

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

BUDGET ESTIMATES - 4 JUNE 2013 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: DHS Service Centre – Kippa-Ring

Question reference number: HS 39

Senator: Boyce

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 26 July 2013

Number of pages: 2

Question:

A fire on February 8 this year at the Kippa-Ring centre north of Brisbane caused damage to the offices of both Medicare and Centrelink. They have been closed ever since.

- a) What was the damage?
- b) Were any client information files lost or damaged in this event?
- c) How many customers would that office deal with annually?
- d) What alternative arrangements have been made?
- e) How far away is the nearest alternative arrangement?
- f) What public transport arrangements are there to facilitate former customers of the Kippa-Ring office going elsewhere?
- g) What travel time would be involved for the average customer of the Kippa-Ring office getting to the nearest alternative location?
- h) How would someone get from Redcliffe to say offices in Caboolture or Deception Bay?
- i) The Minister Kim Carr was quoted in the *Courier Mail* newspaper of the 9th February, said and I quote, “We’re working on setting up a nearby temporary service centre as soon as possible.” Given that was four months ago, has that been done?
- j) Why is returning to the Kippa-Ring site “not an option”? (D’Ath)
- k) Was that office purpose built for Medicare/Centrelink?
- l) What are your plans then and how long before a replacement office is up and running on the Peninsula?

Answer:

- a) The building sustained fire, smoke and water damage to the extent that the building is unsafe and needs major rectification works to make it safe for occupancy again.

- b) Records are predominantly electronic. There were some files and paperwork on site at the time of the fire. These records suffered some water damage but all were able to be retrieved.
- c) Approximately 92,000 visits per year.
- d) In the immediate aftermath of the fire a temporary presence was set up behind the office at 246 Anzac Avenue, Kippa-Ring. Staff were also located in the front car park providing assistance to the public and directing them to alternate service points. This temporary presence operated until 1 March 2013.

In addition, members of the public have been able to access services through the Deception Bay, Caboolture, Strathpine and Morayfield Service Centres. Medicare services can now be accessed through the Deception Bay Service Centre.

Advertisements have been placed in local newspapers advising of the interim servicing arrangements.

- e) The Department Human Services has the following service centres within the region:

Service Centre	Services Offered	Distance from Kippa-Ring *
Deception Bay corner Maine Terrace and Bay Avenue	Centrelink Medicare	8.9 km
Strathpine 242 Gympie Road	Centrelink Medicare	21.2 km
Caboolture 20-22 George Street	Centrelink	27 km
Morayfield Shop 85 Morayfield Shopping Centre	Medicare	24.1 km

*Information obtained from Google Maps

- f) Bus route 660 goes from Kippa-Ring to Deception Bay, a 20 minute bus journey. Bus route 660 also goes to Morayfield (40 Minutes) and Caboolture (65 Minutes).
- g) Kippa-Ring to Deception Bay is a 13 minute car trip.
Kippa-Ring to Strathpine is a 22 minute car trip.
Kippa-Ring to Caboolture is a 30 minute car trip.
Kippa-Ring to Morayfield is a 29 minute car trip.
- h) Members of the public can travel by bus or car to Deception Bay and Caboolture Service Centres.
- i) The interim arrangements are detailed in response (d).
- j) The Department has not made this statement. Options for long term service delivery on the Redcliffe Peninsula are being considered. At present it is not possible to outline the options being considered as the Department is talking with potential providers.
- k) The office at 246 Anzac Avenue was purpose built and fitted out for Centrelink operations in June 2000. It was fitted out to provide co-located Medicare services on 9 September 2012.
- l) It is expected that a replacement service centre will be operational by mid to late September 2013.