

The Department of Education, Skills and Employment

Exposure Draft for the New Employment Services Model 2022
Purchasing Arrangements

Response submitted by:

BUSY Ability



Australian Government
Department of Education, Skills and Employment
Via email: espurchasing@dese.gov.au

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Dear Department representatives,

Feedback on the Exposure Draft for New Employment Services Purchasing Arrangements

BUSY Ability welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the Exposure Draft for the New Employment Services Purchasing Arrangements.

As an organisation dedicated to supporting and empowering marginalised Australians to enter education, training and employment, BUSY Ability supports the inclusion of Ex-offender Specialist licences in the proposed New Employment Services Model.

About BUSY Ability

BUSY Ability, formerly known as ON-Q, has provided services to disadvantaged Australians for the past 30 years. In 2019, BUSY Ability joined The BUSY Group, a national not for profit provider of employment, disability, education and training services for more than 40 years.

Service provision to incarcerated and ex-offender Australians

BUSY Ability currently provides services to incarcerated Australians and ex-offenders through self-funded programs, delivered in partnership with organisations providing wraparound services. We have invested in this work to address an existing gap in employment preparation programs available to incarcerated people. This work has enabled us to better understand the challenges faced by ex-offenders in entering the labour market, particularly after a period of incarceration.

Supporting ex-offenders entering Employment Services to receive appropriate servicing

Ex-offenders and recently released prisoners have commonly experienced difficulty in accessing appropriate Employment Services. In the current jobactive contract, many find themselves classified as Stream A with limited support. Many ex-offenders are facing multiple and significant barriers to employment such as long term unemployment, criminal records, difficulty obtaining housing, mental health issues and other non-vocational barriers.

BUSY Ability encourages the Department to appropriately weight assessments to direct ex-offenders to Enhanced Services in the new model, to provide these vulnerable Australians with access to case management services to address their barriers and move them quickly into employment.





Supporting ex-offenders in Townsville and Cairns, Queensland

BUSY Ability notes that there is currently no ex-offender specialist licence indicated for the Cairns and Townsville Employment Regions. However, the numbers of ex-offenders in these two regions (1500+ per region) are higher than other regions where an ex-offender specialist licence is indicated (for example, Capital region with indicative 847 ex-offenders).

BUSY Ability recommends that the Department consider adding an ex-offender specialist licence type to these two regions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback. I can be contacted via the details below should further information be required.

Kind regards,



BUSY Ability

