

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMICS

REVIEW OF THE FOUR MAJOR BANKS (FIFTH HEARINGS)

Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited

ANZ02QON: Hansard p. 14

Complaints cases – Legal costs

Mr CRAIG KELLY: In addition, as well as AFCA, how many cases do you have where customers have brought action against you in either the Supreme, Federal or District courts?

Mr Elliott: I don't know the number for that. I know it's extremely small, if any. I'm not aware that we have any customer accounts in the Supreme or High courts. There will inevitably be procedural issues that go through with customers in some of the other courts. I'd have to come back to you on the exact number.

Mr CRAIG KELLY: Do you think that's because of the legal costs that are involved for a customer, a complainant, to bring a case—that they would make it impossible for them? How does someone who is just outside of or above the AFCA limits do that? Is it a burden for them to actually have that dispute resolved because of the costs?

Mr Elliott: It could be. I don't know that I'm in a position to talk about what the motivations or issues are for a customer. I don't know.

Mr CRAIG KELLY: Maybe you can take that one on notice.

ANSWER

ANZ has identified 74 current court actions brought by customers against ANZ.

Two are class actions. Of the remainder, two are small businesses, one relates to a medium sized business loan, and 69 relate to wealth products, with the majority of these related to life insurance.

This estimate is for Australia and limited by the timeframe for response requested by the Committee.

We believe that there are wide range of avenues through which retail, small and medium businesses, and wealth customers can resolve disputes with ANZ at no cost, and avoid action through the courts.

For example, the Australian Financial Complaints Authority has jurisdiction for small business disputes up to \$5 million, an estimated coverage of 98 per cent of the number of Australian businesses.

ANZ customers with disputes can also contact the ANZ Customer Advocate, our branches or service centres, or ANZ executives.