

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 1383

asked on Wednesday, 17 October 2018

MR J KRAUSE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SMALL BUSINESS AND MINISTER FOR TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION: With reference to the 'Queensland: An age-friendly community' implementation schedule—

Will the Minister provide a table of the progress made on each deliverable under the Minister's responsibility, and how that compares to the scheduled progress of each deliverable?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Scenic Rim for the question. Please find attached a table of progress on current Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT) associated actions under the 'Queensland: An age-friendly community' strategy and action plan.

Current DESBT associated actions	Scheduled status (2018–2019)	Current status	Notes
Provide eligible Queenslanders, including mature-age people, with access to subsidised training opportunities to secure a job or advance their career through a range of programs available under the Annual Vocational Education and Training (VET) Investment Plan including: the Certificate 3 Guarantee; User Choice traineeships and apprenticeships; and the Higher Level Skills programs.	Ongoing implementation and review	Ongoing implementation and review	<p>Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT) supported Queenslanders, including mature-age job seekers, to access training to secure a job or advance their career, through the <i>2017–18 Annual VET Investment Plan</i>. In 2017–18, the Queensland Government invested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$43.7 million supporting 24,566 people aged 45 and over through the Certificate 3 Guarantee program; and • \$12.3 million supporting 4129 people aged 45 and over through the User Choice Program.
Support workforce participation of different groups in the community, including mature-age job seekers through the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative, by providing tailored assistance to those Queenslanders who need support to gain the skills, qualifications and experience needed to enter and stay in the workforce.	Ongoing implementation and review	Ongoing implementation and review	As at 30 September 2018, 4905 mature-aged people have been assisted through Skilling Queenslanders for Work, with 2509 securing ongoing employment and 451 gaining a further training outcome.
Provide financial support of up to \$15,000 through the Back to Work Regional Program to employers who hire eligible job seekers in regional Queensland including mature-age job seekers.	Ongoing implementation and review	Ongoing implementation and review	In 2017–18, 455 mature aged Queenslanders aged 45 years and over were supported through the Back to Work Regional Employer Support Payments.

Current DESBT associated actions	Scheduled status (2018–2019)	Current status	Notes
Conduct research into entrepreneurship among older people to understand what support seniors need to open a small business (Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors in partnership with DESBT) and provide targeted small business advice and assistance to older entrepreneurs, supporting the <i>Advance Queensland Innovation</i> agenda.	Ongoing implementation and review	Ongoing implementation and review	DESBT is working across government to promote existing small business support programs being delivered under the <i>Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy 2016–20</i> , and to better understand what additional support seniors need to open a small business.
Extend the Back to Work program to introduce support payments to South East Queensland employers to take on long-term unemployed jobseekers, including mature-age jobseekers.	Ongoing implementation and review	Ongoing implementation and review	As at 25 October 2018, 174 mature aged Queenslanders aged 45 years and over have been supported through the Back to Work South East Queensland Employer Support Payments.
Provide a short-term financial boost of up to \$20,000 through the Back to Work program to employers who hire eligible mature-age jobseekers between 1 January 2018 and 30 June 2018.	Ongoing implementation and review	Completed	A Mature Aged Worker Boost Payment of up to \$20,000 was made available to employers who hired an eligible mature aged jobseeker aged over 55 years between 1 January 2018 and 30 June 2018. This payment was available in both South East Queensland and regional Queensland.
Review older entrepreneurs research and implement findings as applicable across the range of Office of Small Business services	Ongoing implementation and review	Ongoing implementation and review	DESBT continues to review available data as well as data collection options for informing service delivery for older entrepreneurs.
Provide targeted small business advice and assistance to older entrepreneurs, including promoting opportunities to participate in Small Business Entrepreneur Grants.	Ongoing implementation and review	Ongoing implementation and review	DESBT promotes the range of Queensland Government small business support programs widely across the small business community (including to older entrepreneurs), and will provide targeted promotion of the Small Business Entrepreneur Grants Program to older entrepreneurs in future rounds.

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Review existing content on the Business Queensland website and identify opportunities with Queensland Government departments to provide targeted small business advice and assistance to older entrepreneurs, supporting the Advance Queensland innovation agenda.	Ongoing implementation and review	Ongoing implementation and review	DESBT engaged with Advance Queensland to identify relevant programs and information to support older entrepreneurs within Queensland, including applicable web content.
Appoint a prominent Queenslander as an Ambassador to promote and advocate to employers the benefits of employing mature-aged workers.	Core development period	Ongoing implementation and review	A number of Ambassadors will be identified through the Mature Workers Mean Business Awards program. A profile of the Ambassadors will be featured on the Business Queensland website and promoted on social media.
Establish an Awards program to recognise and showcase Queensland businesses that demonstrate best practice in employing mature-aged workers.	Core development period	Completed	On 19 September 2018, the Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development announced the Mature Workers Mean Business Awards program. The Minister called on businesses who are actively employing mature aged workers to share their story for a chance to win a personalised business coaching program. Applications for the Awards program closed on Friday 26 October 2018. The Award winner will be featured on the Business Queensland website and promoted on social media.

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Promote positive images of older Queenslanders as valued and respected community members in publications and online materials.	Ongoing implementation and review	Ongoing implementation and review	<p>DESBT ensures there is diversity in all departmental publications.</p> <p>Older Queenslanders have been included in the 100 Faces of Small Business initiative. Older Queenslanders are also featured in videos online and in a range of other promotional opportunities and departmental publications.</p> <p>DESBT is undertaking an image audit of the Business Queensland website and reviewing Business Queensland content for participating Queensland Government departments.</p>
Ensure the views of older Queenslanders inform programs and policies, and ensure older people's voices are heard.	Ongoing implementation and review	Ongoing implementation and review	The views of older Queenslanders are considered in the development of DESBT programs and policies, as required.
Recognise the contribution of carers to the Queensland community, and consult with carers when developing policy, and planning and delivering services, as required under the <i>Queensland Carers (Recognition) Act 2008</i> .	Ongoing implementation and review	Ongoing implementation and review	DESBT ensures that the needs of carers are considered when developing policy, and planning and delivering services, as required.
Value the voice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and seniors, and engage with them in co-designing initiatives for seniors.	Ongoing implementation and review	Ongoing implementation and review	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elders and seniors are engaged throughout the implementation of the Advancing Indigenous Business initiative.

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Investigate policy development to improve employment outcomes for older workers and other groups of people facing additional barriers in the labour market.	Ongoing implementation and review	Ongoing implementation and review	<p>During 2017–18, DESBT implemented key Government employment policies and initiatives. This includes significant investments to improve employment outcomes for disadvantaged Queenslanders, including older people through the Queensland Government’s \$369 million Back to Work program.</p> <p>Key initiatives under Back to Work include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The \$5 million Mature Aged Worker Boost payment; • The \$305 million Back to Work regional employment package; • The \$59 million Back to Work South East Queensland employment package; and • Back to Work Teams including Jobseeker Officers who are available to assist older jobseekers with determining their individual skills, navigating the training system and connecting them with employment opportunities in their region.