

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES – 9 FEBRUARY 2010 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Centrelink People

Question reference number: HS 27

Senator: FIFIELD

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Question:

Senator FIFIELD - You might be aware of an article from late last year in the *Canberra Times* headed 'Number of disabled workers in public service falling'. This is the wording of the article:

The largest job cuts took place at Defence, Centrelink, and the Australian Taxation Office.

That refers to the previous year. I think it cites the *State of the service* report from the Public Service Commission. Are you able to put that in context for the committee? I appreciate that the word 'cuts' that the article uses is probably not the right word, but what is the trend in Centrelink in relation to employment of people with disabilities?

Ms Cornish - I do not recall the actual article, but certainly in relation to the *State of the service* report for 2008-09, yes, as you said, the proportion of people with a disability employed in the APS fell to three per cent. The number of Centrelink employees identifying with a disability fell to five per cent.

Senator FIFIELD - From?

Ms Cornish - I am sorry, I do not have that figure, but we will provide it to you. We certainly do try to have above-average representation for that group amongst our people employed.

Senator FIFIELD - Let us take the last four years. Would you be able to take on notice what the trend has been over the last four years?

Ms Cornish - Yes.

Answer:

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10 As at 30 January 2010
Percentage of employees who have identified as having disability	5.00%	4.89%	4.53%	4.55%
Number of employees who have identified as having disability	1,366	1,279	1,267	1,234
Centrelink Head Count (Total number of employees)	27,298	26,167	27,954	27,109