

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Social Services Portfolio
2014-15 Budget Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: SSAT - Social Security Appeals Tribunal

Question No: 73

Topic: SSAT Funding

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Cameron asked:

Are there any observed incidents where individuals, participating in work or work for the dole activities, will have no income for six months? How did you assess how many appeals may go to SSAT arising from this from the income support changes? How was the assessment made that there needs to be an increase in SSAT funding? On what basis was that decision made and what were the fundamental underpinnings to provide more money? How many more appeals are you expecting and how long will those appeals take to process? What is seen as the legislative restrictions or the discretion that SSAT might have in dealing with issues where a young worker is worried about the health and safety aspects of the proposed project?

Answers:

Question - "Are there any observed incidents where individuals, participating in work or work for the dole activities, will have no income for six months?"

Answer - Individuals participating in work will be entitled to whatever income they earn. Individuals participating in work for the dole activities will be entitled to receive the appropriate fortnightly rate of Newstart or Youth Allowance (other) during the six months they are participating in the Work for the Dole phase, subject to satisfactory compliance with requirements.

Question - "How did you assess how many appeals may go to SSAT arising from this from the income support changes?"

Answer - An estimate of the number of reviews was based on the historical rate of reviews made to the SSAT for the relevant payments.

Question - "How was the assessment made that there needs to be an increase in SSAT funding?"

Answer - In addition to its base funding, funding is allocated to the SSAT for the estimated number of reviews it expects to receive.

Question - "On what basis was that decision made and what were the fundamental underpinnings to provide more money?"

Answer - In addition to its base funding, funding is allocated to the SSAT for the estimated number of reviews it expects to receive.

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Question - “How many more appeals are you expecting and how long will those appeals take to process?”

Answer - 382 reviews are expected in 2014-15. The SSAT Annual Report provides information on timeliness.

Question - “What is seen as the legislative restrictions or the discretion that SSAT might have in dealing with issues where a young worker is worried about the health and safety aspects of the proposed project?”

Answer - The SSAT has the same discretion based on the legislation as the original decision maker, and is able to make its own decision based on the merits of the individual case and the information before it.