

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Finance and Administration Portfolio**

**Department of Human Services and agencies**

Budget Estimates 2005-2006, 26 May 2005

**Question: HS33**

**Outcome #, Output #**

**Topic: Australian Hearing – Travel time targets**

**Hansard Page/Written Question on Notice: F&PA 92 26/5/05**

**SENATOR CROSSIN** asked the Minister representing the Minister for Human Services, upon notice, on 26 May 2005:

Can you take on notice for me then, whether or not any centres have failed to meet their target in travel time associated with servicing remote communities?

What I want to know is whether there are any centres visiting remote communities that have not met their target? That should be fairly easy based on how you measure it.

Ms Scott – We just want to clarify it so we do not get the wrong end of the stick. If the target is expressed in hours spent in a remote community, not actually the travel time getting there – and let us say someone thought that you could get there and spend four hours in the community, you want to know how many times the target time has not been met.

Senator Crossin - Correct

**Answer:**

Hearing Centres are provided with an annual target to visit urban, rural and/or remote sites for which they are responsible. The visiting schedule is negotiated with each community and is not necessarily spread evenly across the year. Therefore it is still possible that Centres that are behind the pro rata target at the end of May, may meet their full year target.

At the end of May, Centres with responsibility for **remote sites** had the following results against the May pro rata target:

- Alice Springs – below target  
It is expected that at the end of June, Alice Springs will exceed the target.
- Cairns – above target
- Darwin – below target  
It is expected that at the end of June, Darwin will be under target. Additional hours were made available to the Darwin centre in December 2004 to establish some new sites but they were unable to utilise all of the additional time. This was partly a timing issue in that the hours became available during the wet season so it

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was not possible to commence trips until February. Darwin is expected to exceed the 03-04 achievement by 18%.

- Townsville – below target  
It is expected that at the end of June, Townsville will be under target as a planned visit to Palm Island has been deferred until next financial year at the community's request as they could not accommodate the Audiologists until that time.
- Brisbane – above target
- Launceston – above target
- Adelaide – below target  
It is expected that at the end of June, Adelaide will be close to target. The Centre would have been well over target except that a trip was cancelled due to 'sorry business'. This resulted in three trips instead of the planned four being made to the community.
- Perth – below target  
It is expected that at the end of June, Perth will meet the target.

Where Centres have responsibility for a mix of urban, rural and remote sites it is not possible to determine whether they are above or below target in a particular location.