

**Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Human Services Portfolio**

Additional Estimates 2006-2007, 13<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> February, 2007

**Question: HS21**

**Agency: Centrelink**

**Outcome 1, Output 1.1**

**Topic: Staffing figures**

**Hansard Page/Written Question on Notice: Hansard Page F&PA 36-37**

**SENATOR MOORE** asked on 16/02/2007:

**Senator MOORE**—I know it is very difficult, Mr Whalan, because it is a national process and I am sure there are ups and downs across the whole process. What budget was allocated for the change to a business line structure?

**Mr Whalan**—We would have to take that on notice.

**Senator MOORE**—What budget has been spent in that process? I will put these questions on notice because they are going to be like that. One thing I am particularly interested in, as you would be aware, is the current staffing level across the country. What is the variation as of now between the figures that go area by area, by gender, by ongoing and non-ongoing in the annual report—which is very detailed; I would like to see the report even more detailed—and the most recent snapshot? When could we have the most recent snapshot?

**Ms Ritchie**—Of staffing levels?

**Senator MOORE**—Yes.

**Mr Whalan**—We will give you the most recent figures we are able to. As a broad comment, the figures will be lower now and at the end of this year than the figures in the annual report. The reason for that is that we are always estimating in annual reports the level of customer numbers we expect by payment in the next year. In some ways you could say that we are predicting the strength of the economy in the next year. What has happened so far this year is that the unemployment rate, which is one of the biggest things that vary, has been lower month on month than we predicted. Therefore, the customer numbers have been lower. Therefore, when we come to reconcile Centrelink's funding for the year, the funding will be lower than we predicted. Throughout the year we are always trying to monitor that and adjust as we go. So, very broadly, because there are lots of ons and offs, we will have had to have progressively reduced the number of staff in Centrelink as the level of unemployed has continued to decrease.

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**ANSWER:**

The variations between the staffing figures reported in the 2005-06 Centrelink Annual Report and 31 January 2007, area by area, by gender, by ongoing and by non-ongoing are below.

The most recent staffing level snapshot as at 31 January 2007 is included.

**Staffing Variations - Area by Area**

Area	Total number of employees reported in the 2005/2006 Centrelink Annual Report	Total number Centrelink employees as at 31 January 2007	Variation
Area Brisbane	1,963	2,003	40
Area Central & Northern Queensland	922	907	-15
Area East Coast NSW	1,174	1,206	32
Area Hunter NSW	1,187	1,160	-27
Area North Central Victoria	1,384	1,421	37
Area Northern Australia	459	492	33
Area Pacific Central	1,659	1,668	9
Area South Australia	1,541	1,663	122
Area South East Victoria	1,193	1,211	18
Area South Metro NSW	940	970	30
Area South West NSW	841	885	44
Area Tasmania	986	1,004	18
Area West Australia	1,691	1,633	-58
Area West NSW	777	828	51
Area West Victoria	1,192	1,382	190

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**Staffing Variations – by Gender (Females)**

Area	Total number of female employees reported in the 2005/2006 Centrelink Annual Report	Total number female Centrelink employees as at 31 January 2007	Change
Area Brisbane	1,391	1,449	58
Area Central & Northern Queensland	734	728	-6
Area East Coast NSW	778	807	29
Area Hunter NSW	896	886	-10
Area North Central Victoria	906	923	17
Area Northern Australia	351	375	24
Area Pacific Central	1,193	1,201	8
Area South Australia	1,061	1,152	91
Area South East Victoria	830	847	17
Area South Metro NSW	682	717	35
Area South West NSW	630	661	31
Area Tasmania	648	659	11
Area West Australia	1,220	1,199	-21
Area West NSW	567	616	49
Area West Victoria	804	934	130

**Staffing Variations – by Gender (Males)**

Area	Total number of male employees reported in the 2005/2006 Centrelink Annual Report	Total number male Centrelink employees as at 31 January 2007	Change
Area Brisbane	572	554	-18
Area Central & Northern Queensland	188	179	-9
Area East Coast NSW	396	399	3
Area Hunter NSW	291	274	-17
Area North Central Victoria	478	498	20
Area Northern Australia	108	117	9
Area Pacific Central	466	467	1
Area South Australia	480	511	31
Area South East Victoria	363	364	1
Area South Metro NSW	258	253	-5
Area South West NSW	211	224	13
Area Tasmania	338	345	7
Area West Australia	471	434	-37
Area West NSW	210	212	2
Area West Victoria	388	448	60

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**Staffing Variations – by Ongoing employees**

Area	Total number of ongoing employees reported in the 2005/2006 Centrelink Annual Report	Total number ongoing Centrelink employees as at 31 January 2007	Change
Area Brisbane	1,853	1,903	50
Area Central & Northern Queensland	803	815	12
Area East Coast NSW	1,135	1,155	20
Area Hunter NSW	1,144	1,134	-10
Area North Central Victoria	1,296	1,331	35
Area Northern Australia	443	477	34
Area Pacific Central	1,555	1,608	53
Area South Australia	1,487	1,593	106
Area South East Victoria	1,125	1,160	35
Area South Metro NSW	841	891	50
Area South West NSW	805	872	67
Area Tasmania	896	945	49
Area West Australia	1,553	1,574	21
Area West NSW	748	781	33
Area West Victoria	1,155	1,302	147

**Staffing Variations – by Non-ongoing employees**

Area	Total number of non-ongoing employees reported in the 2005/2006 Centrelink Annual Report	Total number non-ongoing Centrelink employees as at 31 January 2007	Change
Area Brisbane	110	100	-10
Area Central & Northern Queensland	119	92	-27
Area East Coast NSW	39	51	12
Area Hunter NSW	43	26	-17
Area North Central Victoria	88	90	2
Area Northern Australia	16	15	-1
Area Pacific Central	104	60	-44
Area South Australia	54	70	16
Area South East Victoria	68	51	-17
Area South Metro NSW	99	79	-20
Area South West NSW	36	13	-23
Area Tasmania	90	59	-31
Area West Australia	138	59	-79
Area West NSW	29	47	18
Area West Victoria	37	80	43

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To prepare this answer it has taken approximately 2 hours and 5 minutes at an estimated cost of \$124.