

**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: HS83**

**Agency: Child Support Agency**

**Outcome 1, Output 2**

**Topic: Deloitte Investigation**

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

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

- (1) Please explain the findings of the Deloitte investigation into the CSA and table a copy of this report.
- (2) Can the department please provide a general overview of stress and sick leave at the CSA, any recent reports highlighting increased levels of leave and the measures in place to improve employees' health and safety.

**ANSWER:**

- (1) The Executive Summary of the CSA Service Delivery Review undertaken by Deloitte, including the findings and recommendations, formed a component of the submission to Cabinet regarding the Building a Better CSA initiative. The report is therefore unable to be released.
- (2) CSA regularly monitors the number of workers' compensation claims accepted by Comcare, and the level of unplanned leave.

Based on monthly reports over the last two years, there has been a steady decline in the level of unplanned leave. Accepted compensation claims that relate to stress have also been declining over the last two financial years. Year to date data indicates that this trend is continuing.

The factors driving high levels of unplanned leave in the CSA are almost certainly similar to those for many other service delivery organisations, particularly those that operate in difficult and complex social policy areas. The 2005/06 rate of unplanned leave per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) showed a reduction from the 2004/05 level and this trend appears to be continuing in the current financial year.

The CSA has developed and commenced implementation of a comprehensive strategy – "Building a Healthier CSA" – to improve employee well-being, health and safety. This strategy is a response to a review of CSA's workers compensation and management systems and practices by Health Services Australia in May 2006.

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Specifically, the CSA has taken the following measures:

- Introduced a coordinated approach to the management of health and safety in the CSA including the appointment of an executive level officer to take a national leadership role.
- Skilling and better supporting team leaders and managers including:
  - training focussing on psychological injury awareness, recognition and management;
  - leadership training to improve people management skills to assist in injury management and prevention;
  - information sessions on the prevention of workplace bullying; and
  - a new HR Toolkit which includes Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) content on proactive injury prevention, early detection of mental stress, when to involve a Rehabilitation Case Manager, and return to work processes.
- Better reporting and analysis of leave and workers compensation.
- Development of a best practice injury management model that includes a focus on early intervention to minimise the severity and duration of work-related injury.
- Health and safety assessments on all new projects.
- A review of job design and recruitment practices.
- Enhanced OHS content in induction training for all new staff.
- Access to the Employee Assistance Provider for staff and their families.
- Preventative measures such as flu vaccinations.

To prepare this answer it has taken approximately 7 hours and 15 minutes at an estimated cost of \$408.