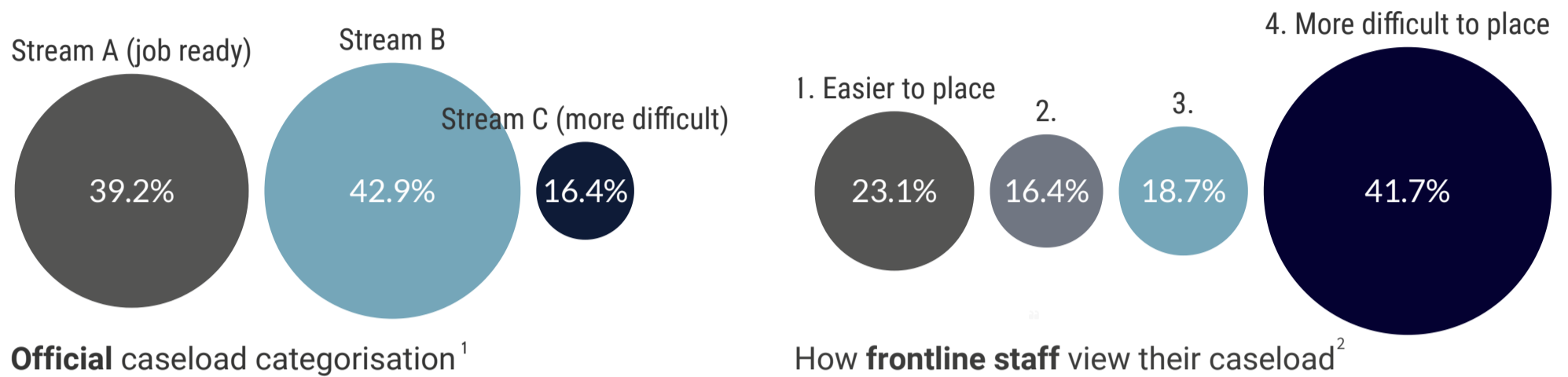


Getting welfare to work: *streaming and assessment*

The **assessment and streaming** of jobseekers is **pivotal** in determining the level of assistance jobseekers receive, and the payments to providers for providing this support.

Our research, involving surveys of frontline staff and case studies of high performing providers, finds that **this process is deeply problematic**:

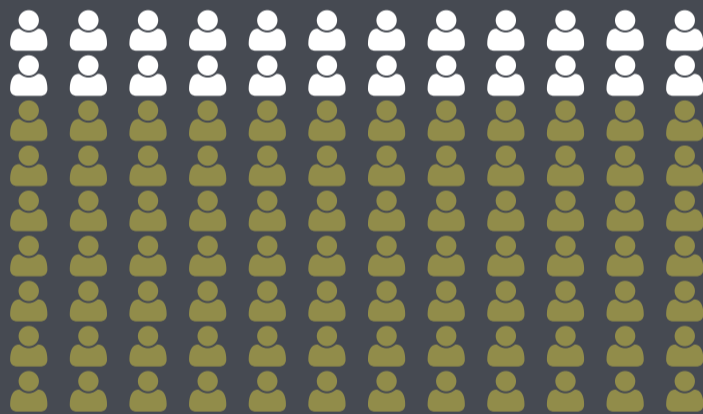
- There is **widening gulf** between how jobseekers are streamed and frontline staffs' views of clients
- Much **valuable time** is spent working to correct how clients are officially streamed



Of 106 jobseekers followed over 18 months with high-performing providers

24
re-categorised

in some way during their period of service with the provider³



“The first thing that I did was I got him an appointment with the psychologist ... had his ESA, he got his reduced work capacity.”

“We are very, very good at identifying a Stream A that should be a Stream C ... This site is very good at recognising that.”

Moved to Disability Employment Services



Up-streamed from A or B to C



Remained Stream C but reduced requirements



Source: O'Sullivan, McGann, and Considine (2019) The Category Game and Its Impact on Street-Level Bureaucrats and Jobseekers: An Australian Case Study. *Social Policy and Society*.

113,549 jobseekers re-streamed during their period of assistance out of all those on the national Jobactive caseload in 2017⁴

48,049 jobseekers moved to DES⁴ from Jobactive in 2017, more than #Stream Cs (29,310) who gained 26 weeks or more of employment during first 35 months of Jobactive¹

“I would say they're [the assessments] probably about 60 to 70% accurate and then "Good Luck."

You might be straight out of prison and your'e an A. Who knows?

We don't know what the measuring stick is anymore.”

1. Australian Government (2018). The Next Generation of Employment Services. Canberra: Department of Employment.

2. Lewis, J.M, Considine, M., O'Sullivan, S., Nguyen, P., and McGann, M. (2016) From Entitlement to Experiment: The New Governance of Welfare to Work - Australian Report Back to Industry Partners. Melbourne: University of Melbourne.

3. See O'Sullivan, S., McGann, M., Considine, M. (2019) The Category Game and Its Impact on Street-Level Bureaucrats and Jobseekers: An Australian Case Study. *Social Policy and Society*. doi:10.1017/S1474746419000162.

4. Data provided by the Department of Employment [Department of Jobs and Small Business] in response to an information request by the researchers.

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