

**Cormann, Mathias (Senator)**

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**From:** s47F  
**Sent:** Monday, 6 April 2020 11:55 AM  
**To:** Cormann, Mathias (Senator)  
**Cc:** s47F  
**Subject:** Employment Services Sector

**Importance:** High

Dear Minister

Thank you for taking the time to discuss the issues currently impacting the employment services sector as a result of COVID-19. As you are aware, APM provides Disability Employment Services (DES) and jobactive services throughout Australia.

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Employment service providers will be required to play a critical role in supporting Australians during this difficult period and beyond and the sector has endeavoured to maintain staffing levels to support these program and their participants.

Globally, in our operations we have been declared an "essential service" as a critical human service and a service once delivered by Government and now outsourced. In recognition of this, Governments have implemented funding mechanisms to ensure Providers maintain their workforces in the face of lower revenues due to reduced placement and outcome fees and in anticipation of the increased demand on our services both during and post this crisis.

Employment service providers support the most vulnerable in their pursuit of sustainable employment and also provide essential services to those most at risk of suffering other issues associated with unemployment such as mental health, financial crisis, family issues, substance misuse and homelessness etc.

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Maintaining Australia's employment service sector workforce is essential during this challenging time to both support the most vulnerable and to optimise employment post COVID-19. There are however newly emerging employment opportunities at this time as the employment landscape is rapidly changing. Our teams are working with unemployed people in metropolitan, regional, rural and remote Australia.

The pace of the change has left many vulnerable and seeking support, for as you are aware the issues associated with unemployment and in particular at the rate of change we have seen in the past weeks, require intervention which our sector is well equipped to provide. This is not about mutual obligation, and we believe the lines continue

at Centrelink offices in part because people want to deal with other people, and to know that someone cares and is there to support them.

APM operates in 10 countries (Australia, USA, Canada, New Zealand, UK, South Korea, German, Singapore, Switzerland and Spain) and all Governments outside Australia have already stepped up to directly support the sector. The employment services sector remains hopeful the Australian Government will do the same.

Globally, assistance for Providers has been focussed on maintaining their workforce to continue to support their participants and to ensure there is a viable skilled sector ready to step in as the economy returns from “hibernation” post COVID-19. Internationally, this support from Government is being provided in two key ways:

- Guaranteed Wage subsidies for Providers in the sector with no qualifying criteria other than commitment to maintaining the workforce – based on a percentage of wages – this has varied from 60% to 75% of employee costs. DESE and DSS could achieve this by making the “equivalent” Jobkeeper subsidy available (which is not available to many as noted below) to all Providers;
- Paying a floor payment to Providers based on the month’s revenue pre COVID-19 (ie February 2020) – noting this number is already reduced due to the impacts of the Australian bushfires

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If you require any further details please don't hesitate to give

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Regards,

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Advanced Personnel Management



APM acknowledges Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people as the original custodians of this country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

APM is building an inclusive workplace to help realise the potential of our employees, embrace difference and apply our diverse thinking to innovation and service delivery.

APM is dedicated to the consideration, support and inclusion of people with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, LGBTQIA people and people from culturally diverse backgrounds in all aspects of our organisation.

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