industry and with communities to maximise opportunities and support worker transitions in response to the net zero transformation. The Australian Government is investing in employment and skills initiatives for workers, especially youth and First Nations people, to prepare for careers in the clean energy workforce and to enable labour market diversification in regions at the forefront of the economic transition.

Going forward, transition supports delivered in key regions will be funded through Regional Workforce Transition Plans (RWTPs) and the Transitioning Workforce Fund (TWF), which will enable communities to determine local needs, priorities and outcomes. Transition support will include priorities like training, career advice, case management and wellbeing initiatives. These plans will be developed with communities, state governments and the Net Zero Economy Authority (NZEa) to complement existing and place-based initiatives, such as the NZEa's Energy Industry Jobs Plan (EIJP), which supports workers affected by coal or gas power station closures.

Supporting the net zero transformation is a national priority under the National Skills Agreement between the Commonwealth and states and territories, which ensures each jurisdiction prioritises efforts to build this vital workforce. The department has led work with states and territories to improve access by people, employers and industry to relevant training pathways and skilled workers. The government has announced, in partnership with state and territory governments, 3 Net Zero TAFE Centres of Excellence: the Queensland TAFE Centre of Excellence Clean Energy Batteries, the TAFE New South Wales Hunter Net Zero Manufacturing Centre of Excellence and the Tasmanian Clean Energy Centre of Excellence. This builds on the 2 Net Zero TAFE Centres of Excellence agreed

with Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory in 2023–24. The Australian Government will also establish a National Training Centre in New Energy Skills in partnership with the Victorian Government and the Plumbing Industry Climate Action Centre, to equip tradespeople with the skills needed for the clean energy transformation.

In addition to introducing the government's Key Apprenticeship Program with a focus on supporting apprentices in net zero and construction occupations, the government has implemented the pilot Group Training Organisation (GTO) Reimbursement Program to reimburse small to medium enterprises (SMEs) for fees commensurate with the usual GTO service fees for qualifications on the Australian Apprenticeships Priority List. The pilot aims to encourage SMEs to explore new avenues for workforce development by taking on an apprentice.

Hearing from and working directly with community is critical in ensuring government efforts meet local needs. Since July 2024, Regional Workforce Transition Officers (RWTOs) have been on the ground in the key regions of Hunter (New South Wales), Gippsland (Victoria), central Queensland and south-west Western Australia. They are actively shaping and 'joining up' policy and programs.

For example, in central Queensland the RWTO organised a Student and Business Connect event in March 2025, where over 120 local high school students met with 25 regional employers from the clean energy, manufacturing and construction sectors. Employers provided information about work experience, apprenticeships and career options, helping students learn about workforce needs and training pathways.

As the closure dates for large coal- and gas-fired power stations approach, RWTOs will play a key role in coordinating with community members, workers, industry stakeholders and governments to implement worker transition supports through the RWTPs and TWF that complement the EIJP.

Regional Workforce Transition Officers are listening to and working with community to ensure government efforts meet local needs.



Pictured: Gippsland Regional Workforce Transition Officer Luke Arber and Program Officer Farhat Firdous.

Note: This highlight is not part of the Performance statements section. It is intended to demonstrate the work of DEWR.