

Joint Committee on Human Rights Inquiry into Compulsory Income Management

Public Hearing – 5 July 2024

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Social Services

**Topic:** Income management assessment

**Question reference number:** IQ24-000112

**Question asked by:** Graham Perrett

**Type of Question:** Spoken.      **Hansard Page/s:** 52-53

**Date set by the Committee for the return of answer:** 19 July 2024

**Question:**

Mr PERRETT: I want to go to the 1.8 per cent that Ms Tink referred to based on an individualised assessment. Can you unpack that 1.8 per cent? How do they come to you?

Mr Boneham: There are a number of different cohorts in relation to the programs. The 1.8 per cent are people who have been referred either through a child protection order—

Mr PERRETT: That's what I was particularly interested in.

Mr Boneham: There is another one which is a vulnerable welfare recipient cohort. They are placed on the program by a Centrelink social worker. They may become aware of their case and make a recommendation that they should be on the program.

Mr PERRETT: Is that because they don't have capacity in the legal sense, or is it that they have concerns about them being exploited by—

Mr Boneham: We would have to take that on notice because that is done by Services Australia. They would look at certain things. Obviously they may become aware of a person who may be showing some particular financial or vulnerable indicators. I mentioned before homelessness or just financial coercion.

Mr PERRETT: I think it said 'child protection not provided' in the data you presented.

Mr Boneham: There are two programs. Income management, if you look at the data on data.gov.au—the data which you have is subject to suppression because of the potential identification of people.

Mrs Hope: Some very small numbers in very small communities.

Mr PERRETT: Got it.

Mr Boneham: On data.gov.au it is suggesting that there are fewer than 16 on income management, and on enhanced income management there are 15.

**Answer:**

The decision-making principles for identifying a Vulnerable Welfare Payment Recipient (VWPR) are publicly available and outlined in section [11.4.2.10 of the Social Security Guide](#).