

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES – 11 FEBRUARY 2016 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: DHS staffing - recruitment

Question reference number: HS 156

Senator: Cameron

Type of question: Written

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

Number of pages: 2

Question:

- a) I refer to the statement made by DHS spokesperson Mr Hank Jongen of ABC radio on February 17, 2016 that 1500 extra staff are being employed to deal with the July peak period. Please provide details of the classifications, full time or temporary, location and DHS service that these extra staff will work on.
- b) Has the CPSU raised with DHS or individual employees raised with their supervisors, problems with the processes used to employ these extra staff and fairness of the recruitment process? If so, what were the issues raised?
- c) Are the 1500 extra staff going to be permanent employees? What is the cost of this deployment? Are costs savings being made elsewhere to fund this extra staff? If so, please provide details.
- d) What proportion of the extra full time staff were previously casual or temporary staff, or staff employed elsewhere in DHS?
- e) What will DHS FTE staff be once this extra staff recruitment has occurred?

Answer:

- a) As at 26 February 2016, 1,250 candidates have accepted offers of employment. Positions have been offered nationally at the APS3 and APS4 levels in smart centres and service centres.
- b) The recruitment process undertaken by the department was consistent with the *Public Service Act 1999*, including the merit principle. All applicants that applied were offered an interview. The CPSU has been briefed at various stages throughout this selection process. Applicants that have been unsuccessful in the process have been offered feedback.
- c) This recruitment activity is being used to fill existing permanent positions in service delivery operations nationwide.
The department currently operates within its affordable staffing levels.

- d) Of the 1,250 applicants that have accepted an offer of employment to date, 681 were casual or temporary staff of the department and 31 are staff employed elsewhere in the department.
- e) The department's FTE as at 31 January 2016 stood at 29,240.