

**Senate Standing Committee on Economics**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Treasury Portfolio**

Additional Estimates

26 February 2014

**Question: AET 1862-1866**

**Topic: Public Debt Interest - ABS**

**Written: 7 March 2014**

**Senator BUSHBY asked:**

According to MYEFO the net interest payments for debt held by the General Government Sector for the current financial year total \$8.8 billion, while the total interest cost is \$12.4 billion. Both figures rise to be \$12.8 billion and \$16.7 billion respectively in the final out-year.

1862. What would the Government be able to do with the equivalent amount of money in this portfolio if these billions were spent on programs and outcomes instead of on debt ?
1863. Does your agency ever observe connection between performance management of staff and claims of stress leave or other forms of sick leave?
1864. What is the number of staff on stress leave or psychological injury claims at any one time in your agency? How many harassment claims are there at any one time? How many of these cases are connected to performance cases? Have you observed any instances of stress claims and harassment claims being a tactic used by staff which the agency tries to performance-manage?
1865. Looking at the length of time claimed for sick leave, are you seeing longer absences for people with physical injuries or people claiming to have psychological injuries? What's the degree of difference?
1866. How much would be saved from your workforce insurance costs if you did not have the current levels of stress-related claims and other psychological injury claims?

**Answer:**

1862. Please refer to the Treasury response to AET 1705.
1863. Yes.
1864. (a) 12 ( based on claims as at 25/3/14.)  
(b) 3 (based on claims as at 25/3/14).  
(c) 3.  
(d) Yes.
1865. (a) Psychological injuries.  
(b) 4 times greater in terms of time off than physical injuries.
1866. \$4M (based on likely future costs of 12 claims in Q3 (a)).