

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES – 25 OCTOBER 2018 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Online Compliance Intervention – Deceased People

Question reference number: HS 28 (SQ18-000176)

Senator: Siewert

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 6 December 2018

Number of pages: 2

Question:

In reference to a question at the previous estimates (SQ18-000105) could the Department please provide updated figures and answer:

- a) How many of these deceased individuals responded, interacted or made contact to the Department after the OCI letter?
- b) How many of these deceased individuals were marked as vulnerable/previously marked as vulnerable?
- c) What is the breakdown of current recipient/ex recipient at the date of death?
- d) What is the age breakdown of these deceased individuals?
- e) What was the average and median debt size for these individuals?
- f) What is the sex breakdown for these individuals?
- g) What is the payment type breakdown for these individuals?
- h) How many of these individuals were referred to a social worker, Lifeline or a similar service?

Answer:

The updated figures for previous estimates question SQ18-000105 for period 1 July 2016 to 31 October 2018 are as below:

No. of people deceased after an accounts payable notice sent	812
No. of people deceased after an Employment Income Confirmation letter was sent	2,030
The average length of time between most recent Employment Income Confirmation letter sent prior to death and their death	222 days.
No. of people deceased after making a debt repayment	504
No. of people deceased prior to receiving a an Employment Income Confirmation Letter	235
No. of estates considered sufficient and insufficient	44 and 358 respectively.

- a) The Department cannot readily identify all methods of recipient interaction. Many of these interactions may occur via processes where the contact is recorded manually and date is therefore not readily available.
- b) 663
- c) 1,423 current recipients at the date of death and 607 non-current recipients at the date of death.
- d) Age breakdown of deceased recipients:

Deceased Recipient Age	No. of recipients
16 to 25	102
26 to 35	327
36 to 45	347
46 to 55	466
56 to 65	536
66 to 80	251
81 to 100	1
Total	2,030

- e) The average and median debt of deceased recipients:

Debt Raised	Total
Average Debt	\$2,377
Median Debt	\$1,248

- f) Deceased recipient gender:

Deceased Recipient Gender	
Female	637
Male	1,393

- g) Breakdown of deceased recipient payment type for current customers:

Deceased Recipient Payment Type	
Disability Support Pension	520
Newstart Allowance	503
Age Pension	252
Other ¹	148

¹Other includes Austudy, Carer's Allowance, Paid Parental (Single & Partnered) and Sickness Allowance.

- h) Referrals to Social Work Services are captured manually in a data field where data extraction cannot be undertaken. As such, it would be an unreasonable diversion of resources to obtain this information.

The Social Work Information System that is utilised by the Department's Social Workers also involves a manual entry and does not capture the volume or type of referrals specific to organisations such as Lifeline or other organisations.