

Senate Select Committee on COVID-19

Public Hearing – 03 June 2020
ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Social Services

Topic: Senate Select Committee on COVID-19 - Question 1

Question reference number: SQ20-000465

Senator: Katy Gallagher

Type of Question: Spoken. Hansard Page/s:

Date set by the Committee for the return of answer: 17 June 2020

Question:

CHAIR: You're almost there now, in May. Has this changed your thinking about where we might be in September?

Ms Campbell: We rely on the Treasury to do the unemployment benefit recipient numbers, and so we work with the Treasury to give us guidance on those. We feed back, of course, the information that we see from the actual results and then the Treasury provides us with an update on the unemployment benefit recipient numbers—the UBR number.

CHAIR: Has that been updated?

Ms Campbell: Not at this time, no.

CHAIR: When would that normally happen?

Ms Campbell: We work with Treasury on a regular basis. Mr Bennett might be able to say when we're expecting the next update.

Mr Bennett: As part of the normal process that we go through working with Treasury associated with economic updates, we previously, prior to COVID, used to get it three times a year. I'd have to take it on notice at the moment to associate it with when we're expecting the next update.

Answer:

An updated Unemployment Benefit Recipient (UBR) parameter will be reflected in the Treasurer's update on the Economic and Fiscal Outlook on 23 July 2020.

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Department of Social Services

Topic: Senate Select Committee on COVID-19 - Question 2

Question reference number: SQ20-000466

Senator: Rachel Siewert

Type of Question: Spoken. Hansard Page/s:

Date set by the Committee for the return of answer: 17 June 2020

Question:

Senator SIEWERT: Ms Campbell, the department has just provided an update on some of the data. Is it possible for the committee to receive more regular updates and a breakdown of payments by type and payment? Is it possible to receive that on a weekly, biweekly or monthly basis so that we get a clearer picture of the data in real time but also of the specific demographics against payment type?

Ms Campbell: We can take that on notice and get back to the committee on that. We are just trying to work out the data to make sure it is cleansed and accurate. We'll check about how we can do that. We'll get back to the committee on that.

Answer:

The Department of Social Services (the department) regularly publishes a wide range of data in user-friendly formats on the data.gov.au website.

This includes the *JobSeeker Payment and Youth Allowance recipients – monthly profile*. This report is published monthly and provides counts of recipients of JobSeeker Payment and Youth Allowance and some demographics of these recipients. The department has published reports for March 2020 and April 2020.

On a quarterly basis, the *DSS Payment Demographic Data* report is released on data.gov.au. This report includes counts of recipients with demographic details on pensions, working age payments, family payments and Rent Assistance.

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Department of Social Services

Topic: Senate Select Committee on COVID-19 - Question 3

Question reference number: SQ20-000467

Senator: Katy Gallagher

Type of Question: Spoken. Hansard Page/s:

Date set by the Committee for the return of answer: 17 June 2020

Question:

CHAIR: Ms Campbell, do you have data on how many Indigenous Australians are in receipt of the coronavirus supplement?

Ms Campbell: I don't think I've got it here, but we could take that on notice and give that to you.

Answer:

Please refer to Question on Notice SQ20-000453.

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Department of Social Services

Topic: Senate Select Committee on COVID-19 - Question 4

Question reference number: SQ20-000468

Senator: Katy Gallagher

Type of Question: Spoken. Hansard Page/s:

Date set by the Committee for the return of answer: 17 June 2020

Question:

CHAIR: Could you also take on notice how many additional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have needed to claim unemployment benefits.

Ms Campbell: We will take that on notice.

Answer:

The answer is provided in the attached table.



ADH20-0190: Completed JobSeeker Payment and Youth Allowance (other) Claim Activities by Indigenous Status and Claim Status - from 23/03/2020 to 29/05/2020

Indigenous Claims	JobSeeker Payment	Youth Allowance (other)
Total	32,327	11,072

Data Descriptions

The data is based on Claim Activities completed

Completed claim activities are reported on the day the claim activity is finalised. Some claimants may be granted payment with a future commencement date.

Note: Indigenous recipients include only those who have voluntarily identified as indigenous. These data may therefore represent an undercount.

Source: Services Australia administrative data - CLK_CLAIMS_COMPLETED_D dataset.

Report produced on 04/06/2020

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Department of Social Services

Topic: Senate Select Committee on COVID-19 – Question 5

Question reference number: SQ20-000469

Senator: Katy Gallagher

Type of Question: Spoken. Hansard Page/s:

Date set by the Committee for the return of answer: 17 June 2020

Question:

CHAIR: My final one would be—I'm not sure if you might have this with you today—what the current fortnightly outlays on unemployment benefits are at the moment and whether that can just quickly be divided into jobseeker and coronavirus supplement.

Mr Bennett: I'll have to take that one on notice.

Answer:

For the latest complete fortnight ending on 21 May 2020, the total outlay for the Jobseeker payment was \$1,666 million of which \$826 million was for the supplement.