

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES – 26 FEBRUARY 2015 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: ICT Service Levels

Question reference number: HS 42

Senator: Cameron

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 17 April 2015

Number of pages: 3

Question:

Arising from HS 28 from Supplementary Estimates 2014:

- a) How many customer service interruptions since 21 November 2014?
- b) What was the total duration for each and what was the business impact?
- c) Have the causes of the outages been identified?
- d) What remedial action has or is being taken to rectify the problems?
- e) What is the reliability performance target for the IT systems and what was achieved in the June quarter 2013-14 and September quarter 2014-15 and December 2014-2015?

Answer:

- a) - c) Attachment A provides details of departmental Priority 1 ICT incidents related to customer service interruptions in chronological order for the period 21 November 2014 to 28 February 2015. Underlying causes and remedial actions have been identified and have been undertaken to restore service in each incident. A 'partial disruption' includes:
 - intermittent access to a service (could be a few seconds impacting only certain customers), and/or
 - proportional unavailability of a service (impact limited to a region or small percentage of users).
- d) The department undertakes a programme of continuous ICT service improvement work. The most significant improvement to service provision undertaken since November 2014 was:
 - improved Customer First infrastructure maintenance practices, providing the capability to conduct maintenance without service disruption. Additionally, the department has commissioned modernised infrastructure that has improved the overall capacity of the solution; and

- additional investment in the desktop environment through the implementation of modernised fleet management tools. This allowed maintenance to be carried without affecting staff during business hours, extending the time that staff can carry out their duties.

e) The department has a Key Performance Indicator of 95 per cent that demonstrates the achievement of endorsed availability and reliability service levels from the department's ICT to its customers. The department is required to report on this Key Performance Indicator regularly and continually exceeds the target. The department has built-in redundancy, meaning that when one system experiences a disruption an alternative system remains available, thereby mitigating against customer impacts.

Quarterly results for this Key Performance Indicator are as follows:

| Metric | Target | Quarter 4 2013-14 (July) | Quarter 1 2014-15 (September) | Quarter 2 2014-15 (December) |
|---------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| Service Level Achievement | 95.0 per cent | 97.98 per cent | 98.02 per cent | 98.56 per cent |

| Start Date | Business Impact |
|------------|--|
| 12/12/2014 | <u>Outage</u> Customers were intermittently unable to access Report Employment Income, Advance Payment, Request a Document, Online Claims, Document Lodgement Service, My Profile and Manage Appointments through Centrelink online accounts and Express Plus Centrelink. Centrelink services were available via the Customer Service Centres and Phone Self Service channel. Customers accessing online services received intermittent error messages for the majority of the incident duration. There was a complete outage of Centrelink online services only from 8:00 am – 9:30 am when systems were restarted. From 9:30 am service continually improved until the incident was declared resolved at 4:10 pm. |
| 14/12/2014 | <u>Partial Disruption</u> Consumer Directory Management System (CDMS) was intermittently unavailable for the duration of the incident. From 8:30 am 15/12/14 – 7:00 pm 15/12/14 Customers intermittently received error messages when using Provider Directory System, Personally Controlled Electronic Health Record, Medicare online accounts, Express Plus Medicare, Australian Organ Donor Register and Aged Care Payment Management system, impact noted. Incident was upgraded to a Priority 1 incident at 5:30 am on 15/12/14. CDMS Impact continued throughout the day until restarts were undertaken from 11:30 pm 15/12/14 that restored service at 12:20 am 16/12/14. |
| 15/12/2014 | <u>Partial Disruption</u> Third parties (doctors and pharmacies) and customers could not access Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme Online, Australian Childhood Immunisation Register, Prescription Shopping System, Aged Care Payment Management System, Personally Controlled Electronic Health Records, Rural Incentive Program System, Incentive Program Payment System, External Breast Protheses Reimbursement Program and Health Professionals Online Serviced intermittently from 1:10 am until 6:50 am. All other services were available. |
| 05/02/2015 | <u>Partial Disruption</u> Customers could not access myGov, Centrelink online account, Centrelink Business Online Services, Child Support online account, Child Support Business Online Services, Express Plus Applications, Medicare online account, ECLIPSE, Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme Online and Health Professional Online Services from 11:20am – 11:35am on 05/02/2015. Centrelink, Medicare and Child Support services were available via the Customer Service Centres and Phone Self Service channel. |
| 13/02/2015 | <u>Partial Disruption</u> Customers could not access myGov, Centrelink online accounts, Child Support online accounts, Medicare online accounts, Personally Controlled Electronic Health Record for the duration of the incident from 10:40 pm on Friday until 10:25 am on Saturday. Centrelink, Medicare and Child Support services were available via the Phone Self Service channel, and Customer Service Centres from morning start of business. |