

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES – 20 OCTOBER 2016 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Overpayment and Underpayments

Question reference number: 47 (HS 48)

Senator: Siewert

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 2 December 2016

Number of pages: 1

Question:

- a) Following up QoN HS 39 from Additional Estimates in February, of the overpayments listed in the table broken down by payment type, how much of this was the Department's error?
- b) Why don't you have a grace period, where the error is your fault?

Answer:

The department does not currently capture the portion of overpayments raised as a result of system or administrative error.

There is no grace period under the legislation for the recovery of debts. However, if a person cannot pay in full, the department can negotiate individually tailored repayment arrangements that are sensitive to the person's financial situation without placing them in undue hardship.