

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
2012-13 Additional Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 5

Question No: 145

Topic: Disability Support Pension

Hansard Page: 15/02/2013 CA79

Senator Siewert asked:

Aside from the implementation of the impairment tables, can you provide a timeline of other measures that have been introduced and their impact upon DSP eligibility?

Answer:

An explanation of the impact of recent measures on DSP eligibility has been provided in answer to Question on Notice No: 144.

The timeline for introduction of relevant measures is:

- introduction of more thorough assessments of DSP claims by Senior Job Capacity Assessors using updated guidelines (1 July 2010);
- establishment of the Health Professional Advisory Unit (HPAU) within DHS to provide DSP assessors independent advice on medical issues in DSP assessments (1 July 2010);
- conduct of all DSP assessments by medical, health and allied health professionals employed by DHS to provide greater consistency (1 July 2011);
- transition of Job Capacity Assessment policy from DEEWR to FaHCSIA (1 July 2011);
- streamlining of assessment processes by introducing faster and simpler assessments for employment service referrals and retaining more thorough assessments for DSP (1 July 2011);
- requirement for DSP claimants who do not have a severe impairment to demonstrate they are unable to work independently, even with employment assistance and support (3 September 2011); and
- introduction of revised Impairment Tables that have a greater focus on a person's abilities, rather than what they cannot do (1 January 2012).

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Other reforms introduced to support people to build their work capacity without impacting on their eligibility for DSP include:

- introduction of Participation Requirements for certain DSP recipients under age 35 with some capacity to work (1 July 2012); and
- allowing DSP recipients to obtain work of up to 30 hours a week and, subject to the income test, still receive part pension (1 July 2012).