

## **Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee**

### **ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES – 11 FEBRUARY 2016 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

#### **Department of Human Services**

**Topic:** Medicare Provider Number backlog

**Question reference number:** HS 150

**Senator:** Cameron

**Type of question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 4 April 2016

**Number of pages:** 1

#### **Question:**

- a) Australian Doctor recently reported that there were a backlog of 15,000 Medicare provider number applications due to staff shortages. Exactly how many provider number applications are waiting to be processed?
- b) How old is the oldest application?
- c) How long does it currently take Human Services to process one provider number application? What is the current Key Performance Indicator for processing applications? Has this changed since the start of the year?
- d) How many Human Services staff were allocated to process provider number applications on 1 January 2016?
- e) How many Human Services staff are currently allocated to process provider number applications?
- f) What APS Grade are the Human Services staff who process and approve provider number applications?
- g) Has an internal taskforce been established to deal with the backlog? How many staff comprise the task force and what APS grade are they?

#### **Answer:**

- a) 7,836 as at 8 March 2016.
- b) As at 8 March 2016, the oldest application was dated 16 February 2016.
- c) As at 8 March 2016, applications were being processed in 9 days. The processing target is 10 working days for standard applications; some non-standard applications may take longer. As at the start of January 2016, after the Christmas New Year period, the average processing time was 17 days.
- d) 100 on 1 January 2016.
- e) 117 as at 7 March 2016.
- f) APS3 processing staff, APS 4 support staff and APS 5 approving staff.
- g) No.