

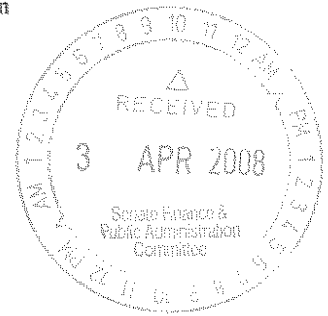
Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Department of Human Services

Additional Estimates 2007-08 – February 2008



Question: HS26

Outcome 1, Output 1.1

Topic: Centrelink and Prosecutions

Hansard Page/Written Question on Notice: Written

SENATOR SIEWERT asked on 22/02/2008:

- (a) How many people have provided wrongful information on income estimates and other information that affects payments?
- (b) How many of those people have been prosecuted?
- (c) What factors are taken into account in determining whether or not to prosecute?
- (d) How many people have been convicted?

Answer:

- (a) Centrelink does not collect this information as data collection and reporting systems are not designed in a way that allows retrieval of this type of information. Centrelink is therefore unable to provide this information.
- (b) Refer to answer provided in response to question (a).
- (c) Centrelink does not prosecute matters. Centrelink refers cases of welfare fraud to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions (CDPP) for consideration of prosecution action. The CDPP makes the decision whether or not to prosecute a matter in accordance with the *Prosecution Policy of the Commonwealth*, which identifies the factors to be considered when determining whether to prosecute a case.
- (d) The number of people convicted for providing wrongful information on income estimates cannot be determined. However, the total number of convictions of Centrelink customers for the 2007-08 financial year to 29 February 2008 is 1,394.