

**SENATE COMMUNITY AFFAIRS LEGISLATION COMMITTEE
SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES – 20 OCTOBER 2016
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

No.	Broad topic	Senator	Question
1	Australian Hearing – Scoping Study	Pratt	<p>Senator PRATT: Has the minister, chair or managing director met with the scoping study team?</p> <p>Mr Hutson: The scoping study was a process that was concluded over a year ago and that was before the consortium proposal was under consideration. As to whether the Minister for Finance has met with members of the team, I think that would be a question for the Department of Finance.</p> <p>Senator PRATT: What about the minister who is responsible for Australian Hearing?</p> <p>Ms Campbell: I think we would have to take that on notice. [p105]</p>
2	Disability Support Pension – medical reviews - ages	Pratt	<p>Senator PRATT: What is the range of ages among those recipients who are being reassessed?</p> <p>Ms Campbell: I think it is unlikely we are going to have that here tonight, because we would have to go back to do a profile of those who have been reviewed. I think it is pretty unlikely we will have that, but we will try to get you the numbers on how many— [p109]</p>
3	Disability Support Pension – medical reviews – loss of DSP	Siewert	<p>Senator SIEWERT: Minister, this is all supposed to be about people staying on DSP, and what you are trying to do is to get them to work. How do we know if this is being effective?</p> <p>Senator Ryan: I think you will understand it is well outside my portfolio of expertise, so I will take it on notice. [p111]</p>
4	Disability Support Pension – medical reviews – transfers to Newstart	Siewert	<p>a) Senator SIEWERT: So can you tell me how many have gone off Newstart?</p> <p>Ms Campbell: I do not think we have that. We will just get someone to see whether we can find the figures about how many people who have gone off DSP and are totally not on payment. Is that what you are looking for?</p> <p>Senator SIEWERT: Just to be clear—I was asking about numbers this morning—there is the cohort that has gone onto Newstart, Youth Allowance et cetera, and there is the cohort that were dropped straight off any form of income support. What I want to know is of that group that went onto Newstart, which overall is around 2,400 or something, how many have then come off Newstart.</p> <p>Ms Campbell: I think that is easier. We can tell you who is no longer on Newstart. [p111]</p> <p>b) Senator SIEWERT: Can you tell me how many of those have been suspended?</p> <p>Ms Campbell: Sorry, I am a bit confused. Suspended as in what?</p> <p>Senator SIEWERT: As in they are off Newstart because they have not met their mutual obligation requirements. I am starting to get emails from people that have gone from DSP to Newstart and are not able or well enough to be able to meet their jobactive requirements.</p> <p>Ms Campbell: So what you are looking for is numbers coming off DSP, on Newstart and subsequently suspended?</p> <p>Senator SIEWERT: Do they turn up as off Newstart when they are suspended or breached? Do they show up in the system?</p>

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			<p>Senator Ryan: You want to know the number of people that moved from DSP to Newstart and then, of that component, how many are breached or suspended.</p> <p>Senator SIEWERT: And how many are off.</p> <p>Ms Campbell: How many are off altogether and, we will assume, have income of some description?</p> <p>Senator SIEWERT: Yes. I am a bit concerned about the suspended ones if they are marked as just off for the time being, but they are marked as breached or whatever?</p> <p>Ms Campbell: I think we should be able to tell whether they are suspended or they are off payment, but we cannot do that tonight; we would have to take that on notice. [pp111-112]</p>
5	Age Pension – claims processing	Watt	<p>a) Senator WATT: Do you measure how many are taking longer than, say, double that 100 days?</p> <p>Ms Campbell: We do have some measurements, but it is worth remembering that the time taken for the applicant to come back to us is included in that figure. We ask for data and if the applicant takes a very long time to return that, then I am not sure that that is the best or accurate measure of the department's action.</p> <p>Senator WATT: But you do have those figures?</p> <p>Ms Campbell: We have some figures in that regard. I do not know that we have them with us.</p> <p>Mr Egan: No, I do not think we have.</p> <p>Ms Campbell: We can take that on notice. We will annotate the answer to show that this does include when the applicant is returning information to us. [p114]</p> <p>b) Senator WATT: Do you have any data as to the longest period of time that someone has waited and who has the longest existing claim?</p> <p>Mr Egan: Some of the claims are quite lengthy. Usually those claims are the ones that are subject to reviews and appeals. We have that information, but I do not think we have it with us. [p114]</p> <p>c) Senator WATT: For those questions you have taken on notice, it would be helpful if the answer could identify the number of claims or percentage of claims that have been outstanding for six months and more than 12 months. I think they would be decent periods to pick.</p> <p>Mr Egan: We are happy to look at that. [p114]</p> <p>d) Senator WATT: Feel free to take this on notice. A couple of times you have made the point that this is a particularly busy time of year. I think that is what you said.</p> <p>Ms Campbell: Yes.</p> <p>Senator WATT: If you have the figures there that would be great. What has been the number of applications outstanding—I am comparing it to the figure of 20,361—for each of the last five years? Do you have the comparable figures with you?</p> <p>Mr Egan: I do not think we have it for the last five years.</p> <p>Senator WATT: For the last three years?</p> <p>Mr Egan: The equivalent points last financial year—we had 16,553 claims on hand.</p> <p>Senator WATT: On notice, please provide that information for the last five years to this point in time. [p115]</p>

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6	Claim processing	Watt	<p>Senator WATT: It sounds like you have some pretty helpful data there about waiting times for processing claims and responses. It may be useful if we could get you to table that.</p> <p>Ms Campbell: We will take that on notice.</p> <p>Senator WATT: Is there any reason you would not?</p> <p>Ms Campbell: We will take it on notice. [p116]</p>
7	Staffing - redeployment	Watt	<p>Senator WATT: Could you take on notice how many staff have been redeployed from age pension processing to other parts of the department, say, over the last 12 months?</p> <p>Ms Campbell: We could take it on notice, but, as Mr Egan said, this is something we do as business as usual. Every week, we sit and go through these key performance indicators; we determine whether or not we need to move staff from one space to the other. Sometimes they may move for a short period of time. So we will see what we can capture. [p117]</p>
8	Age Pension - hardship	Watt	<p>a) Ms Campbell: We have let customers know that, if they are facing financial hardship, they should advise us, and we seek to accelerate those claims for customers who are experiencing financial hardship.</p> <p>Senator WATT: How many requests of that nature, to accelerate, do you have on the books at the moment?</p> <p>Mr Egan: We would have to take that on notice. [p117]</p> <p>b) Senator WATT: So you have taken on notice my request for data about the number of requests to accelerate payments?</p> <p>Ms Campbell: Yes.</p> <p>Senator WATT: And if we could get that data for each of the last five years at this point, or each of the last three years.</p> <p>Ms Campbell: Our systems are not that responsive at the moment. For example, that data requires a manual collection. We will see what we can get this financial year; I think it is unlikely we will be able to get previous financial years.</p> <p>Senator WATT: Maybe even if you could just do it for one previous financial year, if you can see how you are going?</p> <p>Ms Campbell: We will have a look at what we have got, but we do rely quite a lot at the moment on ad hoc add-on systems to do this type of tracking. [p117]</p>
9	Age Pension - hardship	Smith	<p>Senator SMITH: Have we seen an increase in the number of hardship requests from pensioners?</p> <p>Ms Campbell: I do not think we have that information with us. I think we have taken it on notice. [p121]</p>
10	Changes to Family Payments	Siewert	<p>Senator SIEWERT: I have a very short question and then I suspect a couple of longer questions. Family tax benefit changes that were made in the omnibus bill—you know the ones I mean?</p> <p>Ms Campbell: Yes.</p> <p>Senator SIEWERT: Have letters gone out to people yet notifying them of the change?</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Senator SIEWERT: Is it planned for a letter to go out? With all due respect, I do not think a lot of parents</p>

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			<p>receiving FTB will be checking out your website all the time.</p> <p>Ms Campbell: Families are one of the more passionate users of social media.</p> <p>Mr Thiveos: They are. There will be a letter. Can I go through the rest, if that is okay?</p> <p>Senator SIEWERT: Can you take it on notice? I am very conscious of the time. If you have got a statement there that shows the approach that you are taking, it would be fantastic if you could table it.</p> <p>Mr Thiveos: Okay.</p> <p>Ms Campbell: We will be mailing it out.</p> <p>Senator SIEWERT: Thank you. [pp121-122]</p>
11	Telephony – length of calls	Pratt	<p>Senator PRATT: Can you take on notice the length of overall calls—how many calls are complete within 10 minutes, how many within 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80 and 90-plus for each of the lines. I know I have spent over an hour on the line at various times. I am not so interested in the waiting time; it is the length of time that it takes to actually resolve an issue, if that is possible.</p> <p>Ms Campbell: That is quite difficult because there is wait time to talk to us but then we are not sure what the customer is going to ask, so we have average—</p> <p>Senator PRATT: You must know how long they have been on the line for. That is what I am interested in.</p> <p>Ms Campbell: I am not sure that is an accurate reflection. If we have a customer who has a number of issues, we want to deal with that up front. We are not going to try and get them off the line to improve our stats.</p> <p>Senator PRATT: No, I do not mean off the line. You answer the call then you say, 'I am going to put you through to the next person.' You might be waiting again for another 20 minutes before you get an answer. It is the overall length of the call that I am interested in.</p> <p>Ms Campbell: We will see what we can find. In particular, average handling time is another indicator about how long it takes to process that—but it also depends on what the customer wants. [p127]</p>
12	Integrity Measures – payment changes	Pratt	<p>Senator PRATT: I am just interested in, if you can take it on notice, how many people had their payments changed as a result of those measures since they were first announced over time.</p> <p>Ms Golightly: We probably actually have that answer here. I know that in that first financial year of the operation of the measure we recovered around \$400 million in total in savings against a target of \$330-odd million.</p> <p>Senator PRATT: Do we have how many people? [p129]</p>
13	Credit/Transaction Cards	Gallacher	<p>a) What types of credit and transaction cards (including Cabcharge Fastcard and eTickets) does your department issue?</p> <p>b) What was the total expenditure for each type of card over the last 3 financial years?</p> <p>c) Can you break down the expenditure into categories?</p> <p>d) What is the highest and lowest credit limit for each type of card?</p> <p>e) How many times in the last 5 years has the credit limit been reviewed?</p>

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			f) What are Credit Cards used for? g) What are the Governance/probity rules for employees to follow? h) Are cash advances allowed? i) Can you list the total amount of cash advances from credit and other transaction cards over the last 3 years? ii) Can you provide details on the 10 largest cash advances in your department and provide particulars such as how much was accessed? iii) Who approves cash advances in your department in the event of paying suppliers i) Who reviews transactions in regards to all cards? j) Who provides assurance to the Minister in respect to probity governance and fraud control?
14	Ministerial Functions	Bilyk	In relation to any functions or official receptions hosted by Ministers or Assistant Ministers in the portfolio since 1 January 2016, can the following please be provided: a) list of functions; b) list of attendees including departmental officials and members of the Minister's family or personal staff; c) function venue; d) itemised list of costs; e) details of any food served; f) details of any wines or champagnes served including brand and vintage; and g) details of any entertainment provided.
15	Executive Office Upgrades	Bilyk	Have the furniture, fixtures or fittings of the Secretary's office, or the offices of any Deputy Secretaries, been upgraded since 1 January 2016? If so, can an itemised list of costs please be provided?
16	Facilities Upgrades	Bilyk	a) Have the facilities of any of the Department's premises been upgraded recently, for example, staff room refurbishments, kitchen refurbishments, bathroom refurbishments, the purchase of any new fridges, coffee machines, or other kitchen equipment? b) If so, can a detailed description of the relevant facilities upgrade please be provided together with an itemised list of costs? Can any photographs of the upgraded facilities please be provided?
17	Vacancies	Bilyk	Please provide a list of all statutory, board and legislated office vacancies and other significant appointments vacancies within the portfolio, including length of time vacant and current acting arrangements.
18	Media Monitoring	Bilyk	a) How much has the Department spent on media monitoring since 1 January 2016? b) Can a list of all Contract Notice IDs for the Austender website in relation to media monitoring contracts please be provided?

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19	Advertising and Information Campaigns	Bilyk	a) How much has the Department spent on advertising and information campaigns since 1 January 2016? b) Can a list of all Contract Notice IDs for the Austender website in relation to advertising and information campaign contracts please be provided?
20	Program Detail	Watt	Please provide an itemised table detailing the following information: a) Every program administered by the department and all portfolio agencies within it b) The total funding allocated for each in 2016-17, 2015-16 and 2014-15; c) The number of organisations funded under the program in each in those years, the name of each organisation funded and the dollar value of that funding d) The number of individuals projected to be serviced or services to be delivered through each in 2016-17, 2015-16 and 2014-15; e) The total funding actually expended on each in 2015-16 and 2014-15; f) The number of individuals actually serviced or services actually delivered through each in 2015-16 and 2014-15; g) The aggregate staff budget for each in 2016-17, 2015-16 and 2014-15 broken down by i) permanent APS staff and ii) contractors. h) The number of permanent APS staff responsible for delivering each in 2016-17; 2015-16 and 2014-15, the classification of these staff and their geographic location; i) The dollar value of external advice contracted to support each in 2016-17, as well as the number of contractors engaged, the APS-equivalent classification these contractors were engaged at and their geographic location.
21	Evaluation and Program Analysis	Watt	For every program administered by the department and all portfolio agencies within it please provide: a) Copies of any evaluation reports or program analysis prepared by external advisers in the last five years; b) Copies of any evaluation reports or program analysis prepared within the department in the last five years.
22	Australian Hearing – Services Provided	Watt	How many of the following community service obligation funded (CSO) services has Australian Hearing Services (AHS) provided in: a) The year to date? b) 2015/16 budget year? c) 2014/15 budget year? d) 2013/14 budget year?
23	Australian Hearing – Reports to	Watt	Has AHS made any representations to the Minister for Finance, the Minister for Human Services, or the

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	Government Regarding Future Ownership		Department of Human Services with regards to its future ownership? a) If yes, when? b) What was the nature of that advice?
24	Australian Hearing – Complaints Received	Watt	How many complaints did AHS receive from clients in the following periods: a) The year to date? b) 2015/16 budget year? c) 2014/15 budget year? d) 2013/14 budget year?
25	Australian Hearing – Shopfront and Service Locations	Watt	How many of AHS locations are in: a) NSW or ACT? b) Victoria? c) Queensland? d) Tasmania? e) Northern Territory? f) Western Australia? g) South Australia?
26	Australian Hearing – Capacity to Cater to Clients	Watt	Does AHS have any reason to believe that it is not able to adequately cater to its clients?
27	Employee Data – FTE by State	Watt	a) What is the total number of FTE Staff employed by the Department of Human Services? b) How many in: i) NSW? ii) Victoria? iii) Queensland? iv) Tasmania? v) Northern Territory? vi) Western Australia? vii) South Australia?
28	Employee Data – Categories	Watt	What is the total number of DHS employees in each of the following categories and periods; a) Full Time employees as of; i) 1/7/15?

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii) 1/7/16? b) Part Time employees as of; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) 1/7/15? ii) 1/7/16? c) Casual Employees as of; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) 1/7/15? ii) 1/7/16?
29	Employee Data – Allocations	Watt	<p>How many staff working hours were allocated for each month of the 2015/16 and 2014/16 budget years in the following areas;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) All Centrelink programs? b) Aged Pension claim processing? c) Medicare claim processing? d) Disability support claims processing and review?
30	Key Performance Indicators – Centrelink Claims Processing	Watt	<p>Can you provide the Key performance indicators and year to date performance for national and service zone processing service outcomes by quarter for the last two financial years, for the following payment types;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) ABSTUDY (ABY) - New Claim? b) ABSTUDY Schooling A (ABT) - New Claim? c) Age Pension - New Claim? d) AIC Student (EIS) - New Claim? e) Austudy - Abridged Claim? f) Austudy - New Claim? g) Bereavement Allowance - New Claim? h) Carer Allowance - New Claim? i) Carer Payment - New Claim? j) Child Care Benefit (Approved Care) - Excl Lump Sum Claims? k) Child Care Benefit (Approved Care) - Lump Sum Claims? l) Child Care Benefit (Registered Carer)? m) Dad and Partner Payment? n) Disability Support Pension - New Claim?

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o) Double Orphan Pension? p) Family Tax Benefit? q) Low Income Card - New Claim? r) Mobility Allowance - New Claim? s) Newstart Allowance - Abridged Claim? t) Newstart Allowance - New Claim? u) Paid Parental Leave? v) Parenting Payment Partnered - New Claim? w) Parenting Payment Single - New Claim? x) Pensioner Education Supplement - New Claim? y) Pensioner Education Supplement (ABSTUDY) - New Claim? z) Seniors Health Care Card - New Claim? aa) Sickness Allowance - New Claim? bb) Special Benefit - New Claim? cc) Stillborn Baby Payment? dd) Widow Allowance - New Claim? ee) Youth Allowance (other) - Abridged Claim? ff) Youth Allowance (other) - New Claim? gg) Youth Allowance (student) - Abridged Claim? hh) Youth Allowance (student) - New Claim?
31	Centrelink Service Centres	Watt	Can you provide the categorisation of work currently undertaken by Service Centres?
32	Centrelink Service Centres – Performance Information – Face to Face	Watt	What percentage of customers entering a Service Centre required face to face service by quarter in the last two financial years?
33	Centrelink Service Centres – Performance Information – Customer	Watt	<p>For each Centrelink Service Center by quarter for the last 2 financial years;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) What was the customer foot traffic rate? b) Customer foot traffic rates as a percentage by type of inquiry? c) Average customer wait time and time spent by staff with clients?

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34	Telephony – Performance Information and KPIs	Watt	What are the KPIs and actual performance for; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) average call handling times? b) abandoned calls? c) IVR drop outs and calls not answered?
35	Centrelink Telephony – Call Handling and Total Call Time	Pratt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) How many calls have been made to Centrelink telephony services in the year to date? b) How many of these calls had total call handling times; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) under 15 minutes? ii) between 15 and 20 minutes? iii) between 20 and 25 minutes? iv) between 25 and 30 minutes? v) between 30 and 35 minutes? vi) between 35 and 40 minutes? vii) exceeding 40 minutes?
36	Disability Support Pension – Review Process and Outcomes	Watt	With regards to Disability Support Pension (DSP) reassessment; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) How many DSP recipients were reassessed in; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) 2014/15? ii) 2015/16? iii) The year to date? b) How many clients found ineligible for DSP and placed on Newstart Allowance have since ceased receiving either benefit because; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) They found employment? ii) They are deceased? iii) They became eligible for the Aged Pension? iv) For unknown or other reasons? c) What was the average cost to DHS of DSP review and reassessment in the last financial year?
37	Age Pension – Processing and Financial Hardship Applications	Watt	For each of the below periods what was the average processing time for age pension claims and what was the proportion of applicants (as a percentage) who applied for financial hardship assistance while waiting for assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) 2012/13? b) 2013/14? c) 2014/15? d) The year to date?

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38	Age Pension – New Claims	Watt	<p>In each month of the following periods what was the number of new Aged Care Pension applications;</p> <p>a) 2015/16 budget year?</p> <p>b) 2016/17 budget year to date?</p>
39	Staffing – levels by category	McAllister	<p>Please provide a breakdown of staffing levels as at 30 June 2016, nationally and for each state and territory, by the following categories:</p> <p>a) full time equivalent (FTE);</p> <p>b) head count;</p> <p>c) gender;</p> <p>d) ongoing;</p> <p>e) non-ongoing; and</p> <p>f) classification level.</p>
40	Staffing – engagements	McAllister	<p>How many engagements occurred in the 2015-16 financial year, by:</p> <p>a) classification;</p> <p>b) state or territory;</p> <p>c) ongoing staff; and</p> <p>d) non-ongoing staff.</p>
41	Staffing – separation	McAllister	<p>How many separations occurred in the 2015-16 financial year, by:</p> <p>a) classification;</p> <p>b) state or territory;</p> <p>c) ongoing staff;</p> <p>d) non-ongoing staff; and</p> <p>e) reason for separation.</p>
42	Contractors/Consultants – expenditure	McAllister	<p>What was the total expenditure on contractors and consultants in the 2015-16 financial year?</p>
43	Contractors/Consultants – projects	McAllister	<p>For each contract or consultancy in the 2015-16 financial year, please outline:</p> <p>a) the project or engagement;</p> <p>b) the value of the contract;</p> <p>c) the name of each firm or contractor engaged; and</p> <p>d) the purpose of the contract.</p>

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44	Contractors/Consultants – details	McAllister	For each contract or consultancy in the 2015-16 financial year, please outline: a) the names of each firm or contractor engaged; and b) total payments made to each contractor or consultant.
45	Staffing – labour hire	McAllister	For the 2015-16 financial year, please outline: a) how many staff were employed through labour hire arrangements; b) total expenditure on labour hire staff; c) the contractors or labour hire firms engaged to supply these staff; d) total payments to each of the organisations that provided staff through either a labour hire arrangement or other contractual arrangement; and e) the nature of the work performed by labour hire staff.
46	Centrelink – payment administration costs	Siewert	What is the unit cost of administering each Centrelink payment?
47	Overpayments by error	Siewert	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?
48	Family Tax Benefit distribution	Siewert	For those who receive FTB, please provide the distribution of ages and number of children (singles with children, couples with children and totals), as follows: a) No with 1, 2, and 3 or more children <18 years overall (including those sharing care) b) No with 1, 2, and 3 or more children aged 0-12 years c) No with 1, 2, and 3 or more children aged 13-15 years d) No with 1, 2, and 3 or more children aged 16-17 years
49	Disability Support Pension – overseas	Siewert	The number of Disability Support Pensioners who had their pension paid at a proportional rate because they were overseas for more than 26 weeks in: a) 2013-14 b) 2014-15 c) 2015-16
50	Consumer Leases Cap	Siewert	a) Is the Department going to place a cap on costs that can be charged on consumer leases? b) Is the Department going to introduce a protected earnings limit to restrict lease payments to no more than 10% of income?
51	Centrepay Policy	Siewert	a) Notwithstanding the recent appeal against the Full Court finding in the DHS v ACBF matter, does the Government have any plans to strengthen the authority of the Department to enable policy decisions to

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			be made by the Department restricting trader access to Centrepay? b) Should Centrepay have a legislative framework to support it?
52	Complaints	Siewert	How many complaints were received by DHS in 2015-16?
53	Reviews	Siewert	How many and what percentage of reviews by Authorised Reviews Officer were completed within the Departments own timeframes in the last financial year?
54	Disability Support Pension – new claims processing	Siewert	What was the average time taken to complete new claims for the Disability Support Pension in the last financial year?
55	Taskforce Integrity	Siewert	a) Can the Department table a copy of the Taskforce Integrity Pilot for Rockdale that was the subject of media reports in November 2015? b) What other locations in New South Wales have been targeted as part of the Integrity Taskforce?
56	Ombudsman Recommendations	Siewert	Why hasn't the Department implemented all the recommendations of the Ombudsman's review of Centrelink?