

**Estimates 2005-06 — Additional Estimates, February 2006****Questions on Notice Index—Department of Human Services and agencies**

<b>QON No.</b>	<b>Department / agency</b>	<b>Senator</b>	<b>Hansard reference</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Comments</b>
HS1	DHS	Evans	F&PA 98 14/02/06	<p>Senator CHRIS EVANS—Currently, child support is treated differently to the tax family benefit equation, isn't it? It is separately calculated—is that right?</p> <p>Mr Leeper—There are some in the room more expert than me, but my understanding at a general level is that child support liabilities are generally driven by taxable income, as family tax benefit is. The level of family tax benefit received can in part be impacted by the level of child support received under something called the maintenance income test.</p> <p>Senator CHRIS EVANS—Yes. I am referring to the end of the year reconciliation, where the family tax entitlement is now rolled into the tax entitlement so that you either get one bill or one credit. My understanding is that the child support is still separate. Is that right?</p> <p>Mr Leeper—I am not on sure ground here, Senator. It might be safer for us to ask if we could have Centrelink at the table or to hold that question until Centrelink is in the room, if you do not mind.</p>	Received 10/5/06

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
HS2	DHS	Wong	F&PA 102 14/02/06	<p>Senator WONG—I do not believe the issue of cost is relevant to my question, Senator Colbeck, despite your lengthy speech. It might have been relevant if Ms Scott, in response to my questions, had said: ‘We couldn’t answer your questions because it would have been too costly for us to go through that.’ But that is not the defence she has raised. You might throw up a whole range of issues about why Senate estimates should not ask so many questions because that kind of transparency is simply too expensive for the government. But that is not what we are discussing. We are discussing the failure to answer some very specific questions. The department has not indicated that they are too costly. The only thing I can take from what you have indicated is that the minister simply does not want to indicate something that has generally been answered before at estimates committees, and that is the date on which answers were provided to the minister’s office by the department. Obviously the government is taking a different approach to estimates now it has the numbers in the Senate. It is quite happy to throw precedent out the window. These have been answered before. They are not being answered now—and the public, I suppose, Senator Colbeck, can draw their own conclusions as to why that is occurring.</p> <p>CHAIR—Are you finished?</p> <p>Senator WONG—I am, and I am happy to move on.</p> <p>Senator Colbeck—As I said, Senator Wong, if you are not satisfied with the response, which is the one that the minister has signed off on, I am more than happy to take a further question on notice and refer it to the minister. If you would like to place that on the record, that is fine.</p> <p>Senator WONG—I ask you to take it on notice, thank you.</p>	Received 17/05/06
HS3	DHS	Wong	F&PA 110 14/02/06	<p>Senator WONG—In developing this document, were there any estimates done of what proportion of job seekers would fall into each of the two fee categories?</p> <p>Mr Dolan—Yes, we have done that.</p> <p>Senator WONG—Could you take that on notice?</p> <p>Mr Dolan—Sure.</p>	Received 10/5/06

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
HS4	DHA	Moore	F&PA 116 14/02/06	<p>Senator MOORE—I think it would be useful if we could come to some kind of process internally before the next cycle with questions on notice that require this degree of investigation and cost so that there could be some link from the department back to the secretariat to give us some warning about that to see whether we wished to pursue those questions or not so we do not get to this. That would be good.</p> <p>Senator Colbeck—We will take that through as a point to be taken back to the minister and see if we get a response. We will seek a comment from the minister; I think that is the most appropriate response.</p>	Received 12/05/06
HS5	DHS	Moore	F&PA 116 14/02/06	<p>Senator MOORE—I am going to a question on notice straightaway, a very straightforward one that you would be expecting. It is on the filling of the positions and the current establishment. One of the responses which was timely and accurate showed your current establishment, the number of positions you have and your plan to have those positions filled by June of this year. There were considerable areas where you were hoping to recruit between now and then, and I would like the same model between what you have now and June this year to see how many jobs have been filled in the last cycle.</p> <p>Mr Leeper—The answer, Senator, will be: quite a few. There are not many vacancies that we have yet to fill.</p> <p>Senator MOORE—In the answer it is 30. There is a box where you have it and, if I can just have that updated, that would be good.</p> <p>Mr Leeper—Certainly.</p>	Received 10/5/06

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
HS6	Medicare	Carol Brown	F&PA 118 14/02/06	<p>Mr Trabinger—In the system, when a claim is sent through we do a range of checks to ensure that all the data are there. If we are unable to make a match with the information we have been provided then there is the chance that the claim will be rejected and sent back to the doctor's surgery.</p> <p>Senator CAROL BROWN—Do you have any statistics on rejected claims?</p> <p>Mr Trabinger—I do not have precise numbers with me tonight, but certainly we would be able to provide that.</p> <p>Senator CAROL BROWN—Thanks. If you are going to get that information for me, can you also let me know how often a claim is rejected? What sort of data do you collect on rejected claims?</p> <p>Mr Trabinger—We would certainly be able to provide information on the percentage of claims that are rejected. We would have some information on the reasons as to why the claim is rejected, so certainly we would be able to pull that out.</p>	Received 24/4/06
HS7	Medicare	Carol Brown	F&PA 119 14/02/06	<p>Senator CAROL BROWN—With the personal identification criteria, if an applicant for a Medicare smart card needs to supply a birth certificate, can Medicare Australia contact the relevant state or territory registry office and obtain a birth certificate, or does the customer have to pay if they do not have one?</p> <p>Mr Trabinger—My understanding is that the customer has to go and get that information. I would have to check on whether we have been working with the state registrars on behalf of the customer in any cases.</p> <p>Senator CAROL BROWN—So it is not something that is a matter of course.</p> <p>Mr Trabinger—My understanding is that the customer is required to bring in the proof of identity documentation.</p> <p>Senator CAROL BROWN—Have you looked at Medicare Australia perhaps requesting the information from the registry offices?</p> <p>Mr Trabinger—I am not aware whether we have or have not.</p> <p>Ms Argall—We will take that question on notice and make sure that we are giving you the appropriate information.</p>	Received 13/4/06

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
HS8	Centrelink	McLucas	F&PA 121 14/02/06	<p>Senator McLUCAS—I have some questions about the process of applying for the carers allowance. Firstly, what is the frequency of having to reapply for a carer allowance?</p> <p>Mr Dunn—The frequency largely depends on the circumstances of the condition of the child that you might be caring for, but by and large you have to apply infrequently. Once you do apply, unless there is some substantial change in the condition, there is no reason to reapply. That is my understanding.</p> <p>Senator McLUCAS—Can you give me an indication of the severity of the condition? Is there a trigger that says: if this is your condition, you do not have to reapply? What is the trigger for reapplication?</p> <p>Mr Dunn—I do not have that detail with me, but we can find out for you and let you know before the end of the evening.</p> <p>...</p> <p>Senator McLUCAS—It does hinge on that answer. Can you tell me when the trigger is triggered for the reapplication process for carer allowance. I am also interested to know how Centrelink advises a carer allowance recipient that they have to reapply. I suppose it is one and the same question.</p> <p>Mr Dunn—We will find out for you.</p>	Received 11/4/06

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
HS9	Centrelink	McLucas	F&PA 121-122 14/02/06	<p>Senator McLUCAS—The other question I have, with the committee's indulgence, goes to some detail on the number of people with autism and the number of people with Asperger's syndrome who are granted the DSP. Is there someone who could give me some data on that?</p> <p>Ms Hogg—We can get that information for you, but we do not have it here with us tonight.</p> <p>Senator McLUCAS—So you do collect data on the disability of the person on DSP?</p> <p>Ms Hogg—In broad terms, so we will see if we can get it to that level for you.</p> <p>Senator McLUCAS—Can you give me an indication of what broad terms you collect on?</p> <p>Ms Hogg—We usually collect information on whether it is—</p> <p>Mr Whalan—We certainly go to the level of autism. The question is whether we would go beyond that into the subcategories.</p> <p>Senator MOORE—Could you give us the list of categories, or have we asked for that before?</p> <p>Ms Scott—I think there has been a previous question about the categories. I will use my time to find out—</p> <p>Senator MOORE—Can you refer to that one?</p> <p>Ms Scott—All right, I will do the research and see what we can do.</p> <p>Senator MOORE—It is just that that is going to become more important as the process goes on. We would like to see exactly what the categories are—and, if you have already given to us, we will take it again.</p> <p>Senator McLUCAS—That would be terrific, and if you can disaggregate Asperger's and autism that would be great, but I do recognise that you may not collect on Asperger's. Do you have a timed series of that data? Is it reasonable to ask Centrelink to give us some information back over a period of time? I do not want to put the department through a very expensive exercise, but if it is a fairly simple exercise, it would be useful to have that data over the last 10 years.</p> <p>Mr Whalan—Would it be reasonable that we look at what is readily available and, if it is readily available, we provide it, but, if it is not readily available, we provide a year ago and this year—12 months ago and the latest data?</p>	Received 10/5/06

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
HS9 continued	Centrelink	McLucas	F&PA 121-122 14/02/06	<p>Senator McLUCAS—I am interested in hopefully five years, and 10 years would be fantastic. I am actually looking for a bit of a trend over time. So five years would be great, if that is not too difficult for Centrelink to undertake.</p> <p>Mr Whalan—We certainly have to take it on notice and look. My only concern is that I am not sure that we are going to have five or 10 years worth of data, but we will have a look.</p> <p>Senator McLUCAS—The other thing I am interested to know is whether you have data by state. Possibly you will have.</p> <p>Mr Whalan—Once again, I would expect at the moment that we would have data by state, but I am not sure how low a level of differentiation we are going to get in terms of the subcategories. I doubt we are going to have it going back over time. I understand what you are interested in and we will get what we can reasonably get for you.</p> <p>Senator McLUCAS—I accept that. I do not want people spending hours going through application forms, for example. But if that data has been collected, that would be really useful. The final one is the really tricky one. Can you provide it to me in age cohorts?</p> <p>Mr Whalan—Once again, I will take that on notice and I give the same response. I think we are getting into some large degrees of difficulty, but we will look and provide what we can readily and reasonably provide.</p> <p>Senator McLUCAS—I am always hesitant to ask for it from age of receipt to 20, for example, if you collect it in another way. But I am interested in knowing particularly the number of young people who are recipients of DSP who are autistic or have Asperger's syndrome. If I ask for data up to the age of 20 and you collect it up to the age of 22 or something then let us use the cohort that you use. That would be particularly useful. But then I would like data on middle-aged people in the general sense and then older people who are recipients of DSP.</p> <p>Mr Whalan—We had quite a discussion earlier in this session about some of the difficulties of giving answers to quite complex questions. Of the things you have asked for, is there anything that is a particular priority for you?</p> <p>Senator McLUCAS—Young people by state and over time.</p>	

QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
HS10	Centrelink	Moore	F&PA 124 14/02/06	<p>Senator MOORE—We have been told that a number of AHO people in New South Wales have now taken up the opportunity to claim rent assistance.</p> <p>Mr Whalan—That is correct.</p> <p>Senator MOORE—Have you got any figures on that? Is that something that you keep, as a new category?</p> <p>Mr Whalan—I do not think we would know because, once again—</p> <p>Senator MOORE—They go into the pool once they claim.</p> <p>Mr Whalan—Yes.</p> <p>Senator MOORE—Can you have a look at that? It is a simple yes or no. If you can tell us that, that would be good.</p> <p>Mr Whalan—I will say that it is a no, but I could correct it.</p>	Received 11/4/06
HS11	Centrelink	Moore	F&PA 125 14/02/06	<p>Senator MOORE—The National Indigenous Times said, 'Eligible tenants may be able to claim four years rent assistance arrears as well as their current entitlement.' Is that right? In itself, that is a large backdate.</p> <p>Mr Whalan—I would like to take that on notice.</p> <p>Senator MOORE—Yes. If that is true, can you tell us how many people are eligible for that?</p> <p>Mr Whalan—I do not think, once again, that we would know.</p> <p>Senator MOORE—If you cannot, just let us know.</p>	Received 11/4/06
HS12	Centrelink	Moore	F&PA 126 14/02/06	<p>Mr Dunn—Yes. With respect to that, under the older process the data only needed to be exchanged at the end of the year. What we are doing now is exchanging the data earlier in preparation for the end of the year, particularly for the child-care rebate. Essentially it means that people put in their tax claims, they are then reconciled against the child-care data and we can feed that back to the tax office as soon as that occurs.</p> <p>Senator MOORE—Does the client have to agree to the exchange of data for this purpose?</p> <p>Mr Dunn—To have your child-care benefit reconciled this needs to occur. I am quite sure this is on the form, that it makes it clear this happens, but I would have to double-check that.</p>	Received 11/4/06



QON No.	Department / agency	Senator	Hansard reference	Question	Comments
HS13	Centrelink	Moore	F&PA 127 14/02/06	<p>Senator MOORE—You feed in the data and it churns out the exact figures. So it will be the final amount that you will be swapping with Tax, not all the information that has led to that.</p> <p>Mr Dunn—If we are looking at it for child-care rebate purposes—I would have to double-check this—I am quite sure we are providing the information on how much the CCB component was and how much their total eligible component was. That identifies the difference between what they spent and what they received in CCB.</p> <p>Senator MOORE—Could you confirm that, in case it is different.</p>	Received 11/4/06
HS14	Centrelink	Carol Brown	F&PA 129 14/02/06	<p>Senator CAROL BROWN—Have you looked at whether there is a capacity within Centrelink to offer this service as opposed to tendering it out?</p> <p>Mr Whalan—That is an option, but we believe we will get a better result by working closely with local community organisations which are already doing this type of work.</p> <p>Senator CAROL BROWN—Have you spoken to communities and welfare agencies?</p> <p>Mr Whalan—We have spoken to a number.</p> <p>Senator CAROL BROWN—Did you undertake to give me a list of those you have held discussions with?</p> <p>Mr Whalan—I can take that on notice.</p>	Received 11/4/06

<b>QON No.</b>	<b>Department / agency</b>	<b>Senator</b>	<b>Hansard reference</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>HS15</b>	Centrelink	Moore	F&PA 130-131 14/02/06	<p>Senator MOORE—Obviously the person who is particularly keen on this issue has got this one and pored over the data you have given and now has a supplementary question about data on appeals and outcomes by the authorised review officer. There were particular questions here on Indigenous issues, so if we could find out whether there is the possibility of looking at how AROs were involved with Indigenous clients and whether in fact they did access that service well—</p> <p>Mr Whalan—We have got information about appeals and outcomes generally for AROs, but pull it down to appeals and outcomes for AROs in respect of Indigenous customers and we are—</p> <p>Senator MOORE—Basically, I think the thrust of the question is to work out the availability of the appeal system to Indigenous clients and their knowledge of it, based on the premise that perhaps they were not using it as much as other clients. Could you have a look to see whether any of the AROs at the area level have that knowledge, and if we can get it? We will report back to Senator Evans about the problems involved in that answer.</p> <p>Ms Scott—If a quantitative answer is difficult to obtain, would a qualitative answer be sufficient?</p> <p>Senator MOORE—I think, to address the issue, yes. The outcome is to try to get people to use the system.</p>	Received 10/5/06
<b>HS16</b>	Centrelink	Siewert	Written	Attached	Received 11/4/06
<b>HS17</b>	Centrelink	Siewert	Written	Attached	Received 12/05/06
<b>HS18</b>	Centrelink	Siewert	Written	Attached	Received 11/4/06
<b>HS19</b>	Centrelink	Siewert	Written	Attached	Received 11/4/06

<b>QON No.</b>	<b>Department / agency</b>	<b>Senator</b>	<b>Hansard reference</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Comments</b>
HS20	Centrelink	Siewert	Written	Attached	Transferred to Community Affairs 2/3/06. Transferred back to Finance and Public Admin 2/3/06. Transferred to Employment, Workplace Relations & Education Committee 3/3/06. Transferred back to Finance and Public Admin 7/3/06. Received 10/5/06
HS21	DHS	Ludwig	Written	Attached	Received 13/4/06
HS22	CSA	Ludwig	Written	Attached	Received 13/4/06
HS23	CRS	Ludwig	Written	Attached	Received 13/4/06
HS24	Centrelink	Ludwig	Written	Attached	Received 13/4/06
HS25	Medicare	Ludwig	Written	Attached	Received 13/4/06
HS26	DHS	Ludwig	Written	Attached	Received 10/5/06
HS27	CSA	Ludwig	Written	Attached	Received 11/4/06
HS28	CRS	Ludwig	Written	Attached	Received 3/4/06
HS29	Centrelink	Ludwig	Written	Attached	Received 17/5/06
HS30	Medicare	Ludwig	Written	Attached	Received 10/5/06
HS31	Centrelink	Wong	Written	Attached	Transferred to Employment, Workplace Relations & Education Committee 2/3/06
HS32	DHS	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 12/05/06
HS33	DHS	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 10/5/06
HS34	DHS	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 17/05/06
HS35	DHS	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 17/05/06
HS36	DHS	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 17/05/06
HS37	DHS	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 17/05/06
HS38	DHS	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 17/05/06

<b>QON No.</b>	<b>Department / agency</b>	<b>Senator</b>	<b>Hansard reference</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Comments</b>
HS39	DHS	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 12/05/06
HS40	DHS	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 17/05/06
HS41	DHS	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 12/05/06
HS42	DHS	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 15/5/06
HS43	CSA	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 17/05/06
HS44	CSA	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 11/4/06
HS45	CSA	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 10/5/06
HS46	Centrelink	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 10/5/06
HS47	Centrelink	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 10/5/06
HS48	Centrelink	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 10/5/06
HS49	Centrelink	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 10/5/06
HS50	Centrelink	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 10/5/06
HS51	Centrelink	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 11/4/06
HS52	Centrelink	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 11/4/06
HS53	Centrelink	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 11/4/06
HS54	Centrelink	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 12/05/06
HS55	Medicare	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 10/5/06
HS56	Centrelink	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 10/5/06
HS57	CSA	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 10/5/06
HS58	DHS	Evans	Written	Attached	Received 10/5/06
HS59	Medicare	Barnett	Written	Attached	Transferred from Community Affairs Committee Received 15/5/06
HS60	Centrelink	Evans	Written	Attached	Transferred from Community Affairs Committee. Transferred back to Community Affairs 8/3/06
HS61	Medicare	McLucas	Written	Attached	Transferred from Community Affairs Committee 28/2/06 Received 15/05/06
HS62	Medicare	Polley	Written	Attached	Received 10/5/06

Please note that answers are due by 30 March 2006.

## **Written QON**

### **HS16—Personal Advisors**

1. In relation to the rationalisation of Centrelink Personal Advisor services, can you confirm that 31 PAs in 2005-06 and 65 PAs in 2006-07 will be reallocated to undertake an 'engagement role' in support of the new Welfare to Work package resulting in a 'saving' of \$18.54 million over 4 years.
  2. Can you clarify how the role of the Personal Advisors will be changing to meet the 'increased demand' expected under Welfare to Work? In particular (a) what is the expected change in the caseload of these PAs? (b) How many more clients per day or per week are they expected to handle? (c) Has there been an assessment of the implications of this increasing demand on the likely effectiveness of their engagement activities and their effective success rate?
  3. Have you taken into account the fact that many of those who will be new clients (including single mothers, people with a disability who are able to work part-time, and mature aged people) will in fact be more demanding -with on average less skills, education and training and more time out of the workforce?
  4. Are you or will you be monitoring and reporting specifically how many staff (including those who were formerly Personal Advisors as well as those being shifted from income support roles to more demanding engagement and participation roles) leave your employment as a result of unhappiness over changing roles and policy directions?
  5. You mentioned that the skills of staff currently in Personal Advisor roles would be transferred to those working as participation advisors. Can you clarify how this transfer will take place? In particular, are the PAs expected to take on a training role in addition to a new (increased) case load – and if so, do they have the training skills to do so?
  6. What is the training schedule for those you mention who are currently in income support roles and will now be taking on engagement and participation roles? How does this training schedule compare to that for Personal Advisors in terms of length and intensity (which was reportedly significant) and also in terms of the skills imparted and the skill level required from the trainers?
  7. Does this take into account the elevated need for support expected from those new clients (single mothers, partial disabled, mature age)?
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### **HS17**

1. Has the Department of Human Services undertaken any analysis, modelling or planning of the likely increase in demand for Centrelink services as a result of the Welfare to Work program and/or have you consulted with DEWR or any other government department or agency about this projected demand?
  2. Does this analysis, modelling or planning include targets for the expected participation of new clients (single mothers, partial disabled, mature age) in the workforce, were Centrelink consulted on these targets and do you consider them realistic and achievable?
  3. Are you confident that the allocation of resources and staff in the Centrelink budget are sufficient to meet this projected demand and to meet the targets set for the number of new clients placed in the workforce?
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### **HS18—CentreLink Assessment Model**

1. How much money has been spent on the development and implementation of the Centrelink Assessment Model since 2003?
  2. Has the model been implemented?
    - a. If yes, when was it implemented?
    - b. how many customers have been streamed using the system?
    - c. how many customers have volunteered to immediately access participation options?
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### **HS19—Indigenous Customer Breach Protection**

1. How much money has been spent on Indigenous customer breach prevention projects since 2003
  2. Has the goal of improved statistical reporting been achieved?
  3. In relation to the project in the Mooree and Goondiwindini regions to increase community input into Centrelink processes and communication strategies:
    - a. how much has been spent on these projects?
    - b. what initiatives have been implemented as a result of the increased consultation?
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### **HS20—Community Participation Agreements**

1. How many community participation agreements have been signed?
  2. How much money has been spent on negotiating and administering the community participation agreements?
  3. How many people are covered by these community partnership agreements?
  4. How much money has been recovered from Indigenous recipients of Centrelink payments due to overpayment?
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### **HS21 to HS25—GENERAL QUESTION TO ALL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES**

1. How many grants have you issued to Hillsong Church, its associated corporations and entities? List name, price and duration of funding by department.

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**HS26 to HS30—GENERAL QUESTION TO ALL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES**

1. How many briefs have you forwarded to the DPP for 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04, 2004-05?
    - 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 details.
  4. Did the department or agency forward any informal complaints to the DPP regarding the handling of the brief?
    - a. If so, give details.
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**HS31**

1. Has Centrelink estimated how many people may face an immediate 8 week no payment period under the new rules, based on previous breach data, for leaving work voluntarily, being dismissed for misconduct or declining a suitable job offer?
  2. What have your investigations concluded?
  3. How many people is it estimated will have an activity test breach against their name when the new compliance regime starts from 1 July 2006?
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**HS32—*Departmental Secretary***

Please provide:

- An outline of the Secretary's remuneration package (indicative salary, superannuation, Commonwealth-funded vehicle, bonuses etc);
- A full list of all performance bonuses paid to the Secretary of the Department of Human Services in the 2004-05 and 2005-06 (to date) financial years. For each payment, please indicate the date of payment, the value of payment and the reason for payment;

- The total cost of the Secretary's travel for the 2004-05 and 2005-06 (to date) financial years. Please provide a full breakdown of domestic and overseas travel, accommodation costs, food/drink costs and other expenditure. Please also provide a full list of all travel (domestic and international) undertaken by the Secretary since she commenced as Secretary of the Department of Human Services;
  - The cost of the Secretary's Commonwealth-funded motor vehicle in both the 2004-05 and 2005-06 (to date) financial years;
  - The number of staff working directly to the Secretary and their classifications and remuneration levels (eg personal assistants, personal advisers).
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### **HS33—Staffing**

Please provide an update of the information that was provided in response to the first part of question on notice HS 30 from November Estimates.

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### **HS34—Late responses to questions on notice**

1. For all questions on notice arising out of November Estimates that were asked of the Department of Human Services and its agencies, please indicate:
    - The date the answer was cleared by the Department of Human Services;
    - The date the answer was submitted to the Minister's office for clearance; and
    - The date the answer was submitted to the Secretariat of the Finance and Public Administration Committee.
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### **HS35**

1. Why wasn't the Department able to fully answer question HS 30 arising from November Estimates?
  2. Was the Department unwilling to provide dates in its answer, or was it prevented from doing so?
  3. Does the Department not know these dates? If not, why not?
  4. If it was prevented from doing so, who prevented it?
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### **HS36**

1. Can the Department confirm that the response to question on notice HS 86 from Budget Estimates on 26 May 2005 was cleared by Carolyn Hogg of Centrelink on 1 July 2005?
  2. Can the Department further explain why the answer to question on notice HS 86 from Budget Estimates was not submitted to the Committee Secretariat until 28 October 2005?
  3. Why was there a gap of nearly four months between this question being cleared by Centrelink and the answer being provided to the Committee?
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### **HS37**

1. Why did it take the Department so long to answer question on notice HS 92 arising out of Budget Estimates?
  2. On what date did Centrelink forward the answer to question on notice HS 92 arising out of Budget Estimates to the Department of Human Services?
  3. On what date did the Department of Human Services forward the answer to question on notice HS 92 arising out of Budget Estimates to the office of the Minister for Human Services for clearance?
  4. On what date was the answer to question on notice HS 92 arising out of Budget Estimates finally submitted to the Secretariat of the Finance and Public Administration Committee?
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### **HS38**

Were any of the responses to questions on notice arising out of the November Estimates hearings originally supplied by Centrelink changed by officials of the Department of Human Services? If so, why?

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### **HS39**

Why hasn't the Department been able to supply an answer to question HS 33 arising out of November Estimates? Doesn't this answer simply require a print out of a Centrelink database? Why is this question taking so long to answer?

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### **HS40**

Why hasn't the Department been able to supply an answer to question HS 37 arising out of November Estimates? Doesn't this answer simply require a print out of a Centrelink database? Why is this question taking so long to answer?

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#### **HS41**

Why hasn't the Department been able to supply an answer to question HS 39 arising out of November Estimates? Doesn't this answer simply require a print out of a Centrelink database? Why is this question taking so long to answer?

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#### **HS42—Consultancies**

Please provide a full list of all consultants/non-public servants engaged by the Department during the 2005-06 financial year. For each instance, please indicate the date the consultant/non-public servant was engaged, the purpose of the engagement, the total cost of the engagement and the amount spent so far.

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#### **HS43—Child Support Agency**

##### *Staffing*

Please provide an update to the information provided in response to the first part of question on notice HS 31 from November Estimates.

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#### **HS44—Child support payers and recipients**

Please provide an update to the information in response to the second part of question on notice HS 31 from November Estimates.

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#### **HS45—Legal expenses**

1. Please update the indicate the information in response to the third part of question on notice HS 31 from November Estimates.
  2. Please also provide this information in respect of the 2005-06 financial year (to date).
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**HS46—Centrelink***Staffing*

Please provide an update to the information provided in response to part (1) of question on notice HS 32 from November Estimates.

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**HS47—Review of payment recipients' property holdings**

Please provide an update to the information provided in response to parts (2) to (7) of question on notice HS 32 from November Estimates

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**HS48—Income support customers**

For the following payment types:

- Family Tax Benefit Part A
- Family Tax Benefit Part B
- Maternity Payment
- Maternity Immunisation Allowance
- Parenting Payment
- Double Orphan Pension
- Carer Allowance
- Age Pension
- Disability Support Pension
- Wide Pension
- Bereavement Allowance
- Widow B Pension
- Carer Payment
- Newstart Allowance
- Youth Allowance
- Austudy Payment
- Partner Allowance
- Sickness Allowance
- Widow Allowance
- Mature Age Allowance

- Special Benefit
- Mobility Allowance
- Remote Area Allowance
- Crisis Payment

Please provide the following information:

- The total number of people receiving the payment
- The age breakdown of people receiving the payment
- The gender of people receiving the payment
- The number of people receiving the payment in each state and territory

Please provide these figures for the 2005 and 2006 (to date) calendar years

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**HS49—Parenting payment (single) customers**

1. For the 2005 and 2006 (to date) calendar years please indicate the number of parents in receipt of parenting payment (single).
  2. Please provide a breakdown of how many parents in each state and territory were in receipt of parenting payment (single) in 2005 and 2006 (to date).
  3. Please provide a breakdown of how many parents in each federal electorate were in receipt of parenting payment (single) in 2005 and 2006 (to date).
  4. Please indicate the total number of dependent children of parenting payment (single) recipients in 2005 and 2006 (to date).
  5. Please indicate how many of these children were (a) aged under 6, (b) aged between 6 and 12, and (c) between 13 and 16.
  6. Please indicate the total number of dependent children of parenting payment (single) recipients in each state and territory in 2005 and 2006 (to date).
  7. For each state/territory, please indicate how many of these children were (a) aged under 6, (b) aged between 6 and 12, and (c) between 13 and 16.
  8. Please indicate the total number of dependent children of parenting payment (single) recipients in each federal electorate were in receipt of parenting payment (single) in 2005 and 2006 (to date).
  9. For each electorate, please indicate how many of these children were (a) aged under 6, (b) aged between 6 and 12, and (c) between 13 and 16.
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**HS50—Disability support pension customers**

1. For the 2005 and 2006 calendar years (to date), please indicate the number of people in receipt of disability support pension.
  2. How many people are currently receiving the DSP?
  3. Please provide a full breakdown of these figures by age, gender, state/territory and federal electorate.
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#### **HS51—*Marriage-like relationships***

Please update all of the tables provided in response to question on notice HS 36 from November Estimates.

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#### **HS52—*Debt management***

1. Please provide an update (covering the 2005-06 financial year to date) of the figures provided on table 4 on page 44 of the Centrelink Annual Report 2004-05.
  2. Please provide a table showing a full breakdown (by payment type and value of debt raised) of all debts raised in 2004-05 and 2005-06 (to date).
  3. What is the total value of debts that have been recovered by Centrelink in the 2005-06 financial year (to date).
  4. Please provide a full breakdown of the cause (ie payment type) of all debts recovered in 2004-05 and 2005-06 (to date).
  5. Please provide a table listing of all private debt collection agencies used by Centrelink, the commencement of the contract with the agency, the expiry date of the contract, the value of the contract, and how much has been paid to the agency under the contract to date.
  6. Do any of Centrelink's contracts with private sector debt collection agencies have performance/incentive bonuses of any kind built into the contract? Please provide all details of all such bonus arrangements.
  7. Are private debt collection agencies required to follow Centrelink debt collection guidelines when undertaking debt collection activities for Centrelink? If not, why not? If so, please supply a copy of the guidelines.
  8. How much Centrelink debt has been recovered by Dun & Bradstreet in 2004-05 and 2005-06 (to date)? Please indicate the value of the debts recovered in these years, and the number of customers repaying these debts.
  9. What level of debt has been recovered by credit card by Dun & Bradstreet in 2004-05 and 2005-06 (to date)?
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#### **HS53—*Youth allowance debts***

1. Please provide full details of the number of and value of debts raised by Centrelink from students receiving Youth Allowance who went from studying full time, to part time? Please provide this information for 2004-05 and 2005-06 (to date).
  2. Please provide a summary table showing the number of these debts that were appealed to Authorised Review Officers, SSAT and AAT, and indicate whether the appeal was upheld/rejected at each of these stages.
  3. How many youth allowance debts were referred to the Director of Public Prosecution, in 2004-05 and 2005-06 (to date). Please provide details.
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#### **HS54—*Social security fraud***

Please update the information provided in response to parts (2) to (5) of question on notice 42 arising out of November Estimates.

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#### **HS55—Medicare**

1. According to current plans and projections, by what year will the Smartcard program be a) fully operational and b) properly utilized by doctors and patients?
  2. Please provide the content of the plan to conduct a study into privacy issues related to the development and introduction of the Smartcard program?
  3. Will the study into privacy issues related to the development and introduction of the Smartcard program be part conducted by community, academic and NGO stakeholders?
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#### **HS56—Centrelink**

1. What is the time schedule and cost of the measures being undertaken to implement each of the recommendations made in the ANAO Audit report No. 29, as agreed to by Centrelink?
2. How many cases of duplicate payments were there in 2005 and what proportion of these duplicated payments been recovered?
3. Are you aware of adverse taxation consequences suffered by customers who have received payments in error? What steps have been taken to resolve these situations?
4. Are you aware of adverse consequences relating to other welfare payments suffered by customers who have received payments in error? What steps have been taken to resolve these situations?

5. What is the number and APS level of the staff in the Centrelink Data Quality Team?

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**HS57—Child Support Agency**

1. What is the incidence of unplanned leave taken by staff at the Child Support Agency?
  2. How does the incidence of unplanned leave taken by staff at the Child Support Agency compare with the APS average?
  3. What are the exact nature, incidence and cost of all radio broadcasts paid for by Child Support Agency (DHS)?
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**HS58**

1. How many complaints of breeches of privacy has the Department and its agencies received and how many upon investigation have been upheld, in the reporting years 2003 – 2004 and 2004 – 2005?
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**HS59**

1. Was a Medicare benefit paid to Dr Suman Sood for the procured abortion allegedly performed by her in May 2002 on a 20 year old woman who was 22 weeks pregnant and for which she has been committed to stand trial for manslaughter and for administering a drug with intent to procure a miscarriage?
  2. If a Medicare benefit was paid to Dr Sood for this abortion what attempts, if any, will be made to recover the benefit if Dr Sood is convicted of the offences with which she has been charged in connection with this abortion?
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**HS60—Compliance reviews**

1. Page 282 of the Department's annual report indicates that 18.26% compliance reviews found an incorrect payment in 2004-05. Can the Department indicate the actual number of reviews which found an incorrect payment?
2. Can the Department indicate the actual number of reviews which found an under payment? Separately identify how many of these were due to client error?

3. Can the Department indicate the actual number of reviews which found an over payment? Separately identify how many of these were due to client error?

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**HS61—e-Health -- Transactional Health Exchange Linking Multiple Applications technology (THELMA)**

1. When will the results of the tender for an electronic system that will allow Medicare claims to be verified and approved, and rebates deposited into customer bank accounts in 24 hours be announced?
  2. Will this electronic system support HIC Online which is currently described as too clunky to use?
  3. What sort of transactional costs will be involved with any new system? (over an above current costs)
  4. Who would pay this fee – Medicare Australia or the doctor?
  5. What would prevent such a fee from being handed on to the patient?
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**HS62—Medicare Australia**

1. I understand that to date just over 3000 Medicare Smartcards have been issued in the Tasmanian pilot. What percentage is that, as a proportion of the eligible population?
2. How many Tasmanians who are potentially eligible have not been able to get a card because they have been unable to supply the necessary personal identification criteria?