

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: HS69

Outcome 1, Output 1.1

Topic: Centrelink – Data Mining

Hansard Page/Written Question on Notice: Written

SENATOR COONAN asked on 22/02/2008:

- (a) Are there currently any identified gaps in Centrelink's current capacity and mechanisms for detecting incorrect payments?
- (b) Are there currently any identified gaps in Centrelink's capacity to predict which customers are at risk of being overpaid?
- (c) Are there currently any identified gaps which reduce incidence and size of overpayments and increase the early detection of overpayments?

Answer:

Centrelink has a range of initiatives in place to reduce the incidence and size of overpayments and to increase early detection of overpayments. Centrelink applies a risk-based approach to identifying customers at risk of being overpaid.

Centrelink along with key policy departments is constantly reviewing the appropriateness of these initiatives and developing strategies to prevent, detect and deter non-compliance or fraudulent activity. Communication of the customers' understanding of their obligations that apply for receipt of income support is also an essential element.

Consideration of future measures to address any identified gaps in these processes will be subject to consideration by the government in the relevant budget process.