

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

BUDGET ESTIMATES - 4 JUNE 2013 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Internal Reviews – changed decisions

Question reference number: HS 23

Senator: Fifield

Type of question: Hansard page 90

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Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator FIFIELD: Is the level of review below the SSAT an internal review?

Mr Withnell: Yes. It is an internal review. So far this year we have had 101,591 for the same period.

Senator FIFIELD: What percentage was the original decision upheld?

Mr Withnell: Unchanged has so far been 62.8 per cent and changed decisions to this point is 37.2.

Senator FIFIELD: Again, that can be because there is further information provided?

Mr Withnell: It can be for a range of reasons, but certainly further information is a common one. Change may not be to set aside; it may be to just vary that decision.

Senator FIFIELD: Do you know what percentage of the 37 per cent are due to further information being provided?

Mr Withnell: No. I do not have that breakdown. I would be able to get you those that have been varied or set aside as a breakdown of that 37 per cent. The other may be difficult because we do not capture that information.

Answer:

From 1 July 2012 to 31 March 2013, 88,514 appeal decisions were finalised. Of these, 32,902 appeal decisions (37.2 per cent) were changed by the review officer.

Of the changed reviews:

- 27,034 (82.17 per cent) were set aside – which means a new decision replaced the original decision; and
- 5,868 (17.83 per cent) were varied – which means the outcome of the review was partially changed.

Due to system limitations, not all cases of decisions being varied or set aside due to the provision of new information can be captured. From the available data, over 24 per cent of the appeal decisions were identified as changed due to the provision of new information.