

Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES – 21 OCTOBER 2010 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Income Management – suite of letters

Question reference number: HS 14

Senator: Siewert

Type of question: Hansard CA pages 130-131

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 10 December 2010

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Senator SIEWERT - So, people who are not covered now under the legislation for age pension got a letter saying, 'You will be income managed under the Long-term Welfare Payment Recipient Initiative from 11 October.' They were no longer covered by the legislation and yet they got that letter?

Ms Cartwright - I will have to take that one on notice and check the letter. That letter does not appear to be the one that would go to an age pensioner under the Northern Territory emergency response to invite them to have a conversation about options for them to exit off income management, if that was their choice.

Senator SIEWERT - I want to be really clear about this. You are now saying this letter is not the letter that went to age pensioners?

Ms Cartwright - It may not be. I want to clarify that.

Senator SIEWERT - Can you bring that back to me tomorrow, not in three months time? I am not trying to be rude, but on notice usually means three months down the track.

Mr Tidswell - We will be there tomorrow and so we can make sure that we get on top of this. The challenge for us is that we have multiple letters generated for various events. We would need to make sure of the triggers for each letter and each customer group so that we are absolutely accurate.

Senator SIEWERT - That is why I asked if this was the letter that went to age pensioners.

CHAIR - Maybe tomorrow we could get a full suite of the letters, options and also the attachment to which Senator Siewert refers that Centrelink sent out for this change.

Senator SIEWERT - Yes.

Answer:

The answer to this question was provided at the Cross Portfolio Indigenous Hearing on Friday 22 October 2010 (Hansard pages CA15-16).

The two letters referred to were tabled on 22 October 2010 by Senator Siewert.

No, these letters were not sent to age pensioners.