

Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Additional Estimates 2006-2007, 13th and 16th February, 2007

Question: HS26

Department: Department of Human Services

Outcome 1, Output 1

Topic: Job Capacity Assessments (JCA)

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SENATOR WONG asked on 16/02/2007:

Senator WONG—No, I would like to move on. In relation to the referrals from JCAs, could you tell me whether you or DEWR track the numbers and proportion by income support type and by destination—that is, employment service stream?

Mr Dolan—Job capacity assessors do not determine someone's income support payment. That is done by Centrelink.

Senator WONG—It is the point at which a range of decisions are made. I am trying to work out who tracks this data: who is going through a JCA, what income support they are on and then their destination in terms of what service they are then sent to. Is that something you do?

Mr Dolan—Yes. We have information on the broad customer groups that are referred for job capacity assessment—those that are going for, say, a DSP claim or a DSP review and so forth. We record the hours of work assessment where that is appropriate. Where it is a disability claim, we will record the medical impairment rating; it does not necessarily imply anything about the ultimate decision, because that is with Centrelink. We do record the recommended referrals to employment services.

Senator WONG—Okay. In what form can I get that data? What is the best way?

Mr Dolan—We can take that on notice. Given the numbers at stake, we can provide you on notice with some tables showing types of inflows for all destinations.

Senator WONG—That would be good. I am interested in income support type and referral destination.

ANSWER:

Information has been provided in response to Question HS27 which shows the reason the client was referred for a JCA, such as a claim for Disability Support Pension or review of Newstart/Youth Allowance incapacity exemption etc. This response also provides information on the client's destination, that is, on referrals by the assessor to employment services.

The JCA system does not have historic data on payment type. While efforts have been made to link the JCA data with payment type, this is difficult and the data is misleading, particularly as people may be transferred to a different payment following the JCA or at around the same time, due to the circumstances which led to the JCA referral.

To prepare this answer it has taken approximately 2 hours and 10 minutes at an estimated cost of \$125.