

# Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

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

### Human Services Portfolio

**Topic:** International Debt

**Question reference number:** HS60

**Senator:** KROGER

**Type of question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 26 March 2010

**Number of pages:** 1

#### **Question:**

During estimates, Deputy Secretary Philippa Godwin indicated that *'a significant proportion of [debt] is international debt—that is, debt transferred in when a payer from another country comes to Australia. That is one of our ongoing challenges... International debt is in a sense a disproportionate contributor to that overall debt picture, so one of the other things that we are focusing on is how to better manage international debt.'*

- a) How much of the total outstanding child support debt is international debt?
- b) How much has been spent on collecting international debt this financial year?

#### **Answer:**

- a) As at 31 January 2010, the total outstanding child support debt was \$1,121 billion. Of this, \$288.5 million (26 per cent) relates to International debt.

The \$288.5 million is made up of:

- \$128.9 million being debt for collection on behalf of Governments of other countries (paying parent is in Australia and receiving parent is overseas);
  - \$120.7 million being child support debt for Australian paying parents living overseas (receiving parent is in Australia); and
  - International teams also manage 'associated' domestic cases where the parent who is a resident of Australia in the international case has another child support assessment liability with someone else in Australia. Debt associated with these cases is \$38.9 million.
- b) From 1 July 2009 to 31 January 2010, the Child Support Program has spent \$7.4 million in salaries, staff costs and travel to register and administer international cases and debt.