

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Department of Human Services

Additional Estimates February 2005

Question: HS49

Outcome 1, Output 1.1 Effective delivery of Australian Government services to eligible customers

Topic: Seniors Concession Allowance

Written Question on Notice: Written

Senator Evans asked on 15 February 2005:

- (1) What was the date of the first payment of the seniors' concession allowance?
- (2) How many payments have now been made?
- (3) What has been the total amount paid?
- (4) What was the average payment made?
- (5) Were eligible recipients of the payment given the option of declining payment? Why?

Answer:

- (1) 21 December 2004.
- (2) As at 24 February 2005, 286,439 payments of Seniors Concession Allowance had been made by Centrelink.
- (3) As at 24 February 2005, \$28,643,900 has been paid by Centrelink.
- (4) \$100.00
- (5) Yes, eligible recipients were advised in writing that they had the option not to receive the payment.

The Seniors Concession Allowance (SCA) is a supplementary payment made automatically to holders of the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card (CSHC), without the requirement to lodge a claim. Previous experience with automatically issued payments indicates that customers prefer to have the option of accepting these payments or not. The legislation accommodates that option.