

Letter to the Editor - The Australian

Enough is enough – judge jobactive on facts

Facts speak to jobactive success

The National Employment Services Association (NESA) the peak body representing the breadth of Australian employment services with an extensive membership inclusive of not-for-profit and for profit providers considers the article “Failing job sites branded a mess” misleading and inaccurate.

Most importantly, this article is a slap in the face of the 30,000 dedicated frontline workers who daily support some of Australia’s most vulnerable citizens. The sector’s workforce is diversely skilled and experienced, and claims workers ‘on average’ are high school qualified are simply ill informed.

Facts about jobactive achievements clearly contradict claims it is a ‘hopeless mess’.

jobactive made 370,000+ job placements in 2016 -2017 a result 21% higher than its predecessor Job Services Australia.

jobactive exceeded sustainable employment targets set by the Department of Employment based on robust analysis of economic conditions and needs of job seekers requiring assistance.

The claim, “\$1.7bn the department spends on the program each year goes on administration” is incorrect. \$1.3bn was expended on jobactive in 2016-17 and included administration fees, outcome and other payments related to services to employers and the 730,000+ job seekers supported at any point in time.

jobactive does not include “taxpayer-bonuses” the majority of fees are outcome payments.

jobactive exceeded efficiency targets achieving a cost per outcome of \$1,453. In contrast, prior to implementation of contracted employment services Government spent an estimated \$5000 - \$16,000 of taxpayers’ money for every person who found employmentⁱ.

NESA has identified a range of further matters raised in the article requiring correction. A full public response to this article is available on our website www.nesa.com.au

Australian employment services have been the subject of constant review by local and international experts, such as the OECD who hold up Australia’s system as world’s best standard. NESA does not claim jobactive is perfect and we will continue to consult with all stakeholders regarding potential improvement to better support job seekers and employers. NESA is confident Government will take a considered and evidenced based approach to future reform and hopes that future articles by The Australian will reflect the same.

Sally Sinclair

CEO NESA

ⁱ Research Paper no. 15 2007–08 A review of developments in the Job Network