

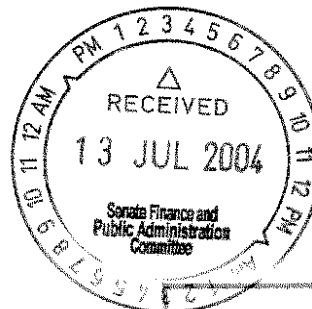


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Our ref: A/2004-2235096

9 July 2004

Mr Alistair Sands
Secretary
Finance and Public Administration Committee
Department of the Senate
Parliament House ACT 2600



Dear Alistair

Please find attached the Commonwealth Ombudsman's response to Budget Estimates 2004-05 questions PM36 and PM37.

Please direct any further queries to Ms Natalie Humphry, Contract Manager, on phone (02) 62760145.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Philip Moss".

Philip Moss
Acting Deputy Ombudsman

File Ref: **A/2004-2235096**

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

Answer to Question on Notice (PM 36)

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Commonwealth Ombudsman

Budget Estimates 2004-05 – May 2004

Question on Notice from Senator Forshaw:

If you could supply us with a breakdown of the Centrelink complaints into various categories – family payments, pensions, disability payments and so on – for the last three or four years. Can you tell me how many of these 20,000-odd complaints per year are resolved?

Answer: Attachment A provides a breakdown of Centrelink complaints closed by the Commonwealth Ombudsman, by issues. It is worth noting that “Other” is seventh in rank order. This is a high position for a general category of this kind, and has resulted in a decision being made to revise how we categorise Centrelink complaints for 2004-05 onwards.

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

Answer to Question on Notice (PM 37)

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio**Commonwealth Ombudsman**

Budget Estimates 2004-05 – May 2004

Question on Notice from Senator Murray:

What I am looking for, essentially, is a measure of unmet need. If we could be provided with statistics of those who have legitimate concerns who are not within your jurisdiction but who might fall within your jurisdiction as a result of the proposed legislative change, that would be of assistance.

Answer: We are unable to provide a detailed breakdown of all out-of-jurisdiction complaints for services delivered by a contractor compared with services delivered directly by the Commonwealth. Attachment B provides a breakdown of out-of-jurisdiction complaints and gives some sense of the character of such complaints. We are instituting a new database in the fourth quarter of this calendar year, and will review whether additional detail on out-of-jurisdiction complaints can be provided in a cost effective manner.

Attachment A

Centrelink Closed Issues 2001/02 to 2003/04

Issues	01/02		02/03		03/04 to 31 May 04	
	Total	Rank	Total	Rank	Total	Rank
Newstart	2760	1	2163	1	1481	1
Dsp	1110	3	1231	4	1015	2
Parenting Payment	1233	2	1298	3	972	3
Fao (Ftb A)	683	5	1802	2	954	4
Youth Allowance	718	4	718	5	525	5
Age Pension	432	8	594	6	453	6
Other	542	7	587	7	392	7
Gen Publ'Ty/Inf	597	6	480	9	373	8
Fao (Ftb B)	270	9	557	8	205	9
Austudy Payment	248	10	227	10	169	10
Carer Allowance	187	12	166	11	149	11
Fao (Ccb Par/Gdn)	86	17	121	14	111	12
Misc Payment	71	19	95	15	108	13
Carer Payment	110	14	157	12	84	14
FOI Personal Access	93	16	91	16	79	15
Sickness Allownce	107	15	136	13	77	16
Abstudy	70	20	50	18	53	17
Misc Services	36	22	48	19	52	18
Public Denunciatn	76	18	80	17	33	19
Widow	31	24	34	23	30	20
Maternity Allownce	36	21	39	20	22	21
Special Benefit	32	23	38	21	20	22
Mobility Allownce	30	25	35	22	18	23
Bereavement	15	29	17	24	13	24
Mature Age Allow	19	28	15	25	12	25
Wife Pensn (Age)	6	34	11	27	11	26
FOI General Access	6	32	6	29	9	27
Fao (Ccb Servprv)	5	36	13	26	6	28
Assist Isol Child	5	35	1	34	5	29
Wife Dsp	6	33	9	28	3	30
Tender/Contract	2	37	4	30	3	31
Dble Orphan Pens	6	31	1	33	3	32
Savings Bonus	11	30	3	31	2	33
Superannuation	0	40	0	40	1	34
Child Care Assist	26	26	1	32	0	35
Core Business	0	39	1	35	0	36
Family Allowance	243	11	0	36	0	37
Family Tax Pymnt	152	13	0	37	0	38
Chldcare Cash Reb	20	27	0	38	0	39
Employment	1	38	0	39	0	40
Grand Total	10081		10829		7443	

Attachment B

Inquiries	02-03	03-04 (end May)	03-04 Projected
Banking	895	551	601
Commercial	1,113	620	676
Employment	317	233	254
Health	292	217	237
Insurance	796	509	555
Legal	740	456	497
State	3,209	2,132	2,326
Superannuation	462	325	355
Telecommunications	1,028	870	949
Other	1,143	663	723
Total OOJ Agency Inquiries	9,995	6,576	7,174
Total In Jurisdiction Agency Inquiries	1,183	1,276	1,392
Total Inquiries	11,178	7,852	8,566