

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

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

Department of Human Services

Topic: Disability Support Pension - new claims processing.

Question reference number: 54 (HS 62)

Senator: Siewert

Type of question: Written

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

Number of pages: 1

Question:

What was the average time taken to complete new claims for the Disability Support Pension in the last financial year?

Answer:

The Department works to ensure that all claims are processed as quickly as possible. To do this, the Department needs all required medical and other information to make a decision and the Department has processes in place to identify, at the initial claim stage, where further supporting medical evidence is required.

For claims finalised after a Job Capacity Assessment, once the claimant had submitted all required evidence, claims typically took 35 days to finalise in 2015–16

In 2015–16, the average time taken to complete Disability Support Pension (DSP) new claims was approximately 52 days, from the date of the first submission of a claim. The majority of new claims were missing required information to enable an assessment to be made and needed further information to be provided.

While awaiting the DSP claim outcome, an individual may claim a provisional payment, such as Newstart Allowance, and will be exempt from Mutual Obligations.

The Department fast-tracks DSP claims where claimants are likely to be manifestly eligible for DSP.