

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES – 11 FEBRUARY 2016 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Comcare Trial

Question reference number: HS 153

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) Please provide details of the trial that DHS is participating in, where Comcare is referring claims back to DHS for handling.
- b) How many claims have been referred back so far?
- c) Please provide a breakdown of the nature of the claims and the cost to DHS of handling them.

Answer:

- a) The department is participating in a 12 month pilot of an alternate claims management model with Comcare. An external claims services provider, under contract to Comcare, will manage compensation claims, and work in conjunction with staff in the Department of Human Services (the department). The department will exercise Comcare's delegations under the *Safety Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* to make determinations and decisions during this trial.
- b) Comcare transferred a cohort of 1,301 existing claims, including 449 open claims, to the department on 4 February 2016. All new claims from 4 February 2016 are also part of the pilot cohort and 14 new claims have been received since the pilot commenced.
- c) Of the 1,301 claims, 1,223 occurred while the employee was working at the department. This includes 995 physical injury and illness claims and 228 mental illness claims. The remaining 78 claims occurred when the employee worked at a different Commonwealth agency.

The 14 new claims received since 4 February 2016 include nine physical injury and illness claims and five mental illness claims.

As the pilot only commenced on 4 February 2016, the cost to the department of managing these claims is not yet known. The evaluation of the pilot will also include an assessment of the associated costs.