

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2023 - 2024

ADDITIONAL HEARING OPENING STATEMENT

Requests for data

- Services Australia provides services to almost all Australians at some point in their lives and manages an enormous volume of interactions. In the 2022–23 financial year, for example, we managed
 - 55.2 million telephone calls
 - 1.1 billion digital interactions
 - Over 10 million service centre interactions.
- Delivering government services at this scale also generates an enormous volume of data. We make extensive use of this data to support our focus on improving the customer experience and delivering services more efficiently.
- The customers we support, the services we deliver and, consequently, the data we collect are not homogeneous.
- As a result, turning this data into meaningful information requires that it be accessed, processed and assessed in light of a wide range of contextual factors.
 - For example, we typically analyse data in terms of average rather than median values, as the latter is not as representative of the customer experience.
- Nor is all the data we collect available in real time. At times we need to wait for a data collection period – weekly or monthly, for example – to end before we can provide accurate information.
- Services Australia is committed to transparency.
- Where we know from experience that particular sets of data are likely to be requested – as in the case of Estimates hearings, for example – we proactively prepare that information.

- For example, we regularly table a report about our telephony performance, which highlights key data about our telephony transactions, which make up just under 10% of our total.
- This process typically takes a number of weeks of planning, database interrogation, data analysis and quality assurance to ensure the information we are providing is accurate and relevant.
- As Secretary Griggs noted in the previous hearing, it is a common practice for committees and agencies to agree on a standard set of data to be tabled at hearings.
- This would allow us to ensure that data can be produced at the appropriate time and minimise the impact on the data analysis undertaken to support the agency's operations.

Committee requests for tabled information

- In terms of the materials the Committee requested be tabled at the previous hearing, we commenced gathering data to address questions in advance of the hearing. We also tabled data in response to a number of your questions.
- We have continued to progress this work following the hearing, and our responses to questions taken on notice on 25 October 2023 will be prepared for tabling on 15 December 2023, the date set by the Committee, through the usual processes.

Providing support in Tara, Queensland

- Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our staff who have been processing claims and helping customers following the recent bushfires in Queensland.
- This includes our staff working from the Desert Rose Mobile Service Centre, which is supporting the local community on the ground in Tara.