

## Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs

### BUDGET ESTIMATES - 2 JUNE 2011 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### Human Services Portfolio

**Topic:** Pension Reform - *Social Security and Other Legislation Amendment (Pension Reform and Other 2009 Budget Measures) Act 2009*

**Question reference number:** HSW 19

**Senator:** Fifield

**Type of question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 22 July 2011

**Number of pages:** 1

**Question:**

- a) Is Centrelink aware of any individual that has been made worse off due to changes introduced by the Act?
- b) Is Centrelink aware of any individual who has been deemed worse off by either the Administrative Appeals Tribunal or the Social Security Appeals Tribunal as a result of this legislation?
- c) How many individuals have been deemed worse off by either the Administrative Appeals Tribunal or the Social Security Appeals Tribunal as a result of this legislation?
- d) How many complaints has Centrelink received from DSP recipients who believe that they have been made worse off due to the Act?

**Answer:**

- a) No individual was worse off when the changes were implemented on 20 September 2009. Customer circumstances may have subsequently changed, for a variety of reasons, which may have altered the rate they receive.
- b) The department collects information on the results of appeals, that is whether they were affirmed, varied or set aside. The department is not aware of any cases that have been varied or set aside.
- c) The outcomes of appeals are either affirmed, varied or set aside. The department has no records indicating whether the Administrative Appeals Tribunal or the Social Security Appeals Tribunal had an opinion that any individual was worse off.
- d) The departmental Customer Relations Unit records indicate that there have been 46 complaints from Disability Support Pension customers who stated that they think they are "worse off" under the changes to the Act. Some customers may have complained more than once.