

**SENATE EMPLOYMENT, WORKPLACE RELATIONS AND EDUCATION  
LEGISLATION COMMITTEE**

**2006-2007 SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET SENATE ESTIMATES HEARING  
2<sup>ND</sup> NOVEMBER 2006  
EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Outcome 1: Efficient and effective labour market assistance**

**Output Group 1.1: Working age payments**

**Output 1.1.1: Working age payments and compliance**

**Question Number: W950-07**

**Question:**

Senator Wong asked in writing: Utilities Allowance. Why is less forecast for the coming financial year than was spent last year?

**Answer:**

Utilities Allowance (UA) is paid to recipients of Mature Age Allowance (MAA), Partner Allowance (PA) and Widow Allowance (WA) that are aged under age pension age. Less expenditure on UA is forecast for the 2006-07 financial year as MAA and PA are payments that are closed to new claimants, so the numbers are decreasing.

WA is open to new claimants who are born on or before 1 July 1955 and meet the remaining qualification criterion. The number of new recipients is growing very slowly.