

**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 Number: HS40**

**Agency: Centrelink**

**Outcome 1, Output 1.1**

**Topic: Parenting Payment, Disability, Newstart and Youth Allowance**

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

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

1. What is the current number of Parenting Payment recipients, broken down by age of youngest child (0-6, 7-15) family status (PPS or PPP) and employment status (employed or not employed), by State, and by the combinations of these characteristics?
2. What is the current number of Disability Support Pension recipients, broken down by employment status, payment status ('transitional group' and other), State, and by the combinations of these characteristics?
3. What is the current number of Newstart Allowance and Youth Allowance (other) recipients, broken down by employment status, principal carer status, partial capacity to work status, those exempted from activity requirements (including specifically: temporary exemptions for parents), State, and combinations of these characteristics.
4. What is the current number of Newstart Allowance and Youth Allowance (other) recipients, broken down by duration on these payments (less than 1 year, 1 year and less than 2, 2 years and less than 5, 5 years or more), employment status, and State and combinations of these characteristics?
5. In how many cases of 'first' and 'second' participation failures, and '8 week penalties' since July 2006 has the customer
  - made contact with the relevant authorized review officer, and lodged an appeal.
  - Please provide data by State/Territory.
6. What were the outcomes of these appeals, by State/Territory?
7. In how many of these cases were customers paid pending appeal?
8. What is the average time taken for the National Participation Solutions Team to decide on a participation failure, and issue correspondence to the customer, once they have been notified of an alleged participation failure?
9. Do income support payments continue during this period?

**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

**Answer:**

The detailed information required to answer parts 1 to 8 of the question is not readily available. To obtain this information would be highly resource intensive and we cannot justify the level of expenditure that would be required to obtain it.

9. In the case of first and second participation failures, provided the job seeker has reconnected with their Provider of Australian Government Employment Services (PAGES), payment continues while the possible failure is being investigated.

In the case of repeated participation failures (three or more in a 12-month period), the *Application for Payment* is processed for the fortnight in which Centrelink received the failure, and then no further payments are released until the failure decision is finalised.

In the case of a serious failure that is recommended by a PAGES or Centrelink where the job seeker is currently on payment at the time of the possible failure, payment continues until the failure decision is finalised.

In the case of a serious failure that is identified during the new claim process (for example, for leaving work voluntarily or being unemployed due to misconduct), the claim is not granted until the failure decision is finalised.

Where a failure has been applied that has a penalty of an eight-week non-payment period, and the job seeker has requested a review by an Authorised Review Officer or the Social Security Appeals Tribunal, the job seeker may ask for payment to continue until the outcome of the review is known. Where a job seeker is appealing to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, they must request a Stay Order from the Tribunal, which, if granted, would restore their payments until the outcome of the review is known.

To prepare this answer it has taken approximately 3 hours and 16 minutes at an estimated cost of \$185.