

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

Outcome Number: 4

Question No: 166

Topic: Commonwealth Rent Assistance

Hansard Page: Written

Senator McLucas asked:

At estimates on 5/6/14, Mr Palmer said "We would have worked out the costing element in doing the forward estimates" (refer page 27 of transcript). Please provide the details of the cost implications that Mr Palmer agreed to take on notice - with specific regard to the budget measure of pausing the indexation of payment rates and thresholds.

Answer:

Rent Assistance rates and thresholds are excluded from the budget measure pausing the indexation of payment rates and thresholds.

Payments including supplements such as Rent Assistance will not be reduced unless customers' circumstances change, such as their income or assets increase in value. Some customers will not receive increases to their primary payment that would otherwise have occurred.

While the change to parameters informed the costing of the primary payments, the effect of parameter changes on individual components, including Rent Assistance, was not disaggregated in this process.