

**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 2009-10**

Outcome 4

DEEWR Question No. EW794_10

Senator Scullion provided in writing.

Question

Non Payment Periods

- (a) How many people have had any Centrelink payments stopped as a result of breach action?
- (b) For what act or omission was the breach for?

Answer

(a) For the 2008/09 financial year, 18 638 job seekers incurred an eight week non-payment penalty.

(b) An eight week non-payment period penalty was imposed by Centrelink in instances where a job seeker had a serious failure, without a reasonable excuse or had three participation failures within a 12 month period. Serious failures included leaving a job voluntarily, dismissal from employment due to misconduct or failing to start a job as planned. Participation failures included failure to attend Centrelink or employment service provider appointments, failure to attend job interviews or failure to participate in an employment related activity or program e.g. Work for the Dole.

Job Services Australia is supported by a more effective job seeker compliance framework. The new framework is designed to provide a stronger safety net for vulnerable job seekers while reinforcing the message that job seekers who are capable of seeking work and participating in activities have a responsibility to do so in return for income support.