

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: HS78

Department/Agency: Centrelink

Outcome 1

Topic: LPG Vehicle Scheme

Written Question on Notice: Written

SENATOR MOORE asked on 16/02/07:

1. Where is the Australian Government LPG Grant administration based?
2. How many people have received the LPG Grant since it was made available in August last year?
3. Please provide the states and territories that grant recipients have resided in.
4. How much money has been spent on paying grants so far?
5. What was the 2006-07 and 2007-08 budget for this grant?
6. What quality control procedures are in place to assure only eligible applicants receive the payment?
7. What is the error rate?
 - a. How many people have received the payment that shouldn't have?
 - b. Has this money been retrieved?
 - c. How much did it equate to?
8. What measures are in place to ensure ineligible applicant people do not receive the payment in the future?

ANSWER:

1. The LPG Vehicle Scheme is jointly administered by three agencies - AusIndustry, Medicare Australia and Centrelink.

Centrelink's administration of the Scheme is managed in its National Support Office. Centrelink also has a dedicated processing centre in the Adelaide Call Centre that is responsible for the assessment of applications lodged by customers.

2. At Sunday 4 March 2007, Centrelink has paid 32,200 applicants for the LPG Vehicle Scheme.
3. Applications have been assessed and payments made to applicants from all Australian States and Territories.

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4. At Sunday 4 March 2007 the total program outlay for the LPG Vehicle Scheme was \$64,042,000.
5. This information should be obtained from the responsible policy area, the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources.
6. Applicants must produce evidence to support the claim for payment, including the registration paper for the vehicle in their own name and a tax invoice as evidence that an LPG conversion has occurred and been paid for. The LPG provider and the applicant each sign a declaration on the application form.

Payments of the LPG Vehicle Scheme grants are only paid into the personal bank account of the applicant.

A database is maintained of all claims.

7.
 - a Centrelink has identified ten cases in which applicants have received the LPG Vehicle Scheme grant who should not have done.
 - b. Centrelink has contacted all customers paid incorrectly and formally requested that the payment be returned.
 - c. Since 4 March 2007, a total of \$2,000 has been returned by these applicants. The balance outstanding is \$12,000 and recovery action is continuing.
8. Centrelink has provided processing staff with reinforcement of the eligibility criteria. Further training in the payment system and support tools has been provided where necessary.

To prepare this answer it has taken approximately 4 hours and 13 minutes at an estimated cost of \$239.