

**SENATE COMMUNITY AFFAIRS LEGISLATION COMMITTEE
 ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES – 1 MARCH 2018
 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
 DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

DHS No.	PDMS No.	Broad topic	Senator	Question
HS 2	SQ18-000002	Call Wait Times	Singh	<p>a) Senator SIEWERT: You just told us the number of calls up to 24 February. Is it possible to get the breakdown of this up to 24 February? The call wait times? Senator SINGH: I think we want to know the longest wait time. Mr Jackson: I'd have to take it on notice. <i>[page 99]</i></p> <p>b) Senator SINGH: And how many calls make more than an hour to answer. Mr Jackson: We can provide that on notice. <i>[page 99]</i></p>
HS 3	SQ18-000003	Call Wait Times	Siewert	<p>a) Senator SIEWERT: Thank you very much for this. It saves us a lot of time and it's very useful. But the average wait time for employment service has gone up over that period of time. It's basically still the same average wait time overall across all the lines. The average time for families and parenting has gone up. The average time for older Australians has gone up from nearly 19 minutes to 25.5 minutes. We still have that significant problem. Ms Leon: Absolutely. I think I commenced my remarks by saying we're not at all complacent about this. We're taking it very seriously. We're committed to addressing it. We are throwing a lot of resources at fixing this problem. That includes a range of initiatives. Some of it is the trial about outsourcing 250 staff. Some of it is reforming the telephony system to simplify the queuing system. Some of it is getting better data out of our contract for the management of the phone lines so we can understand what the drivers are. There's a significant amount of work going in to reducing it. In relation to the figures that you have referred to about the increases, that is as at 31 December. I tried to paint a picture in my remarks a little earlier that it's been in the last few months that we've been really seeing significant decreases. So these figures as at 31 December won't be reflecting that yet. Senator Fierravanti-Wells: I'd just ask the secretary if it would be possible, picking up the point Senator Singh and Senator Siewert made, up to the 24th? The secretary has pointed out the months of January-February was a decided bettering of the situation. Would it assist if this table was updated? Senator SIEWERT: That's what I'm after. Senator Fierravanti-Wells: Or even compared in some way? I'm not saying which way, but I've just asked the secretary if we could take that on notice and provide potentially this table amended to you so you can compare apples with apples? Senator SIEWERT: That's what I'm after, and as Senator Singh just pointed out, we asked for some data on top of this last time, or Senator Singh did, and it's only just come through. Ms</p>

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				<p>Leon was answering that. If we could get that as a matter of urgency to actually look at what impact is it also having on all this other data that's here—the successful calls, particularly the call waiting time, and the longest number of people that are waiting for over an hour.</p> <p>Senator Fierravanti-Wells: And potentially, depending on when that answer is, I'm sure the department could probably even take it up to whatever the date is or beyond 24 February to give you a better understanding and a better comparison for a longer period of time. We'll certainly look at what we can do. <i>[pages 99-100]</i></p> <p>b) Ms Leon: I can tell you in relation to—this is not a point-in-time figure I don't think, but the information that I do have about longer wait times is that calls waiting longer than an hour are now only at 2 per cent. So it's come down substantially, but I'll have to take on notice to get you the number of calls that that represents. <i>[page 100]</i></p>
HS 4	SQ18-000005	Telephony	Smith	<p>Senator SMITH: My next question went to the number of busy calls in 2011-12, and you gave me that figure—22.3 million. So last year the department answered double the number of calls that it answered in the year 2011-12.</p> <p>Ms Leon: Roughly—a little bit more than double, I think.</p> <p>Senator SMITH: Yes, a little bit more than double. That's correct. Did the number of calls that were blocked remain the same?</p> <p>Mr Jackson: We don't have the detail with us and nor in the ANAO report that I have in front of me that gives us an indication of the number of calls blocked that were actually blocked, other than the fact it was introduced in that transition period.</p> <p>Ms Leon: We can take that on notice. We just don't have those figures going back that far in front of us today. <i>[page 103]</i></p>
HS 5	SQ18-000006	Call Centre Enhancement Pilot - Evaluation	Siewert	<p>ACTING CHAIR: I wanted to go back to the pilot. 'Pilot' implies evaluation—and I think you mentioned that yourself. What process of evaluation is going to be used to look at how successful or not that process is?</p> <p>Ms Leon: We will have an independent evaluation. We will contract the evaluation to an independent firm to do.</p> <p>ACTING CHAIR: You haven't done that yet, though?</p> <p>Ms Leon: There's been an initial evaluation of the first few months, but obviously it's not of the whole two-year trial.</p> <p>ACTING CHAIR: Could you tell us what that has shown to date?</p> <p>Ms Leon: I don't think it's been finalised yet. I think the version that we've seen has been draft and still under consideration. Perhaps by next estimates we might be in a position to share that.</p> <p>ACTING CHAIR: Maybe you could take it on notice so we could see it before the next estimates.</p> <p>Ms Leon: I can take it on notice and so what we can make available between now and then. <i>[pages 103-104]</i></p>
HS 6	SQ18-000007	Call Wait Times – Peak Periods	Siewert	<p>Ms Leon: I think I said in one of my earlier answers that we do get peaks and troughs. There are periods of peak demand. It may well be that that could be it's coinciding with one of our peaks. I</p>

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				<p>will let Mr Jackson or Ms Brill go through some of the historical patterns we usually see on the lines.</p> <p>ACTING CHAIR: That'd be appreciated. I could understand that for families and parenting. The time line you're talking about over Christmas/New Year is busy, but for older Australians?</p> <p>Mr Jackson: I'll endeavour to help, and I'm sure Ms Brill will tell me if I get it wrong. As the Secretary said, it is a peak period. Even among older Australians, there was some change in requirement for reporting periods, which brought in the peak outside of the normal period. This is one of the reasons we are very mindful of having point-in-time data: our average wait times are targeted against an annual average. So for this particular, it is quite likely we're in a peak period, and a lot of the benefits that have produced a reduction in the busy signals haven't started to flow into this. We expect that to happen in the latter half of the year. We're doing a lot of work, as Senator Smith will note, with regards to the various KPIs and performance measures that we do use on this work.</p> <p>ACTING CHAIR: I take on board your point about the peak periods but is it possible for the peak periods to compare like with like?</p> <p>Mr Jackson: We can produce a document that will show the peaks and we can put some narrative around it to articulate what the peak is. If there's a specific external influence that has changed those metrics, we can provide them for you. <i>[page 104]</i></p>
HS 7	SQ18-000008	Interactive Voice Response	Keneally	<p>Senator KENEALLY: Can people opt out of having their call recorded?</p> <p>Mr Jackson: Given that we give them advice that it's about to be recorded, their opt-out is to hang up.</p> <p>Senator KENEALLY: That's the only opt-out they have? My phone call has to be recorded, if I call Centrelink?</p> <p>Mr Jackson: I would have to check the IBR—I don't want to mislead you. I'll check what the IBR message says. It could be possible that you can tell the operator not to record the call, but it's not an uncommon feature for call recording.</p> <p>Ms Leon: We'll just take on notice what the interactive voice message says.</p> <p>Senator KENEALLY: I'd be concerned if people weren't given the option to opt out.</p> <p>Mr Jackson: I understand, so that's why we'll take it on notice and get you an accurate answer. <i>[page 107]</i></p>
HS 8	SQ18-000009	Departmental Correspondence	Smith	<p>Senator SMITH: And for how many months or years has correspondence been a primary means of communicating with customers?</p> <p>Ms Brill: I'd have to take that on notice, but I would expect a number of years. <i>[page 107]</i></p>
HS 9	SQ18-000010	Departmental Correspondence – Impact of User Testing	Siewert	<p>Senator SIEWERT: Is it possible to get a copy of an example of the new type of letters?</p> <p>Ms Brill: Before and after?</p> <p>Senator SIEWERT: Yes.</p> <p>Ms Brill: Certainly. <i>[page 109]</i></p>

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HS 10	SQ18-000011	Departmental Staffing	Keneally	<p>Senator KENEALLY: Could you provide year-to-date actual staff numbers by full-time equivalent, headcount, state and territory, classification, SES, non-SES, cadets, graduates, trainees, employment status (ongoing or non-ongoing), employment type (full time or part time) and gender?</p> <p>Ms Leon: We definitely will have to take that on notice. <i>[page 111]</i></p>
HS 11	SQ18-000012	Customer Service Surveys	Keneally	<p>a) Senator KENEALLY: When did you start that new caller survey process? Mr Jackson: It was January this year. Mr Horsley: It's reasonably new. Senator KENEALLY: So you're very much into the beginning of that. How much does that cost? Mr Jackson: I'll take that on notice. Again, it's part of the bundled service. Senator KENEALLY: As part of the telephony— Mr Jackson: Yes. We're happy to see if we can break that up for you. <i>[page 113]</i></p> <p>b) Senator KENEALLY: Was there some other challenge around rolling that out? Did you have to consult with the union, or did you have— Mr Jackson: No. I think I'd have to, again, take it on notice, but I don't believe it required the same level of consultation. <i>[page 113]</i></p>
HS 12	SQ18-000013	Customer Service Surveys - Analysis	Watt	<p>Senator WATT: If you've already started undertaking that analysis, there must be some internal reports that provide some analysis or a summary of the survey responses. Could you please table those to the committee?</p> <p>Mr Jackson: I'm happy to take that on notice and have a look at whether they are meaningful. . <i>[page 113]</i></p>
HS 13	SQ18-000014	Call Centre Enhancement Pilot	Watt	<p>Senator WATT: I have a couple more questions on Serco. I'm sorry if you've already said this, but how many people is Serco employing? Mr Jackson: Two hundred and fifty. Senator WATT: What's the cost again—of the contract? Mr Horsley: It's \$51.7 million over two years. Senator WATT: Over two years? And I know you won't be able to give me an exact figure for this, but based on the average sort of wage of an APS staff member who does this type of work, do you know how many APS staff members you'd get for that contract price? Ms Leon: We'd have to take that on notice, because we'd have to add on property costs and all of our overheads. It's not just their wage; it's the equivalent. So we'd have to take that on notice— <i>[page 113]</i></p>
HS 14	SQ18-000015	Call Centre Enhancement Pilot – Advice to Government	Watt	<p>a) Ms Leon: Government didn't choose Serco. There was a departmental tender process that led to the selection of Serco. Senator WATT: Sure, okay. But before you went to tender, I presume that advice was provided to government on options for dealing with calls: one option was a tender, an outsourcing, and</p>

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				<p>another would have been employing more internal staff?</p> <p>Ms Leon: I think that you're now going to the content of what might have been considered by government.</p> <p>Senator WATT: Did you provide options to government?</p> <p>Ms Leon: We provided advice to government in the making of their decision.</p> <p>Senator WATT: And in providing advice, did you provide options?</p> <p>Ms Leon: I think you're now going to the content of the advice.</p> <p>Senator WATT: You're kidding? You can't tell me if you provided options—</p> <p>Senator Fierravanti-Wells: Senator Watt, that's it: line in the sand—</p> <p>Senator WATT: That's just rubbish! You can tell us that you provided some options—</p> <p>Senator Fierravanti-Wells: Good try, Senator Watt—</p> <p>Ms Leon: If a matter is considered by government in the cabinet process, then it's a longstanding practice before estimates—</p> <p>Senator WATT: So every other public servant who has told that me they've given government options is wrong?</p> <p>Ms Leon: that public servants don't go to what went into cabinet documents—</p> <p>Senator WATT: I'm not asking you what the options were—</p> <p>Senator SIEWERT: But we're not asking—</p> <p>Senator WATT: Every other committee I go to—</p> <p>Ms Leon: Well, I certainly don't have the papers that went to the government in front of me. I'll have to take that on notice to see what else we can provide. <i>[page 114]</i></p> <p>b) Senator WATT: Was any analysis conducted to determine whether outsourcing this function would be cheaper to government than running it in-house and providing further resources in-house?</p> <p>Ms Leon: I will have to take that on notice to see to what extent that's covered by the nature of the government decision-making process. . <i>[page 114]</i></p> <p>.....</p> <p>Ms Leon: I said I'd take it on notice to see what I can provide. <i>[page 114]</i></p> <p>c) Senator WATT: Did you consider employing more in-house staff as an alternative?</p> <p>Ms Leon: I think that is part of the same question. I'm happy to consider that as part of the same question. <i>[page 115]</i></p>
HS 15	SQ18-000016	Departmental Staffing – Labour Hire	Singh	<p>a) Senator SINGH: Following on from Senator Watt, what is the number of FTE labour hire staff currently working in DHS workplaces?</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Mr Hutson: In answering your question, I will, if I can, give a headcount number, which is just</p>

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				<p>the number of persons that we have employed at a particular time. I have the headcount at 31 December 2017. At 31 December 2017, ongoing and non-ongoing staff, including intermittent and irregular employees was 33,288; outsourced staff, which includes the Serco contractors, was 250; our contingent workforce, which consists of labour hire contractors and other, was 3,524—for a total headcount at 31 December 2017 of 37,062 people.</p> <p>Senator SINGH: Can I have that also by state and territory?</p> <p>Mr Hutson: I'd have to take that on notice.</p> <p>Senator SINGH: And site?</p> <p>Mr Hutson: And site as well?</p> <p>Senator SINGH: Yes.</p> <p>Mr Hutson: We can do that. . [pages 115-116]</p> <p>b) Senator SINGH: Can you provide the details of the list of labour hire companies providing staff in each state and territory?</p> <p>Mr Hutson: We'd have to take that question on notice.</p> <p>Senator SINGH: Also on notice the number of staff they're providing?</p> <p>Mr Hutson: Yes.</p> <p>Senator SINGH: And the sites in which they are located.</p> <p>Mr Hutson: Yes. I believe we can provide that.</p> <p>Senator SINGH: Can I have the details of the functions performed by the labour hire staff at each site?</p> <p>Mr Hutson: Yes. I have to take these questions on notice, I don't have that information. . [page 116]</p> <p>c) Senator SINGH: Also the details of the hourly rate paid by labour hire companies?</p> <p>Ms Leon: I doubt that we'll be able to provide that.</p> <p>Mr Hutson: We may not be able to provide that.</p> <p>Ms Leon: We'll take it on notice and see if we can. But bear in mind that these are competitive tender processes, and I don't know whether our contracts with the companies enable us to provide details of what their input costs are. We pay the labour hire company; we don't pay the wages of the staff.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Ms Leon: Their input costs are likely to be commercial-in-confidence to their tender process.</p> <p>Senator SINGH: How convenient.</p> <p>Ms Leon: I'll take it on notice and see what we can find, but I do just caveat that there will likely be some restrictions from the contractual nature of the relationship about what we can provide. . [page 115]</p> <p>d) Senator SINGH: Perhaps you could provide the contractual arrangements?</p>

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				<p>Ms Leon: Yes. . [page 116]</p> <p>e) Senator SINGH: Can you provide the details of the total cost to the government of engaging labour hire staff? So the cost of the government providing training, equipment and any ongoing additional costs.</p> <p>Ms Leon: We won't be able to disaggregate the cost of training and equipment, because they'll be using our training and our equipment. We don't have a separate allocation of training and equipment just for contractors. We'll be able to tell you the amount we're spending on the contracting in of the labour, but they are also utilising all of our overheads, which we don't cost separately, depending on when they're being utilised by a contractor or by a staff member. [page 116]</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Senator SINGH: What about details of the total cost to the department for the provision of training and support?</p> <p>Ms Leon: For everyone?</p> <p>Senator SINGH: To labour hire staff.</p> <p>Ms Leon: Well, we don't do that separately. The staff who come in as contractors mostly will go through our normal departmental training. It won't be separately costed for them. They have the same training as if they were staff of the department. If we run a training program, for example, to teach all of our staff or contractors about their obligations in terms of the privacy and security of our IT systems, that's provided out of our departmental training budget, which is not separately allocated to the contractors compared to training our own staff.</p> <p>Senator SINGH: You haven't allocated a certain amount of budget to training labour hire staff?</p> <p>Ms Leon: No, because we have a training budget. Whether we're training our own staff or contractors, it's still the same amount of money.</p> <p>Senator SINGH: I understand you have a training budget. I'm asking for the breakdown of that training budget for labour hire staff.</p> <p>Ms Leon: I'll take it on notice, but I don't think we train the contractors under a separate bucket of money. [page 117]</p>
HS 16	SQ18-000017	Debt	Siewert	<p>Senator SIEWERT: I want to go back to that point—if I'm a recipient, do I have to accept the debt before I can access the background paperwork?</p> <p>Mr Storen: I'd like to take that on notice to give you a probably more comprehensive answer, Senator. The intention of how we've approached the business process since February is no.</p> <p>Senator SIEWERT: Since February?</p> <p>Mr Storen: Mr McNamara flagged February 2017.</p> <p>Senator SIEWERT: Since last February? Sorry, I thought I'd missed something else there.</p> <p>Mr Storen: We've continuously looked at the business process. The intention is to be able to provide a customer with what they need to be able to accept the debt. Obviously, a number of our systems are a little bit old, as we went through in previous hearings. I'd prefer to give you a more</p>

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				comprehensive answer about our guidance to our compliance officers and what data they readily have access to that be transmitted to a customer. <i>[page 121]</i>
HS 17	SQ18-000018	Data Matching	Keneally	<p>a) Senator KENEALLY: Is funding allocated to that work with the ATO across all three streams you've just described? I have a figure of \$50.4 million. Mr McNamara: We've received money under each of those measures to undertake the data-matching. Senator KENEALLY: Would that money be around \$50.4 million over three years from 2016-17? Mr Storen: That sounds quite low. Senator KENEALLY: That doesn't sound like the right figure? Mr McNamara: No. I think we can take that on notice to get you a figure. . <i>[page 123]</i></p> <p>b) Senator KENEALLY: The information I've been provided would suggest there will be an estimated net saving of \$157.8 million. Does that figure seem familiar? Ms Harfield: I'd have to take it on notice, sorry. <i>[page 123]</i></p>
HS 18	SQ18-000019	Debt	Siewert	<p>Senator SIEWERT: Can I go back to the original debts that were at the beginning of the process in 2016, when there was that large number of debts that referred to debt collectors? There were 50,000. Have all of those now been recalled? Have they all been dealt with? Mr Storen: I'd have to take that on notice to track down. We did do remediation processes on a range of those debts. It often depended on the nature of the debt, where it came from, whether we could contact the customer, et cetera. I think we're better off coming back to you with an answer around what's the status of the 50,000. <i>[page 124]</i></p>
HS 19	SQ18-000020	Compliance Labour Hire Workforce	Pratt	<p>a) Senator PRATT: So following up on Senator Siewert's questions regarding the contract staff, can I ask what organisations and businesses those contract staff have been contracted from? Mr Storen: There's two businesses being contracted, senator. One business is Adecco and the second organisation is Chandler Macleod Group. Senator PRATT: What's the hourly rate that those staff are paid at? Ms Leon: I think I said before in relation to the question that Senator Singh asked about contractors more generally, is that we have to take on notice to see whether it's possible to provide that under the contractual arrangements that we have, both whether we even know what they're paid, but also whether what their input costs are is commercial-in-confidence to the tenderers. <i>[page 124]</i></p> <p>b) Senator PRATT: It's in the public interest for us to be able to compare the salaries of your staff doing similar work with the value of the contract overall. So we would ask for an answer on that. Ms Leon: I've taken it on notice to see, and I'm happy to take this on notice as well, to see what's possible to provide. <i>[page 124-125]</i></p> <p>c) Ms Leon: Just to clarify, I've taken on notice to provide what our mechanisms are for managing</p>

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				the contract in relation to compliance with workplace law. I should say of course that for employees of labour hire companies, like every employee, their enforcement recourse, is, of course, to the range of workplace relations regulators as well. So they have access to the Fair Work Ombudsman or to the processes of the regulator if they think there's any concern about their working terms and conditions. <i>[page 126]</i>
HS 20	SQ18-000021	Aged Care – Payment Caps	Siewert	<p>a) Senator SIEWERT: How much extra money are we talking about people having paid? Ms Cattermole: I haven't got that on me, I don't think. There's been quite a lot of work put into this. We've had to do several things. One is to identify exactly who and make those remediations which required, obviously, quite a complex set of recalculations and ensuring that that was dealt with. The second is we've had to institute a manual workaround to make sure, in the interim, that it doesn't occur again. The third is we're in the middle of developing an automated process that will ensure that it is automated. That's been the focus of the work so far. We haven't—and I'm sure that I don't have anything here that tells us—really looked through what the amounts were, what the range is and whether there are other factors. What we've tried to do is identify exactly who—we worked out pretty quickly that it was a time-bound cohort—and then spent that time on the remediation and the processes we needed to do to ensure that it doesn't occur again. <i>[page 128-129]</i></p> <p>b) Senator SIEWERT: Could you take on notice how much has been repaid and what the largest sum was that was repaid. <i>[page 129]</i></p>
HS 21	SQ18-000022	Single Parent Payment	Siewert	<p>a) Senator SIEWERT: Of that number, how many have continued on their payment? Ms Deininger: I don't have the numbers to hand. I'm happy to take that on notice. It changes from day to day, as you might expect, because the 100 all had different finalisation dates. We didn't send them all on day one; we sent them over a staggered period. I'm happy to provide that on notice. <i>[page 131]</i></p> <p>b) Senator SIEWERT: Could you provide on notice, then, the number of people who were suspended and then re-engaged? Ms Deininger: Sure. <i>[page 131]</i></p> <p>c) Senator SIEWERT: Also, could you provide those who have voluntarily given it up and those that continue and any other outliers that I haven't mentioned. Ms Deininger: I'm happy to provide that. <i>[page 131]</i></p>
HS 22	SQ18-000023	Child Support – ICT Systems	Pratt	<p>a) Senator PRATT: What processes are triggered by CSA staff to update the system to record an outer-agency payment or an ad hoc payment from one parent to another? Ms Bridger: I'm afraid I don't know the answer. Ms Leon: I'm sorry, Senator, could you say that again? Senator PRATT: What processes are triggered by CSA staff to update the system to record an outer agency payment? Do they do it in Cuba? Do they do it in Pluto? Ms Leon: I'll have to take that on notice. <i>[page 134]</i></p>

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				<p>b) Senator PRATT: Is it Cuba or Pluto that's updated? If both systems are updated, can you confirm that the previously identified quality assurance process applies to this payment update as well? Mr McHardie: Yes. Ms Leon: Is that a subset of the question you've just taken on notice? Senator PRATT: Yes. Ms Leon: Yes. Ms Ryan: We'll definitely take that one on notice.</p> <p>Senator PRATT: I want to know whether your quality assurance processes are working to ensure robust datasets for clients. We're only asking these questions because we've had people telling us that there are issues. Ms Bridger: There is an audit currently being undertaken internally in the department—if it hasn't started, it will kick off shortly—with regard to transactions that go from one system to the other. So I'd probably need to let that run its course and then come back to you. I'll take that one on notice. <i>[page 134]</i></p> <p>c) Ms Bridger: As far as I'm aware, I would have to say I believe they're correct. But I'd like to take it on notice. And as a form of assurance we do have an audit. If it's not yet started, I know it's on the calendar. Senator PRATT: Have you done any audits since Pluto commenced? Ms Bridger: Not formal internal audits. We do have an assurer as part of the program of work, and they did some early work. But that was probably some six months ago. Senator PRATT: How do we find out the results of that? Ms Bridger: I'll take that one on notice for you. <i>[page 134]</i></p> <p>d) Senator PRATT: It's the same kinds of calls that Centrelink has provided data on. We're interested in the total number of CSA calls received and missed as at July 2016, December 2016, July 2017 and 31 December 2017. We're looking to see if there's a pattern in relation to these issues. Mr Jackson: Happy to take those on notice. <i>[page 134]</i></p> <p>e) Senator PRATT: Have rates of overtime increased since Pluto has been in operation? Mr Volkers: I'd have to take that on notice. <i>[page 135]</i></p>
HS 25	SQ18-000026	Newstart – Activity Test Exemptions	Siewert	Please provide a breakdown of the numbers of people receiving Newstart who have an activity test exemption and include the reason for the exemption.
HS 26	SQ18-000027	Disability Support Pension	Siewert	Please provide the number of people who have exited from DSP because they have gone to prison for 16/17.
HS 28	SQ18-000029	Employment Income Confirmation (Online)	Siewert	With reference to SQ17-000199 <i>[Supplementary Budget Estimates HS 52]</i> :

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		Compliance Intervention)		a) How much were the administrative costs to identify and recover these figures? b) Are the policies under, over, or on budget? c) Please provide up-to-date figures for identified, recovered and costs incurred. d) What are the projected costs moving forward to administer these policies?
HS 29	SQ18-000030	Employment Income Confirmation (Online Compliance Intervention)	Siewert	With reference to SQ17-000195 [<i>Supplementary Budget Estimates HS 48</i>]: a) How many requested a reassessment or multiple reassessments? b) How much debt reduced?
HS 30	SQ18-000031	Employment Income Confirmation (Online Compliance Intervention) – Use of Registered Post	Siewert	Since the Department decided to start sending letters via registered post in 2017: a) How many OCI letters have been sent via registered post? b) How much has this cost?
HS 31	SQ18-000032	Employment Income Confirmation (Online Compliance Intervention)	Siewert	Between 1 July 2016 and now: a) How many OCI letters have been sent? b) How many have resulted in debts raised? c) How many reassessments have been requested/completed? d) How many formal reviews have been requested/completed? e) How many appeals (AAT) have been requested/completed? f) How many debts have been reduced? g) How many debts have been wiped? h) How many debts have been written off? i) How many debts are currently awaiting reassessment?
HS 32	SQ18-000033	Employment Income Confirmation (Online Compliance Intervention) – Reduced Debt	Siewert	How much debt has been reduced and wiped in each state?
HS 33	SQ18-000034	Employment Income Confirmation (Online Compliance Intervention) - Modelling	Siewert	Has the Department done any modelling or calculations to estimate how much would be owed back to recipients via increased historic tax returns due to decreased entitlements after a debt is repaid?
HS 34	SQ18-000035	Ministerial Functions	Kitching	In relation to any functions or official receptions hosted by Ministers or Assistant Ministers in the portfolio in calendar year 2017, can the following please be provided: a) list of functions; b) list of attendees including departmental officials and members of the Minister's family or personal staff; c) function venue; d) itemised list of costs (GST inclusive);

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				e) details of any food served; f) details of any wines or champagnes served including brand and vintage; and g) details of any entertainment provided.
HS 35	SQ18-000036	Departmental Functions	Kitching	In relation to expenditure on any functions or official receptions etc. hosted by the Department or agencies in the portfolio in calendar year 2017, can the following please be provided: a) list of functions; b) list of attendees; c) function venue; d) itemised list of costs (GST inclusive); e) details of any food served; f) details of any wines or champagnes served including brand and vintage; and g) details of any entertainment provided.
HS 36	SQ18-000037	Executive Office Upgrades	Kitching	a) Were the furniture, fixtures or fittings of the Secretary's office, or the offices of any Deputy Secretaries, upgraded in calendar year 2017? b) If so, can an itemised list of costs please be provided (GST inclusive)?
HS 37	SQ18-000038	Facilities Upgrades	Kitching	a) Were the facilities of any of the Department's premises upgraded in calendar year 2017, for example, staff room refurbishments, kitchen refurbishments, bathroom refurbishments, the purchase of any new fridges, coffee machines, or other kitchen equipment? b) If so, can a detailed description of the relevant facilities upgrade please be provided together with an itemised list of costs (GST inclusive)? c) Can any photographs of the upgraded facilities please be provided?
HS 38	SQ18-000039	Staff Travel	Kitching	What was the total cost of staff travel for departmental employees in calendar year 2017?
HS 39	SQ18-000040	Media Monitoring	Kitching	What was the Department's total expenditure on media monitoring in calendar year 2017?
HS 40	SQ18-000041	Advertising and Information Campaigns	Kitching	What was the Department's total expenditure on advertising and information campaigns in calendar year 2017?
HS 41	SQ18-000042	Promotional Merchandise	Kitching	What was the Department's total expenditure on promotional merchandise in calendar year 2017?
HS 42	SQ18-000043	Ministerial Overseas Travel	Kitching	Can a copy of all correspondence exchanged between Ministers or Assistant Ministers in the portfolio and the Prime Minister in relation to approval for overseas travel in calendar year 2017 please be provided?
HS 43	SQ18-000044	Call Centre Phone System	Watt	Does the Centrelink call centre phone system identify recipients when they ring, if so, if the recipient is unsuccessful in connecting to an operator and they ring the following day, ringing does the system have an automated system that will identify them as having rung the day before and hangs up after an automated message saying "telling you they are busy and you called yesterday?"
HS 44	SQ18-000045	Child Support – ICT Systems	Watt	a) What QA process is in place to ensure both systems (Cuba + Pluto) contain up-to-date child

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				<p>payment information?</p> <p>b) Does this QA process apply to all data updates?</p>
HS 45	SQ18-000046	Child Support – Payment Reports - DHS	Watt	<p>a) Are child payment reports provided by the CSA to the ATO?</p> <p>b) If so, which system generates the report?</p> <p>c) If not PLUTO please explain why - are there integrity issues associated with the new system?</p> <p>d) What is DHS doing to fix these issues?</p>
HS 46	SQ18-000047	Child Support – Payment Reports - ATO	Watt	<p>a) If (when) the ATO provides child payment reports to DHS, which system is updated to reflect the ATO report?</p> <p>b) If both are updated, please confirm the QA process applies to this update.</p>
HS 47	SQ18-000048	Child Support – Outer Agency Payments	Watt	<p>a) What processes are triggered by CSA staff to update the system to record an outer agency payment (an ad hoc payment from one parent to another)?</p> <p>b) What system (CUBA or PLUTO) is updated to reflect an outer agency payment?</p> <p>c) If both systems are updated can DHS confirm that the previously identified QA processes applies to this payment update as well?</p> <p>d) How does DHS know that its QA processes are working effectively to ensure a robust data set for CSA clients?</p>
HS 48	SQ18-000049	Child Support - Calls	Watt	<p>a) CSA clients can ring the CSA call centre to dispute a child payment report. Has the number of clients ringing the CSA call centre to dispute a child payment report increased since PLUTO began operation?</p> <p>b) Please provide the total number of CSA calls (received and missed) as at 1 July 2016, 31 December 2016, 1 July 2017 and 31 December 2017.</p> <p>c) Please provide the average call time for the same periods.</p>
HS 49	SQ18-000050	Child Support – ICT Systems	Watt	<p>a) Why is DHS running a dual system?</p> <p>b) What planning (and timing) is in place to remove the inefficiencies associate with this arrangement - reduce CUBA to a historical data system only (a genuine legacy system) and, the planning (and timing) in place to migrate the historical data to Pluto and shut down the legacy system?</p> <p>c) How are DHS staff managing the additional workload of running the dual systems?</p> <p>d) Have the rates of overtime increased over the time PLUTO has been in operation?</p> <p>e) What is the total cost to the department for running the CSA dual systems - as at 1 July 2016, 31 December 2016, 1 July 2017 and 31 December 2017? Please include staffing costs in the response, including cost of any overtime and contract workers employed to assist DHS staff to manage the additional workload.</p>
HS 52	SQ18-000053	Debt Recovery – Expand Debt Recovery Measures	Watt	<p>a) How much of the \$28.5 million has been spent? (\$19.9 million by 30 June 2018)</p> <p>b) How much actual debt has been identified?</p> <p>c) How much of this actual debt been recovered?</p>

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d) What is the actual debt recovery profile (by financial year)? e) What are the actual net savings achieved? f) To date (as at 31 January 2018), what is the proportion of total actual savings to total estimated identified debt?
HS 53	SQ18-000054	Debt Recovery – Income Data Matching	Watt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) How much of the total funding to DHS (as at 31 January 2018) has been spent? b) What was the estimated number of people identified for data matching in 2013-14 and 2014-15? c) What is the actual number of people identified? d) What was the total estimated debt identified from this population of individuals? e) How much actual debt has been identified? How much of the actual debt has been recovered for 2016-7 and YTD for 2017-18 (as at 31 January 2018) f) Can you please confirm - the savings identified per year are estimated net savings. g) What were the actual net savings achieved for 2016-17 (estimated at \$603.6 million) and YTD for 2017-18 (as at 31 January)? h) What is the forecasted actual net savings for 2017-18 (as at 30 June 2018) and estimated at \$625.0 million? i) To date (as at 31 January 2018), what is the proportion of total actual savings to total estimated identified debt? j) Can you please explain the \$200,000 estimated saving for DHS in 2018-19 under this measure?
HS 54	SQ18-000055	Debt Recovery – Indigenous / Non-Indigenous	Watt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) What is the amount collected (all debt programs) for Indigenous Australians and Non-Indigenous Australians? b) What is the breakdown by welfare payment for both Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians? c) What is the breakdown of debt collected by State and Territory from Indigenous Australians and Non-Indigenous Australians?
HS 55	SQ18-000056	Debt Recovery – Non-employment Income Data Matching	Watt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) How much of the total funding to DHS (as at 31 January 2018) has been spent? b) What was the estimated identified debt and actual debt identified in 2016-17 and YTD 2017-18 (as at 31 Jan 2018)? c) How much of the actual debt has been recovered in 2016-17 and YTD 2017- 18? d) Can you please confirm the identified estimated savings per year are estimated net savings? e) What is the actual net savings for 2016-17 (estimated at \$272.6 million)? f) What are the actual net savings for 2017-18 YTD (estimated at \$250.0 million for 2017-18)? g) What is the forecasted net savings for 2017-18 (as at 30 June 2018)? h) To date (as at 31 January 2018), what is the proportional of total actual savings to total estimated identified debt?

DHS No.	PDMS No.	Broad topic	Senator	Question
HS 56	SQ18-000057	Parenting Payment Single - Newstart	Siewert	<p>a) Is a single parent transferred automatically to Newstart from Parenting Payment Single when their youngest child turns 6?</p> <p>b) If this is not the case why has the process changed?</p> <p>c) Does a single parent have to apply for Newstart in this situation?</p> <p>d) How long does that process take?</p> <p>e) Have single parents been left in a situation where they have no payments?</p> <p>f) If so how many have had a no-payment wait period?</p> <p>g) What is the longest time someone has had to wait?</p> <p>h) What is the average time of non-payment period?</p>
HS 57	SQ18-000058	Aged Care Payments	Brown	<p>Aged care providers are reporting ongoing and longstanding problems with inaccurate and non-payment of subsidy payments from the Department of Human Services sometimes amounting to many thousands if not millions of dollars owing to them and resulting in increased administration costs to reconcile payments and numerous, often futile, contact with the Department of Human Services.</p> <p>a) Would the Government advise how many complaints/issues are logged with them to address on behalf of aged care providers?</p> <p>b) How long on average does it take for the Government to resolve these complaints/issues?</p> <p>c) What is the longest period of time that it has taken the Government to resolve a complaint/issue?</p> <p>d) Would the Government advise the amount of outstanding payments to aged care providers?</p> <p>e) What is the average outstanding amount?</p> <p>f) What is the largest outstanding amount owed to an aged care provider?</p> <p>g) What is the Government doing to address this situation? Can the Department advise when it will be fixed?</p>
HS 58	SQ18-000059	Disability Support Pension	Watt	<p>a) What is the average length of time it takes to process an application for the DSP?</p> <p>b) What assistance is available to people to complete their DSP application together?</p> <p>c) What is the most common reason that people do not qualify for the DSP?</p> <p>d) Of those who do not receive the payment on their first application, how many request a review of the decision? How many of these reviews result in a grant of the payment?</p> <p>e) Of those who are not granted the DSP, how many go on to receive Newstart or another payment instead?</p>
HS 59	SQ18-000060	Call Analytics - Cost	Keneally	<p>Senator KENEALLY: I just thought I'd ask very quickly—the cost of the call analytics?</p> <p>Mr Jackson: It's actually part of our managed telephony service that we have with our telephony provider. It's part of a lump sum price, but we will be able to go back and take on notice that we can segment out that particular cost associated with call recording and analytics. <i>[page 107]</i></p>

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HS 60	SQ18-000061	Data Matching – ATO and Child Support	Pratt	<p>Senator PRATT: Was the agency able to meet all its obligation to intercept a tax refund within 48 hours, as required so that people can get their tax refunds in a timely manner? Was that impacted by the introduction of this system substantially relative to the speed in which tax refunds could be processed in previous years?</p> <p>Mr Volkens: The tax refunds occur automatically. There's data-matching between the ATO and child support systems. The ATO system knows when there's a child support debt outstanding for a child support customer and a tax refund becomes available. That happens automatically. I think the 48 hours you're referring to is the time frame that the tax office is—</p> <p>Senator PRATT: That's right. I had people tell me that they couldn't meet the tax office's 48-hour turnaround at various points in time because there were just too many building up.</p> <p>Mr Volkens: I'm not aware of missing any tax refund intercepts as a result of that issue.</p> <p>Senator PRATT: If you could take it on notice and see if you can find the extent to where.</p> <p>Mr Volkens: Sure. <i>[page 135]</i></p>
HS 61	SQ18-000062	Aged Care Payment Project	Polley	<p>a) Can the Department confirm the existence of the Aged Care Payment Project?</p> <p>b) What was the intent of this project? What was the rationale behind needing this project?</p> <p>c) Were public sector positions re-allocated from Canberra to Brisbane? Were these positions then shifted back from Brisbane to Canberra? If yes, why were public sector staff relocated from Canberra to Brisbane then relocated back to Canberra?</p> <p>d) What was the cost of establishing the Aged Care Payment Project? What were the relocating costs for the Aged Care Payment Project?</p> <p>e) Can the Department confirm that consultants or third parties were used as part of this project? If yes, did this third party or those consulting on this project have access to any data?</p> <p>f) Would this data have been deemed as sensitive or classified?</p> <p>g) What, if any, were the outcomes of this project?</p>