

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Finance and Administration Portfolio**

**Department of Human Services and agencies**

Additional Budget Estimates 2005-2006, 14 February 2006

**Question: HS27**

**Outcome 1, Output 2**

**Topic: Child Support Agency – Briefs to the DPP**

**Hansard Page/Written Question on Notice: Written**

**SENATOR LUDWIG** asked on 14/2/2006:

1. How many briefs have you forwarded to the DPP for 2001-2002, 2002-2003, 2003-2004, 2004-2005?
  - (a) How many briefs were returned without action and how many were actioned?
2. For each year, what was the average time (as well as indicating the minimum and maximum time in each case) in which it took the DPP to:
  - (a) Bring charges against the accused party;
  - (b) Formally bring the matter to a conclusion through either a verdict of guilty or not guilty, the entrance of a nolle prosequi or dropping the charges;
  - (c) Return the brief for no further action.
3. Did the Department or agency forward any formal complaints to the DPP regarding the handling of the brief?
  - (a) If so, give the details.
4. Did the Department or agency forward any informal complaints to the DPP regarding the handling of the brief?
  - (a) If so, give the details.

**Answer:**

1. CSA forwarded 1 brief in 2001-02 and 1 brief in 2004-05. In addition, the ATO provided a Fraud prevention and control service to CSA in the above years which included referral of appropriate cases to DPP. ATO has advised that information about numbers and outcomes of referrals that relate to CSA actions is not readily available. CSA would need to manually examine all ATO files to identify those relating to CSA and to manually extract the information. This is expected to take a minimum of 65 hours.
2. In 2001-02, the complaint and summons was filed approximately 6 months after referral and the first hearing was one month later. The matter was concluded 10 months after the first hearing. In 2004-05, the matter was concluded within approximately 5 weeks.
3. No.
4. In 2001-02, informal verbal requests were made to expedite the matter.

This answer required 6 hours at a cost of \$240 to prepare.