EC24-004453

Australian Government
Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

Minute to: Quyen Tran, acting First Assistant Secretary

Subject: Job search mailbox – slow processing time impacting participants

Action Due date: *7 December 2024*.

From: s 47F(1) , Director Mutual Obligations Team
Through: Andrew Wright, A/g Assistant Secretary
Access and Participation Branch
Copy to: Nicky Antonius, Assistant Secretary
Digital Solutions Employment Services Branch
Adam Shain, First Assistant Secretary
Digital Solutions Employment Services Branch

Contact: s 47F(1)
Phone: s 47E(d)

Recommendation(s) – That you:

1) **approve** the decommissioning of the jobsearcheffort@workforceaustralia.gov.au mailbox from **March 2025** and commence transition to remove the function for participants.

approved / not approved

s 22(1)

Signature

_____

Please ensure that we make concerted, proactive contact with those individuals who have been using their mailbox to submit their jobsearch, particularly in the lead-up to decommissioning the mailbox. It is important that individuals are not adversely impacted noting that there Is not a viable alternative to the mailbox. I note, however, that there a number of existing methods for individuals to record their jobsearch. I appreciate the transition approach to decommissioning the mailbox for impacted employment services.

_16__/_12__/2024

Purpose

1. To seek approval to transition to the removal of the email function for participants to report job search efforts. The proposed transition plan is at Attachment A.

Issues

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2. On 2 October 2024, Digital Solutions Division (DSD) identified slow processing of the jobsearcheffort@workforceaustralia.gov.au mailbox which is used by participants to submit evidence of job search efforts to meet mutual obligation requirements. This mailbox is used by Workforce Australia, Disability Employment Services (DES) and Community Development Program (CDP) participants.
3. The slow performance of the mailbox has potential serious consequences. If a job search is not counted due to the delayed processing, the participant will be assessed as not meeting their PBAS requirements and have the Targeted Compliance Framework applied.
4. DSD investigated the issue thoroughly and managed to resolve the fault on 15 November 2024.
5. No viable alternative method of participants emailing in job search efforts has been identified, despite extensive investigation.
6. While a method of improving functionality has been identified, this would be a significant workload and require de-prioritisation of other IT deliverables – including Budget measures. Despite the issue being resolved, no particular cause has been identified, reducing future confidence that any 'fixed' mailbox would operate as intended.
7. Manual processes have been put in place to protect participants from a payment suspension. But these are labour intensive and divert limited resources from other priorities.
8. Due to a lack of viable alternatives, removal of the mailbox is therefore proposed, allowing resources to be better directed to other priorities.
9. The preferred method for participants to report their job search efforts is through their Workforce Australia account, through their Provider, or by contacting the Digital Services Contact Centre (DSCC). These channels provide the department with greater assurance as they verify the identity of the participants. Emails into the mailbox do not provide this identity verification.
10. Removal of the mailbox would mean participants must access one of the alternative methods above to record their job search efforts. Many already need to, for example to report activities other than job searches.
11. Most users of the mailbox are in Workforce Australia Online, and therefore more digitally literate. The additional onus of logging into their Workforce Australia account is likely minor, while providing greater assurance for the department. Those in provider services also have the back-up option of reporting their job search to their provider if they are unable to use their Workforce Australia account.
12. With a robust transition plan to remove the mailbox, the department can minimise disruption to participants. Proposed transition at Attachment A.

Background

13. The email-based system was initially built to process less than 500 emails per day in 2016, while the current load is approximately 4,000-5,000 emails per day which increases the likelihood of delays in processing, among other risks.
14. Using the mailbox was considered a convenient option for employment service participants to submit job search efforts to the department. With the additional alternatives of reporting activities through the Workforce Australia platform, DSCC, or their Providers, since the commencement of the Workforce Australia contract in July 2022, the department has not reviewed and considered the future of this mailbox until now.
15. In the month of September 2024, 245,606 participants self-reported job search efforts via the online platforms (Workforce Australia Online for Individuals website and email batch combined), of these a total of 12,731 participants used the email batch at least once. Of the 12,731 using the batch 8,876 used the batch as their sole method of self-reporting job search efforts.
16. This represents less than 4% of Workforce Australia participants use this method only for reporting job search efforts.
17. Other employment services contracts also use this mailbox, including TtW (74), DES (1,658) and CDP (17).
18. There are currently 5 ways a Workforce Australia, CDP or DES participant can submit job search efforts.
    - Sign in to Workforce Australia platform and submit individual job searches

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- Sign in to Workforce Australia platform and submit bulk job searches
- Sign in to Workforce Australia platform and apply for jobs directly on Workforce Australia website
- Unauthenticated environment where participants forward private email confirmation from third party job boards such as Seek, LinkedIn, Adzuna to the department's jobsearcheffort@workforceaustralia.gov.au mailbox to be processed in a batch.
- Participants who are serviced by a provider can also take their job search efforts into the provider and the provider can submit these on their behalf.

19. The mailbox is an unauthenticated environment. The department understands that the Australian Taxation Office and Services Australia have moved away from using unauthenticated environments with customers due to an increased risk of security implications.

Risks

20. There has been recent negative media on the mailbox's poor performance including it being raised at the recent Senate Estimates hearing, suggesting that the onus is put on participants to fix the department's issues. Removing the mailbox and a method through which participants can report job search would likely amplify this criticism.

Financial implications

21. Currently there is no funding for DSD to maintain or monitor the jobsearch mailbox. Current and ongoing costs to do so are estimated to be:
    - Permanently monitoring of the system to ensure the batch is functioning within acceptable parameters has an anticipated effort of 20% of a Developer, 10% of production support resource, and 5% of a release team resource, estimated cost of $90,000 annually.
    - Endeavouring to have all templates working would be 40% of a senior developer, 20% of a Tester, and 5% of a Business Analyst (BA). As the templates are associated with third party recruitment sites, we would be reliant on failures being identified through monitoring before we could commence fixes, estimated cost of $156,000 annually.
    - Investigate incidents when the batch is processing slowly or fails, noting that there are no guarantees that the investigation will result in an identified cause or fix for the incident. Based on the latest incident the resources required to investigate would include 4 TSD resources full time, 1 release team member, and 1 Senior developer full time at a cost of $8,000 per day.
22. To repair functionality of the mailbox to an acceptable standard requires time and money.
    - To redevelop the existing batch the estimate for DSD only resources would be 1 Developer for 5 Sprints (10weeks), 1 Tester (20 days), 1 BA (10 days), estimated cost of $100,000.
23. While repairs could improve the performance it is still not technically feasible or cost effective to maintain and monitor the mailbox. Ongoing management would require reprioritisation of planned project work, such as reprioritising DES (which has a fixed delivery date) in order to deliver within existing resources.

Consultation

24. DSD have been consulted and agree that the risk of continuing to provide an unauthenticated email option outweighs the value of having it, particularly given there are other reliable options available for participants currently.
25. DSS or NIAA have been made aware of our intention to remove the mailbox. DSS and NIAA both confirmed this direction is agreeable once your endorsement is confirmed. Both would appreciate as much advance notice as possible to manage communication of the changes to providers and participants.
26. There is no impact on providers, employers or Services Australia.

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Summary of attachments

Attachment A	Approach to decommissioning the mailbox

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Attachment A

Approach to Decommissioning

Propose a 2 –3 month transition plan to ensure we can inform participants and providers.

Given mutual obligation requirements are paused over Christmas from 16 December to 2 January, the mailbox propose to decommission from the end of February 2025.

A staged transition approach is intended, firstly an immediate response to take pressure off the mailbox, followed by targeted communication to stakeholders as the decommission date nears.

Proposed communication plan:

Stage 1 – Education to participants to discourage use of email submission

Timing – Commence immediately, November 2024.

- Work with Targeted Content team to strongly promote all other methods available for participants to report job search efforts. This would involve:
    - Targeted messaging to current users of email submission method. Revise all auto-replies to participants to include clear advice on alternate ways to submit job search efforts and encourage using the authenticated environment. This includes Submission, Success and Failed to Process notifications to participants
    - Include that the mailbox will not be available from end of February 2025 and to use the options via Workforce Australia sign in.
- Liaise with DES and CDP agencies to advise decision and encourage them to communicate the change to their participants.
- Workforce Australia website, used by Workforce Australia, DES and CDP participants, updated to provide clearer advice on reporting requirements, encouraging participants to use the authenticated environment as email option being removed.
- Banner added in the authenticated environment encouraging participants to use this secure platform to submit job search efforts as it gives instant recognition of their job search and points requirement.
- Consider an educational video to demonstrate to participants how to use the authenticated environment options to submit job search efforts and make available on Workforce Australia website.
- Provider portal notice to all providers advising to promote participants to use other methods to submit job search efforts and to educate participants.

Stage 2 – Targeted communication

Timing – January 2025 (after Christmas shutdown)

1. Promote change to participants

- Targeted messaging to current participants using the email option and send SMS or email in authenticated environment notifying of the change. Potential to extract a list of users over the past 12months and direct message them.

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- Social media. Proactively use social media posts to promote education or easy ways to use including how to upload evidence for job search (noting not available during Caretaker period)
- Update/add a banner to the participant dashboard in the authenticated environment advising the mailbox is no longer available.
- Remove the link (tile on participant dashboard) so participants can't access email option details.
- Display a link to education pages/video from banner on Points page and Job Search effort page on Workforce Australia website.
- Virtual Assistant to be provided with updated information for participants.
- DSCC and NCSL to be provided with updated scripts and knowledgebase articles on the changes for reference.

2. Promote change to Providers

- Develop communication products for providers, advising of mailbox decommissioning and promoting other viable methods. Including Provider Portal notice, updated guidelines, review taskcards.
- Consider developing a taskcard or handout for providers to give participants showing how easy it is to report using the authenticated environment.
- Communication to State Network, requesting Provider leads reiterate the message and field any questions for program area to respond to.
- Open task reminder published on the Providers site dashboard advising of the upcoming change and to ensure providers educate participants on using the authenticated environment.

Stage 3 - Post decommissioning

Timing – March 2025

- Consider an aftercare period so while we advertise the mailbox is not available after a set date, we don't actually switch off for a period after that to ensure we can contact participants and advise compliance may apply if they continue as the mailbox will no longer be monitored.
- Leave on auto-reply after decommission for a set period, advising participants that they must sign in or talk to their provider.
- Identify participants that continue to use despite communications and consider targeted messaging using the authenticated environment notifying of non-compliance implication if they continue to use.

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s 22(1)

From: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 25 October 2024 2:50 PM
To: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Subject: RE: ISSUE - job search mailbox slow processing time [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s 47F(1) ,

Apologies for the delay in my response, we've been completing the assessment along with managing the path to the upcoming release, I completely understand that this is a big decision, and it does impact a user base that has been using this service for a while. At the meeting we have on Monday I am happy to unpack issues we may not have taken into consideration, happy to hear from you beforehand as well.

I have started to have a weekly meeting with s 47F(1) to discuss any concerns or work through issues outside the focus on projects. It might be beneficial for us to have the same arrangement meeting, if you see are happy for me to arrange it just let me know.

Cheers

s
47F(

From: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 21 October 2024 11:23 AM
To: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Cc: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>; s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Subject: FW: ISSUE - job search mailbox slow processing time [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s
47F(

I understand the job search mailbox continues to have a very slow processing time and the cause is yet to be identified.

This morning s 47F(1) mentioned using NTMS but not sure how that works and how that will help support the mailbox.

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My team has been exploring the use of the mailbox and alternative options including whether to keep or not. However, based on our data, the mailbox is used by Workforce Australia, Disability Employment and CDP and sits at around 8% or so. Removing the mailbox is not an easy option.

The mailbox receives approx. 3-4000 emails per day, or approx. 75,000 per month as it is an easy option for participants to submit job search/job application evidence to meet mutual obligation requirements as they don't have to log into their myGov account and can just forward their job confirmation.

We are keen to understand the options DSD are considering to manage this issue on a more permanent basis as the current temporary solution to apply contingency arrangements and manually remove demerits and payment suspensions daily is not a sustainable option.

Is it worth getting together to discuss options and a way forward.

s
47F(1)

s 47F(1)

Acting Director
Mutual Obligations Team | Access & Participation Branch
Workforce for Individuals Division
Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
Phone s 47E(d)
dewr.gov.au

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s 22(1)

From: s 47F(1)
Sent: Tuesday, 22 October 2024 11:35 AM
To: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Job search effort email box [SEC=OFFICIAL]

FYI

s 47F(1)
Acting Director
Mutual Obligations Team | Access & Participation Branch
Workforce for Individuals Division
Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
Phone s 47E(d)
dewr.gov.au

From: WRIGHT,Andrew <Andrew.Wright@dewr.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 22 October 2024 11:30 AM
To: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>; s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>; s 47F(1) s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Job search effort email box [SEC=OFFICIAL]

FYI

From: WRIGHT,Andrew
Sent: Tuesday, 22 October 2024 11:29 AM
To: Nicky Antonius <Nicky.Antonius@dewr.gov.au>
Subject: Job search effort email box

Hi Nicky,

I was talking to the team about the job search effort mail inbox, and keen to get a bit of an idea on what would be required to implement a fix/replacement to address the performance issues? I know that your team are advocating removing the functionality entirely, but given that the mail box is used by three employment services and around 30,000 people per month, I don't think we could recommend that without a thorough understanding of the relative costs and benefits of fix/replacement vs removal.

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I'm pretty conscious that the current issues are taking up around 1-2 hours of DSD's time per day, as well as this branch's time.

Cheers,

Andrew Wright
a/g Assistant Secretary
Access and Participation Branch | Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
Tel: s 47E(d) **| Email**: Andrew.Wright@dewr.gov.au

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s 22(1)

From: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 22 October 2024 11:01 AM
To: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Cc: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Pros and Cons removing Mailbox for job search submissions [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s 47F(1) ,

Additional considerations:

- Capacity and resources of DSD to prioritise to resolve the issue is limited given other higher priorities such as VPS at the moment. (I can't pin anyone in DSD down to discuss this topic).
- Only if a participant reads the reply email to say their job search has not been processed would the participant then have to action a second time. Eg. would have to login or contact provider to re-submit. For mailbox failures, Participant has to then submit job searches via WFA which involves logging in, completing job application details including employer, job title, method of job search, or uploading evidence and submitting, or give details to a provider to submit on their behalf. This takes more time than onforwarding an email from eg. Seek which is send and forget.
- Manual intervention to mitigate slow processing time to avoid TCF is not viable long term. DSD resources are already stretched, plus currently using Contingency as a safeguard which is extra work too
- Data differences:
    - DSD data last week indicated 3-4,000 emails processed per day with approx. 75,000 processed per month. Equals about 4% of job search effort submissions occur using email mailbox.
    - SPO initial analysis indicates that overall 5.5% or 118k of the 2.18m job applications submitted by users came through the email batch last month (not sure over what time period).
    - I've sourced from DSD today the Number of mailbox emails processed (meaning 1 by 1 processing of emails and can have a result of submitted or failed). See attached spreadsheet. Interestingly, s 47F(1) graphed the data and it shows Sept with highs and lows of processing time and October with lower but more constant processing over the course of each day (word doc).

thanks

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s 47F(1)
Assistant Director

Mutual Obligations Team | Access and Participation Branch
Workforce Australia for Individuals Division

s 22(1)

From: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 15 October 2024 8:52 AM
To: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Cc: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Subject: Pros and Cons removing Mailbox for job search submissions [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s 47F(1) ,

Find below s 47F(and my thoughts on removing the email option for submitting job applications to meet requirements. I understand Andrew is not keen to remove the functionality given the volume of job search recorded that way, but think it's worth putting some ideas out there for pro's and con's of having it, or not.

Pros to remove mailbox:

- It will standardise and provide a more efficient service to participants by using the reliable and consistent submitting through online, the app or through a provider or DSCC.
- Points are immediately recorded on the app, website or provider/DSCC. Current mailbox has a delay causing points not accounted for at the end of the point period.
- When submitted using WFA platform, participants know immediately what their requirements are, what they have submitted and how much more to go. When lodging via email there is a delay to receiving a response until the email is processed which can be hours.
- Better tracking. Emails could be lost or delayed with sending out as more factors involved such as internet service provider issues or mailbox issues.
- Security, using official department systems will improve data protection and privacy. That is emails are not hacked or intercepted by third parties.

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- Manual entry of email address can lead to human error.
- Main user is DIG6 who could arguably login and use app or WFA instead.
- DSD advise that ongoing maintenance of the mailbox is not funded, so there is no dedicated staff or resource from DSD to monitor and maintain the efficiency of the mailbox.

Cons to remove mailbox:

- Forwarding an email is an easy/lazy option for submitting job searches. Participants don't have to log in to WFA/MyGov, they just forward from their personal email address. Participants can use email whether PA03 or not PA03 in Job Plan.
- Removing email option could see an increase dependency on providers and DSCC. Could see increased removal of PA03 in job plans because job seekers that only used the email method may opt to not use other methods and use providers instead.
- Accessibility issues, not all participants are proficient to use the app or online submission due to digital literacy issues (no PA03). These participants will rely on providers or contact with DSCC.
- There are currently 4 ways a participant can submit job searches. Email jobsearcheffort mailbox (participant), manually report single submissions using app/website/WFAOP (participant and provider), upload bulk submissions with evidence using app/website/WFAOP (participant and provider) or via jobsboard on WFA (participant, these are reported automatically) Removing email will mean less flexibility and options for participants to submit job applications for PBAS.
- Increase in contact with providers and DSCC to lodge on behalf of participants, due to digital literacy issues. Increase to staffing/resourcing to service participants.
- Potential for an increase in dissatisfaction (complaints) by participants due to increase time involved to report points than just sending an email by having to login. Increase burden on providers and DSCC in managing participants responsibilities.
- Departmental IT outages will increase stress for participants, where email submission is currently send and forget.
- email function used for all employment programs, noting it is used by WFA, DES, TTW, RJCP which includes 3 different gov departments. Removing will involve liaison with other depts.

Impacts with the removal of the mailbox:

- there are approx. 4% of job search effort submissions lodged via using email mailbox according to data from DSD. Equates to approx. 3000 per day or 75k per month.
- DIG6 impacted the most as they submit over half they emails received in the mailbox.
- For April to Sept (6mths) there were over 700k emails received from almost 27000 participants. Supports that many participants use email mailbox repeatedly.
- Participants who are older and less IT proficient, participants with disability or participant with digital literacy issues are impacted with the removal of the mailbox.
- Providers and DSSC will see more resources required to assist participants transitioning to a new submission methods as there may be an education and communication required with the change.
- Removing the mailbox will see reporting be more timely and accurate. Currently the IT system is struggling to cope with the volume of email lodgements.
- Programs from 3 different gov departments impacted. (DEWR, DSS, NIAA)
- Cost and time/effort by DSD to rebuild to improve efficiency of mailbox, if removing is not an option

Thanks,

s 47F(1)

Assistant Director

PBAS Team | Access and Participation Branch
Workforce Australia for Individuals Division

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s 22(1)

From: s 47F(1)
Sent: Tuesday, 15 October 2024 12:32 PM
To: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Cc: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Pros and Cons removing Mailbox for job search submissions [SEC=OFFICIAL]

A few thoughts..

- Email jobsearcheffort mailbox (participant) it seems simple to use – what other options is just as easy?
- manually report single submissions using app/website/WFAOP (participant and provider), this is more time consuming than submitting an email right?
- upload bulk submissions with evidence using app/website/WFAOP (participant and provider) or
- via jobsboard on WFA (participant, these are reported automatically)

s 47F(1)
Acting Director
Points Based Activation System | Access & Participation Branch
Workforce for Individuals Division
Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
Phone s 47E(d)
dewr.gov.au

From: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, October 15, 2024 8:52 AM
To: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Cc: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Subject: Pros and Cons removing Mailbox for job search submissions [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s 47F(1)

Find below s 47F(1) and my thoughts on removing the email option for submitting job applications to meet requirements. I understand Andrew is not keen to remove the functionality given the volume of job search recorded that way, but think it's worth putting some ideas out there for pro's and con's of having it, or not.

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- Better tracking. Emails could be lost or delayed with sending out as more factors involved such as internet service provider issues or mailbox issues.
- Security, using official department systems will improve data protection and privacy. That is emails are not hacked or intercepted by third parties.
- Manual entry of email address can lead to human error.
- Main user is DIG6 who could arguably login and use app or WFA instead.
- DSD advise that ongoing maintenance of the mailbox is not funded, so there is no dedicated staff or resource from DSD to monitor and maintain the efficiency of the mailbox.

Cons to remove mailbox:

- Forwarding an email is an easy/lazy option for submitting job searches. Participants don't have to log in to WFA/MyGov, they just forward from their personal email address. Participants can use email whether PA03 or not PA03 in Job Plan. If we removed it what is the other option that is as easy?
- Removing email option could see an increase dependency on providers and DSCC. Could see increased removal of PA03 in job plans because job seekers that only used the email method may opt to not use other methods and use providers instead.
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- Departmental IT outages will increase stress for participants, where email submission is currently send and forget.
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- Programs from 3 different gov departments impacted. (DEWR, DSS, NIAA)
- Cost and time/effort by DSD to rebuild to improve efficiency of mailbox, if removing is not an option

Thanks,

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s 47F(1)
Assistant Director

PBAS Team | Access and Participation Branch
Workforce Australia for Individuals Division

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s 47F(1)

From: s 47F(1)
Sent: Thursday, 21 November 2024 5:26 PM
To: s 47F(1)
Cc: Nicky Antonius; WRIGHT,Andrew; s 47F(1) , s 47F(1)
Subject: Update on jobsearchmailbox minute re decommissioning

Hi all

Just an update on the job search mailbox minute - **EC24-004453** - Job search mailbox – slow processing time impacting participants.

Andrew suggested to liaise with DSS and NIA to seek their view and agreement to decommission the mailbox. DSS have replied, however we are still waiting on NIAA.

- DSS – supports decommissioning the mailbox and they don't reference it in any of their guidance material.
- NIAA – waiting on confirmation – they asked to have until tomorrow to advise.

Once we have confirmation from NIAA we will update the minute and progress it to our acting FAS as a priority.

As discussed, the auto reply will stay in place until we have agreement to 'decommission' the mailbox and then update the autoreply with the date of the mailbox no longer being in use. This will hopefully re-educate participants on the other ways to submit their job search efforts.

Happy to discuss.

s 47F(1)
Director
Mutual Obligations Team | Access & Participation Branch
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dewr.gov.au

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s 47F(1)

From: s 47F(1)
Sent: Monday, 4 November 2024 14:43
To: s 47F(1)
Subject: RE: Job search mailbox -Legacy Email-Based Solution for JSC Reporting [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Looks good to me.

s 47F(1)
Acting Director
Mutual Obligations Team | Access & Participation Branch
Workforce for Individuals Division
Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
Phone s 47E(d)
dewr.gov.au

From: s 47F(1)
Sent: Monday, 4 November 2024 2:17 PM
To: s 47F(1)
Subject: FW: Job search mailbox -Legacy Email-Based Solution for JSC Reporting [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s 47F(1) ,

I was working on this consolidated feedback and comments for Andrew and s 47F(. Thoughts?

Black is themes from the report.
Red is PBAS response
Blue is ideas to consider

- Benefits of retiring the mailbox. Current manual process does pose a risk with Compliance and poor user experience. Risk versus ease of submitting job search by onforwarding email confirmation to be determined before agreeing to decommission.
- Risk that mailbox does not comply with Cyber Security requirements. Nicky A confirmed it does comply.
- Demand/use of mailbox has grown since first introduced (prior to WFAOI) Agree, 4-5000 emails a day requires mailbox to be maintained. No current budget to maintain or monitor is an issue.
- An automated script is applied on the mailbox to process incoming emails (last in, first out). s 47F(1) confirmed the script doesn't do oldest first. It works from the top being last received is processed first.
- Alternative if decommissioned. Recommended solution to use existing WFAOI authenticated environment only. Can lodge by 3 different ways currently. Requires participant to login to WFAOI or Provider to submit on behalf.
    - Add manual job application eg. requires input details (application submission date, job title, agent name, contact name, contact email, contact phone, how did you apply) Can be done by provider or participant.
    - Bulk job application eg. requires upload of file and enter number of job applications in the upload. Can only be file type doc, docx, pdf, rtf, xls, xlsx, ppt, pptx, txt, csv, jpg, jpe, jpeg, png or gif file under 3 MB. Can be done by provider or participant.
    - Apply for online jobs (tile takes participant to Workforce Australia website to access jobs board). Applications are recorded automatically using this method. Can be done by participant only.
- Over a 6-month period covering 02-04-2024 to 02-10-2024 has identified that less than 4% of job seekers use this facility for reporting job search efforts. This is approx 27,000 different participants

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using the mailbox during the period. Used by PRO6, DIG6, TTW plus DES, and CDP. The data also suggests in Sept 41.4% failed the processing checks due to 'no income support'. Could this be for participants who are suspended (so not on allowance) and submitting job search to meet re-engagement requirements? If so, 40% is high use for this purpose.

Ideas:

- Allow upload of email file types so participants can use the bulk upload function without having to convert the email to another file type. Initial discussion with DSD indicates this would be problematic given all the email file types that exist but worth exploring.
- Majority of participants use mobile device to report. DSD suggest easiest way is to screenshot a pic of the email and upload screenshot image as evidence using existing bulk upload function. Not sure what file type a screenshot is and if it is one of the allowable file types to upload. Would require comms and re-education to participants on how to use.
- Could we retire for WFA (PRO6 an DIG6) and only make available to use by DES and CDP participants? Would require clear comms. Would mean no negotiation with other departments to decommission.
- If we changed the script to read oldest first, would this improve the time for a participant to get a response? Wouldn't change the function of the mailbox though. Has been raised with s 47F(1) who thought it would have little impact, but worth asking/exploring.
- Seek funding to have a dedicated resource to monitor and maintain the mailbox, including making sure the Seek/LinkedIn templates remain current.

Thanks,

s 47F(1)
Assistant Director

Mutual Obligations Team | Access and Participation Branch
Workforce Australia for Individuals Division

From: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 4 November 2024 1:00 PM
To: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Cc: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Job search mailbox -Legacy Email-Based Solution for JSC Reporting [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s 47F(1)

Would you mind reviewing the paper again and adding in anything else you think we need to flag even if its not considered as an option.

I think we do have to point out that the data suggests people are using it so if there was alternative it needs to be as simple as the email option.

Then if you can send back through s 47F(and whoever else is copied in that would be great.

s 47F(1)
Acting Director
Mutual Obligations Team | Access & Participation Branch
Workforce for Individuals Division
Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
Phone s 47E(d)
dewr.gov.au

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From: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 25 October 2024 5:24 PM
To: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Cc: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Job search mailbox -Legacy Email-Based Solution for JSC Reporting [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s 47F(1)

s 47F(and I have both reviewed the Discussion Paper provided by s 47F(in DSD.

To summarise, they don't thing the mailbox is fit for purpose anymore and want to decommission it and just use the WFAOP platform that is secure and reliable.

The data strongly supports the use of the mailbox is mostly by people unemployed for less than 2 years, with good English, educated above year 12 and male and females in their 20's. No surprise.
What stood out though is that 30% of email only submission are from people in high region disadvantage areas which I thought was odd.
Also 40% of people that submit email only, are not on income support. Could this be people who are exempt but still reporting? Or could it be that the system is saying they are not on allowance as they are TCF suspended eg. for PBAS failure and they are trying to submit re-engagements?
What other scenario's would make this so high?

Separate to this, after our meeting with Andrew earlier in the week, s 47F(1) did a sample of 10 PRO6 and 10 DIG6 participants (5met and 5 unmet) to profile them. Nothing out of the ordinary or unexpected was evident in the small sample.

I think the biggest risk and something I hadn't thought of was the cyber-security risk and whether the mailbox even complies, given it is linked to the system's database of personal job seeker details.

Comments in the links to sharepoint below for your consideration.

Let's discuss on Monday.

Thanks,

s 47F(1)
Assistant Director

Mutual Obligations Team | Access and Participation Branch
Workforce Australia for Individuals Division

From: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 25 October 2024 2:18 PM
To: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Job search mailbox -Legacy Email-Based Solution for JSC Reporting [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s 47F(1)

I read through the documents looks fine. I actually don't understand how the Solution 2 - WAOI works.
Solution 1, we are all aware of the issues with it and I have no problems replacing or upgrading it.
We can discuss when you are back online.
s
47F(

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From: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 25 October 2024 11:55 AM
To: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Subject: Job search mailbox -Legacy Email-Based Solution for JSC Reporting [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s 47F(,

Attached is the discussion paper DSD s 47F(1) prepared and will discuss at the meeting on Monday.

I've saved to Sharepoint so we can add comments before we discuss with s 47F(1) .

Legacy Email-Based Solution for Job Seeker Compliance Reporting Discussion Paper.docx
Data for Email Batch.xlsx

Can you please go through the paper closely and add any comments that you feel we need to consider. I'll do the same and then we can discuss further with s 47F(1) and get her view.

Thanks,

s 47F(1)
Assistant Director

Mutual Obligations Team | Access and Participation Branch
Workforce Australia for Individuals Division
Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
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dewr.gov.au

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of country throughout Australia and their continuing waters and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and Elders past, present and emerging.

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Australian Government
Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

Legacy Email-Based Solution for Job Seeker Compliance

Discussion Paper

Employment Services Platform

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ISBN
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The document must be attributed as the (insert document title).

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Document Information

Revision history

Version	Date	Created By	Comments
0.1	03/10/2024	s 47F(1)	Initial draft

Review

Version	Date	Reviewed By	Comments
0.1	03/10/2024	s 47F(1)	Initial draft
0.2	22/10/2024	s 47F(1)	Final

Endorsement

Version	Date	Approved By	Comments
		Nicky Antonius	

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Executive summary

This discussion paper explores options for the legacy email-based solution used to report job searches from outside the Workforce Australia platform. The solution, developed prior to the New Employment Services Model (NESM) in 2022 and the Targeted Compliance Framework (TCF) in 2018, is no longer fit for purpose due to frequent failures which increase compliance, business, and technological risks, affects operational efficiency, and poses significant reputational damage. Alternatively, a more reliable, streamlined, cost-effective, and contemporary solution is already available via the Workforce Australia Online for Individuals (WAOI) interface, without the limitations of the legacy solution. The WAOI interface offers a better user experience and robust support for modern compliance requirements.

Background

Participants with compellable job search requirements are required to report their job search efforts as agreed in their job plans. Failure to meet this requirement may result in compliance action, including income support being placed on hold, reduced or cancelled.

Job seekers are provided two system-based facilities to report their job search reports through either:

- **Solution 1: Legacy Email-Based System** (Pre-NESM/TCF), or
- **Solution 2: Contemporary Solution - WAOI interface**

Assessment

Solution 1: Legacy Email-Based System (Pre-NESM/TCF)

The legacy email-based system was initially built to process less than 500 emails per day, while the current load is approximately 4000-5000 emails per day which increases the likelihood of delays in processing, among other risks. The systems high level process flow is as follows:

1. Job seekers who apply for vacancies through third party job boards receive email confirmation of their applications. At this stage, this effort is not yet known to the Department unless it's being reported manually by the job seekers themselves.
2. In order to satisfy their job search requirements, job seekers forward the email confirmation received from third party sites to the Department mailbox (jobsearch@workforceaustralia.gov.au) to record Job Search Effort (JSE).
3. An automated script is applied on the mailbox to process incoming emails (last in, first out). The scraping process extracts pertinent data points (job seeker ID, date of emails, etc) from the incoming email.
4. Based on results of the extraction process, the following actions are taken:
    1. If successful, the participant is notified by email that their application was accepted. The job search report is stored in a central Job Search Applications table and attributed to the participants current JSE or PBAS reporting period.
    2. If unsuccessful, the participant is notified by email and advised to login and try to report their job search via the WAOI platform. No record is stored in employment databases.

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Limitations of the Legacy Solution:

- **Business Perspective:**
    - The system does not support evolved compliance requirements under the TCF, making it obsolete and misaligned with current compliance goals.
    - While the email facility provides convenience and familiarity to job seekers who have done so throughout the years, it has not considered Solution 2, which the department has since built and delivered through NESM.
- **Technology Perspective:**
    - Confirmations participants receive from third party jobs boards are subject to constant change by the unaffiliated websites. Hence, the scraper-based approach is fragile and prone to frequent failures as the Department has no control over when or how often jobs boards change their confirmation messages. The Department is not notified of changes, until participants report failures via our service desk.
    - There are numerous failure points, often requiring participants to retry, which leads to inefficiency and poor user experience.
    - Significant time delays between error detection and participant notification increase operational risks.
    - The system backend is prone to breakdowns, such as mailbox overload and periodic auto-processing failures.
    - The system is not integrated with reporting period assessments meaning that compliance can be raised when processing of job searches is still in progress.

Benefits of Retiring the Legacy Solution

- **Operational Efficiency:** Reduce the overhead of managing frequent system failures and the rework associated with retry requests to participants. Reduce the need for additional support in monitoring the mailbox and associated issues e.g. Application Support team involvement.
- **Compliance Alignment:** The WAOI solution is fully compliant with modern frameworks like the TCF, reducing regulatory risk.
- **Improved User Experience:** Participants receive immediate feedback, reducing frustration and eliminating unnecessary delays.
- **Technical Debt Reduction:** Decommissioning the legacy email-based solution eliminates a significant source of technical debt. Maintaining an outdated system diverts resources that could be better used on modern, scalable, and resilient technologies.
- **Cost Reduction:** Retiring the email-based solution will lower operational costs associated with error handling, rework, and infrastructure failures.
- **Reduced Risk:** The WAOI solution minimises the risk of system failures and compliance errors, protecting the Department from reputational and financial harm.

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Risks of retaining Legacy Solution

The email-based JSE processing solution cannot deliver the level of integrity expected of a Government IT system. The solution is part of the compliance framework, therefore causes a high level of risk to the departments and governments reputation as compliance action may be raised on email submission users because of:

- lack of reliable and instant feedback. SMTP emails may never be delivered to the department's mailbox and the sender may be left unaware.
- delays in processing due to scheduled and unscheduled outages. This causing a backlog of emails waiting to be processed and may not be processed until after the reporting period has ended.

Another risk that may not yet be realised is receiving emails from unauthenticated users. This may have security implications as requirements have changed and a cyber security assessment should be performed of this solution.

Costs associated to maintain Legacy Solution

If the legacy solution is not decommissioned there would be an ongoing costs to:

- permanently monitor the system to ensure the batch is functioning within acceptable parameters. We would anticipate effort to perform the monitoring would be 20% of a Developer, 10% of production support resource, and 5% of a release team resource.
- Endeavouring to have all templates working would be 40% of a senior developer, 20% of a Tester, and 5% of a Business Analyst (BA). As the templates are managed by third parties, we would be reliant on failures being identified through monitoring before we could commence fixes.
- Investigate incidents when the batch is processing slowly or fails, noting that there are no guarantees that the investigation will result in an identified cause or fix for the incident. Based on the latest incident the resources required to investigate would include four TSD resources full time, 1 release team member, and 1 Senior developer full time.
    - During the last investigation there were multiple meetings some lasting over five hours. Over the course of the week of the last incident there was an estimated 20 people involved in the investigation including production support, and production support management.

If there is a requirement to redevelop the existing batch the estimate for DSD only resources (1 Developer for 5 Sprints, 1 Tester 20 days, 1 BA for 10 days). While it would improve the performance it is still not technically feasible and would require reprioritisation of planned project work.

Impact of Failures:

- The fragility of Solution 1 is critical because it directly impacts job seeker's TCF and Mutual Obligations requirements. Job seekers may have done the right actions by applying for a job, but when the fragility is realised, the Department is not able to acknowledge and account for this activity being met.
- Compliance actions based on inaccurate or delayed information can negatively affect participants, potentially leading to unjust loss of income support.

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- The solution introduces avoidable compliance and payment risks for the Department. It is expensive to maintain, both in terms of operational costs and the effort required to resolve frequent issues

Solution 2: Contemporary Solution - WAOI

The contemporary WAOI system provides an integrated and user-friendly platform for participants to report their job search efforts. Unlike the legacy email solution, WAOI offers:

- Immediate feedback on job search reports.
- Seamless processing that is not prone to the common failures of email scraping.
- Full compliance with NESM and TCF requirements, ensuring that the Department can meet its regulatory obligations.

User Base

Analysis of the user base over a 6-month period covering 02-04-2024 to 02-10-2024 has identified that **less than 4% of job seekers use this facility for reporting job search efforts** reflected in the figures below:

Email batch Applications	716,781
Jobseekers	26,912

Figure 1 Jobseekers with active referral using email batch

Email batch Applications	1,634
Jobseekers	99

Figure 2 Jobseekers without active referral using email batch

Contract Type Code	Application Record Count	Jobseekers
Totals	**718,415**	**27,011**
DIG6	454,237	16,984
PRO6	229,450	10,015
DESB	23,255	894
DESA	20,851	764
-	1,634	146
TTW6	1,396	74
RJCP	100	17

Figure 3 Email batch usage by contract type

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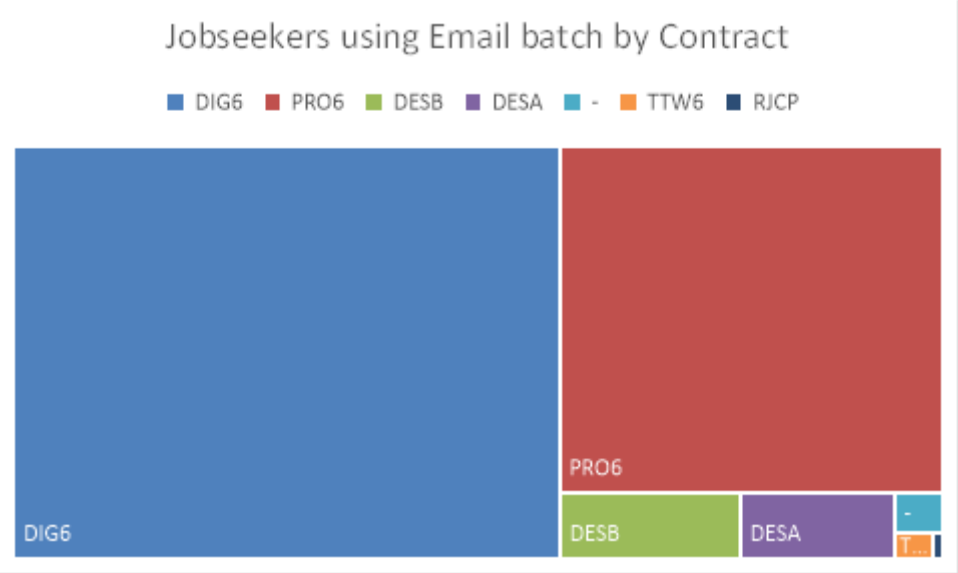

Figure 4 Email batch usage by contract type (visual)

Created Year - Month	Application Record Count
Totals	**454,237**
2024-5	78,842
2024-6	76,947
2024-8	75,355
2024-9	73,613
2024-7	73,005
2024-4	70,958
2024-10	5,517

Figure 5 DIG6 email batch usage by month

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Created Year - Month	Application Record Count	Jobseekers
Totals	**229,450**	**10,015**
2024-8	38,874	4,739
2024-9	38,849	4,699
2024-5	38,774	4,351
2024-6	37,499	4,400
2024-7	36,115	4,412
2024-4	35,965	4,089
2024-10	3,374	709

Figure 6 PRO6 email batch usage by month

User Impact

To minimise the impact on existing users while decommissioning solution 1 we would recommend the following steps be implemented:

- Additional support in monitoring the mailbox and associated issues e.g. Application support involvement for an agreed duration. It should be noted that a separate agreement would need to be put in place with the Application Support team, which would reduce their capacity in supporting other issues during this timeframe.
- Stop promoting its use by removing 'how to' instructions from the website etc. and/or place advice about its unreliability.
- Start promoting use of Upload evidence as the easiest way to report jobs.
- Continue with an autoreply until it can be decommissioned.
- Add information in T5 notification to inform participants to report directly on the website close to the end of reporting period as it may not be processed in time etc.

Recommendation

Given the limitations, risks, operational costs and potential reputational damage to the Department associated with the legacy email-based solution, we recommend its retirement. The WAOI platform is already available, offering a more robust, compliant, and user-friendly alternative.

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Characteristic	Response	Overall Cohort	Percentage	Email Only Cohort	Percentage	Variance batch to overall
		245,461		8,738		
					0.035598323	
Geographic Disadvantage	No Data	1699	0.7%	31	0.4%	0.3%
	0. Lowest region disadvantage	37692	15.4%	1014	11.6%	3.8%
	1. Low region disadvantage	55911	22.8%	2277	26.1%	-3.3%
	2. Moderate region disadvantage	81164	33.1%	2765	31.6%	1.4%
	3. High region disadvantage	67565	27.5%	2638	30.2%	-2.7%
	4. Highest region disadvantage	1439	0.6%	13	0.1%	0.4%
English Literacy	No Data	1699	0.7%	31	0.4%	0.3%
	Good English language level	226485	92.3%	8455	96.8%	-4.5%
	Mixed language level	11209	4.6%	158	1.8%	2.8%
	Poor language level	6068	2.5%	94	1.1%	1.4%
Educational Attainment	No Data	1724	0.7%	32	0.4%	0.3%
	Bachelor Degree or equivalent	26420	10.8%	1556	17.8%	-7.0%
	Did not go to school	571	0.2%	10	0.1%	0.1%
	Diploma or equivalent	20057	8.2%	872	10.0%	-1.8%
	Graduate Certificate or equivalent	2199	0.9%	82	0.9%	0.0%
	Graduate Diploma or equivalent	1115	0.5%	23	0.3%	0.2%
	Non-trade vocational education	69989	28.5%	2351	26.9%	1.6%
	Post-graduate	6539	2.7%	325	3.7%	-1.1%
	Primary school or less than Year 10	12986	5.3%	184	2.1%	3.2%
	Secondary schooling completed (Year 12/13)	44098	18.0%	1983	22.7%	-4.7%
	Special school or special support unit	114	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%
	Trades qualification	9846	4.0%	227	2.6%	1.4%
	Year 10/11	49810	20.3%	1095	12.5%	7.8%
Age and Gender	No Data	1699	0.7%	31	0.4%	0.3%
	Female, 60 years or older	9062	3.7%	246	2.8%	0.9%
	Female, between 15-19 years	2636	1.1%	123	1.4%	-0.3%
	Female, between 15-19 years (Disadvantaged)	1745	0.7%	41	0.5%	0.2%
	Female, between 20-24 years	17603	7.2%	876	10.0%	-2.9%
	Female, between 25-29 years	15798	6.4%	750	8.6%	-2.1%
	Female, between 30-34 years	11486	4.7%	374	4.3%	0.4%
	Female, between 35-39 years	10405	4.2%	282	3.2%	1.0%
	Female, between 40-44 years	10644	4.3%	277	3.2%	1.2%
	Female, between 45-49 years	10101	4.1%	262	3.0%	1.1%
	Female, between 50-54 years	9798	4.0%	208	2.4%	1.6%
	Female, between 55-59 years	7379	3.0%	174	2.0%	1.0%
	Gender unknown, 60 years or older	2	0.0%	1	0.0%	0.0%
	Gender unknown, between 15-19 years	30	0.0%	1	0.0%	0.0%
	Gender unknown, between 15-19 years(Disadvantaged)	27	0.0%	1	0.0%	0.0%
	Gender unknown, between 20-24 years	184	0.1%	17	0.2%	-0.1%
	Gender unknown, between 25-29 years	134	0.1%	7	0.1%	0.0%
	Gender unknown, between 30-34 years	48	0.0%	3	0.0%	0.0%
	Gender unknown, between 35-39 years	18	0.0%	1	0.0%	0.0%
	Gender unknown, between 40-44 years	9	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%
	Gender unknown, between 45-49 years	10	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%
	Gender unknown, between 50-54 years	5	0.0%	1	0.0%	0.0%
	Gender unknown, between 55-59 years	3	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%
	Male, 60 years or older	10714	4.4%	305	3.5%	0.9%
	Male, between 15-19 years	2370	1.0%	98	1.1%	-0.2%
	Male, between 15-19 yrs old (Disadvantaged)	1640	0.7%	37	0.4%	0.2%
	Male, between 20-24 years	20589	8.4%	962	11.0%	-2.6%
	Male, between 25-29 years	24992	10.2%	1143	13.1%	-2.9%
	Male, between 30-34 years	18148	7.4%	639	7.3%	0.1%
	Male, between 35-39 years	14740	6.0%	524	6.0%	0.0%
	Male, between 40-44 years	13376	5.4%	450	5.1%	0.3%
	Male, between 45-49 years	11169	4.6%	339	3.9%	0.7%
	Male, between 50-54 years	10673	4.3%	314	3.6%	0.8%
	Male, between 55-59 years	8227	3.4%	251	2.9%	0.5%
Indigenous Status	No Data	1699	0.7%	31	0.4%	0.3%
	Declined to answer	3419	1.4%	121	1.4%	0.0%
	Does not identify as Indigenous	214629	87.4%	8204	93.9%	-6.4%
	Identifies as Indigenous	25715	10.5%	382	4.4%	6.1%
Disability/Medical Status	No Data	1699	0.7%	31	0.4%	0.3%
	15 to 22 hours work capacity	21219	8.6%	499	5.7%	2.9%
	23 to 29 hours work capacity	1615	0.7%	49	0.6%	0.1%
	Declined to answer	2231	0.9%	94	1.1%	-0.2%
	e 8 hours or above work capacity	177	0.1%	6	0.1%	0.0%
	Has mulitple disabilities	17611	7.2%	474	5.4%	1.8%
	Has one disability	10406	4.2%	324	3.7%	0.5%
	Less than 15 hours work capacity	17333	7.1%	370	4.2%	2.8%
	No permanent disabilities	173175	70.6%	6891	78.9%	-8.3%
Duration on Income Support	No Data	1699	0.7%	31	0.4%	0.3%
	12 to 23 months	37983	15.5%	1624	18.6%	-3.1%
	24 to 35 months	18058	7.4%	462	5.3%	2.1%
	36 to 47 months	9657	3.9%	249	2.8%	1.1%
	48 to 59 months	20791	8.5%	510	5.8%	2.6%
	60 months or more	60277	24.6%	1142	13.1%	11.5%
	Less than 12 months	25778	10.5%	1101	12.6%	-2.1%
	No income support	71232	29.0%	3620	41.4%	-12.4%
Recent Work Experience	No Data	1699	0.7%	31	0.4%	0.3%
	Not in the labour force	62609	25.5%	2185	25.0%	0.5%
	Not working but looking for work	52881	21.5%	1465	16.8%	4.8%
	Paid full-time work (30 hours+)	69115	28.2%	2966	33.9%	-5.8%
	Paid part-time work less than 8 hours	4495	1.8%	154	1.8%	0.1%

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	Paid regular part-time work 8 to 30 hours	39447	16.1%	1418	16.2%	-0.2%
	Paid seasonal/irregular work	10078	4.1%	358	4.1%	0.0%
	Unpaid work (inc voluntary work)	5144	2.1%	163	1.9%	0.2%
Average logins		5		5		

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s 47F(1)

From: s 47F(1) @dss.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 20 November 2024 16:21
To: s 47F(1)
Cc: s 47F(1)
Subject: RE: Job search mailbox [SEC=OFFICIAL]

You don't often get email from s 47F(1) @dss.gov.au. Learn why this is important

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Hi s 47F(1)

Thank you for your email regarding the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations' (DEWR) intention to decommission the jobsearchefforts@workforceaustralia.gov.au mailbox.

DES Program Management team have checked our DES Compliance Guidelines and websites (DSS, JobAccess and Disability Gateway). This mailbox is not referenced.

We understand from your advice below that decommissioning this mailbox will mean the main avenue to report job search for all job seekers will continue to be via the secure Workforce Australia Online website and the App.

In this context, DES Program Management team supports DEWR's request to decommission this mailbox.

This support is subject to DEWR's advice below that this change will be communicated to all job seekers and providers prior to decommissioning the mailbox.

s 47F(1)
Assistant Director
Disability Employment Programs
Department of Social Services
s 47F(1) @dss.gov.au P: s 47E(d) **M:** s 22(1)
National Relay Service

From: s 47F(1)
Sent: Monday, 18 November 2024 2:19 PM
To: s 47F(1)
Cc: s 47F(1)
Subject: Job search mailbox [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Dear s 47F(1),

I am currently acting Director of DEWR's Mutual Obligation team, filling in for s 47F(1) this week.

I am contacting you to advise of an IT system issue that the department has recently experienced which impacts a small number of DES participants.

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The department identified an issue with the jobsearcheffort@workforceaustralia.gov.au mailbox which was processing emails particularly slow. It is used by participants of employment services (Workforce Australia, DES and CDP) to submit evidence of job search efforts to meet mutual obligation requirements. For context, over the last 6 months, there were 1658 DES participants use the mailbox.

While the system issue has been resolved, it has prompted us to consider whether the department needs to retain this mailbox. It was introduced in 2016, and is used by a relatively small number of participants. Other department's have moved away from using unauthenticated environments with customers due to an increased risk of security implications.

We are currently discussing the viability of the mailbox and seek views from your program perspective on the potential impact if the department was to remove the mailbox option.

If removed, it would then mean the Workforce Australia system would be the primary platform for participants of all employment services to submit job search efforts. This authenticated environment is currently used by the vast majority of participants and provides the flexibility for a participant to submit job search efforts a number of ways and in real time.

If DEWR was to remove the mailbox, it would not be before March 2025. There would be a transition plan between now and then communicating the change to participants and providers.

It would be appreciated if you could please consider removal of the mailbox option, and let me know your thoughts by reply email by **COB Wednesday 20th Nov**. Apologies for the tight timeframe, we're seeking to get a decision as soon as possible as the issue was very topical at Senate Estimates. Do let me know if the timeframe is an issue,

Thanks so much s 47F(1)
Warm regards,

s
47F(

s 47F(1)

Assistant Director
Mutual Obligations Team | Access and Participation Branch | Workforce Australia For Individuals Division

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s 47F(1)

From: s 47F(1) @niaa.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 26 November 2024 10:31
To: s 47F(1)
Cc: s 47F(1)
Subject: RE: FOR ENDORSEMENT - closure of the Job search mailbox - due by 4pm 20/11/24 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

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OFFICIAL

Good morning s 47F(1)

I apologise for the delay in our response.

I can confirm that we received endorsement yesterday to support the closure of the mailbox.

To ensure this change is effectively communicated to our participants, especially those in very remote locations, we would like to give our CDP Providers as much notice as possible. With this in mind, we would appreciate if you could share with us, any notifications that are developed for Providers, so that we can get messaging out as soon as possible.

We look forward to receiving further updates on this change as it progresses.

Many thanks
s 47F(1)

s 47F(1) | Assistant Director
Community Development Program Management| Remote Employment Taskforce
National Indigenous Australians Agency
p. s 47E(d) m. s 22(1) . e. s 47F(1) @niaa.gov.au
Gimuy Country
Level 7 Citi Central Building, 46-48 Sheridan Street | PO Box 1599 CAIRNS QLD 4870
w. niaa.gov.au w. indigenous.gov.au

The National Indigenous Australians Agency acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of country throughout Australia and acknowledges their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to the people, the cultures and the elders past, present and emerging

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OFFICIAL

From: s 47F(1) @niaa.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 25 November 2024 11:37 AM
To: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>; s 47F(1) @niaa.gov.au>
Cc: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>; s 47F(1) @niaa.gov.au>
Subject: RE: FOR ENDORSEMENT - closure of the Job search mailbox - due by 4pm 20/11/24 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hello s 47F(1)

Thanks for the email.

We note the below, the main thing for management at our end was to understand how the transition to closure would be managed. You have answered this below, so will pass on with the aim of having a response to you shortly.

Regards
s
47F(

s 47F(1)

Remote Services Mailbox
Community Development Program Management
National Indigenous Australians Agency
w. niaa.gov.au w. indigenous.gov.au

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OFFICIAL

From: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 25 November 2024 12:34 PM
To: s 47F(1) @niaa.gov.au>
Cc: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Subject: FW: FOR ENDORSEMENT - closure of the Job search mailbox - due by 4pm 20/11/24 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s 47F(1)

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations - Documents released under FOI - LEX 1438

Thanks for reaching out.

If the mailbox is removed there will be an updated auto-reply message to redirect participants to alternate ways to submit job search efforts.
Workforce Australia websites will be updated and messaging will be communicated to employment service providers.

We are on a tight timeframe as we have manual processes in place to ensure no one is impacted negatively with the slow processing time of the mailbox.

At this stage we seek NIAA's support to remove it and would be happy to work with you regarding communicating the change, closer to a removal date.

Thanks,

s 47F(1)
Assistant Director

Mutual Obligations Team | Access and Participation Branch
Workforce Australia for Individuals Division

OFFICIAL

From: s 47F(1) @niaa.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 25 November 2024 12:02 PM
To: s 47F(1) <s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Subject: RE: FOR ENDORSEMENT - closure of the Job search mailbox - due by 4pm 20/11/24 [SEC=OFFICIAL]

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Hello s 47F(1)

I tried to phone this morning but without luck.

Can I please ask what will happen once the mailbox is closed, i.e. will they have an out of office response? What will the out of office response say and/or direct to?

Thanks
s
47F

s 47F(1)
Remote Services Mailbox
Community Development Program Management

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National Indigenous Australians Agency
w. niaa.gov.au w. indigenous.gov.au

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OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

From: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 18 November 2024 1:21 PM
To: s 47F(1) @niaa.gov.au>
Cc: s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>; s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>; s 47F(1) @dewr.gov.au>
Subject: Job search mailbox [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Dear s 47F(1)

I am currently acting Director of DEWR's Mutual Obligation team, filling in for s 47F(1) this week.

I am contacting you to advise of an IT system issue that the department has recently experienced which impacts a small number of CDP participants.

The department identified an issue with the jobsearcheffort@workforceaustralia.gov.au mailbox which was processing emails particularly slow. It is used by participants of employment services (Workforce Australia, DES and CDP) to submit evidence of job search efforts to meet mutual obligation requirements. For context, over the last 6 months, there were 17 CDP participants use the mailbox.

While the system issue has been resolved, it has prompted us to consider whether the department needs to retain this mailbox. It was introduced in 2016, and is used by a relatively small number of participants. Other department's have moved away from using unauthenticated environments with customers due to an increased risk of security implications.

We are currently discussing the viability of the mailbox and seek views from your program perspective on the potential impact if the department was to remove the mailbox option.

If removed, it would then mean the Workforce Australia system would be the primary platform for participants of all employment services to submit job search efforts. This authenticated environment is currently used by the vast majority of participants and provides the flexibility for a participant to submit job search efforts a number of ways and in real time.

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If DEWR was to remove the mailbox, it would not be before March 2025. There would be a transition plan between now and then communicating the change to participants and providers.

It would be appreciated if you could please consider removal of the mailbox option, and let me know your thoughts by reply email by **COB Wednesday 20th Nov**. Apologies for the tight timeframe, we're seeking to get a decision as soon as possible as the issue was very topical at Senate Estimates. Do let me know if the timeframe is an issue,

Thanks so much s 47F(1)
Warm regards,

s
47F(

s 47F(1)

Assistant Director
Mutual Obligations Team | Access and Participation Branch | Workforce Australia For Individuals Division

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From: s 47F(1)
To: WRIGHT,Andrew; Nicky Antonius; s 47F(1)
Cc: s 47F(1)
Subject: Legacy Email-Based Solution for JSC Reporting
Attachments: Legacy Email-Based Solution for Job Seeker Compliance Reporting Discussion Paper.docx
Data for Email Batch.xlsx
image001.jpg

Good morning all,

Please find attached a discussion paper following our assessment of the email-based solution for JSC Reporting. The paper has assessed both existing options, identifying limitations, risks, user impacts and benefits and some provides some indicative estimates to maintain/improve the batch going forward vs decommissioning the solution. Hoping to work through this to give us a path forward.

Additionally attached is the analysis of September data against key characteristics, that will give a further understanding of the impacted user base over a month of the email only solution.

In the meantime, I am happy to take any question or concerns. Please forward to others you would like involved.

Cheers

s 47F(1)

Director

Job Seeker Compliance and Mobile Apps | Digital Experience and Services Branch
Digital Solution Division
Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
Phone s 47E(d)

dewr.gov.au <https://www.dewr.gov.au/>

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s 22(1)