

Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Department of Human Services

Budget Estimates 2007-08 - May 2007

Question: HS9

Outcome 1, Output 1

Topic: DHS – Staffing in communications areas

Hansard Page/Written Question on Notice: Hansard Page F&PA 71-2

SENATOR MOORE asked on 24/05/2007:

Senator MOORE—Can I put on notice—and I have asked similar questions in the past: within each of the component agencies of Human Services, what is the staffing level of the communications unit or whatever it is called? Already there have been three slightly different variations of what they are called within the agencies, but I mean the area that used to be known as the PR and community liaison lot. I want to know how many people in Centrelink are working in that area, how many people in Medicare and how many people in the access card area—that kind of thing.

Ms Williams—Could I just clarify that the access card group of course is part of the core department.

Senator MOORE—Yes, but they have their own communications unit...

Senator MOORE—Which is exactly where my questions are coming from in terms of the process. In this estimates process, over a couple of years we have talked about the coordinating role of Human Services. Already in the example of the Medicare PR, there are people from a range of different areas working on it, which could be the way to go—but can I get that information for the various communication areas? Also, in terms of each of those areas, how many people are whatever the current terminology is for someone who is a journalist—are they called public affairs officers?

Mr Popple—Yes.

Senator MOORE—How many of the people in those various areas are public affairs officers in terms of that background?

Mr Popple—We will have to take that on notice.

Senator MOORE—Thank you.

Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Department of Human Services

Budget Estimates 2007-08 - May 2007

Answer:

As at 24 May:

Department of Human Services

25 full time employees and three part-time employees. There are no public affairs officers.

Medicare

25 employees. There are no public affairs officers.

Centrelink

131 employees. There are 70 public affairs officers.

The Child Support Agency

16.3 full time equivalent employees There are no public affairs officers.

Australian Hearing

7 full time employees. There are 2 public affairs officers.

CRS Australia

6 full time employees. There are no public affairs officers.

HSA Group

There is no dedicated communications unit as such. There is one manager and two staff who make up the Business Development Unit and they co-ordinate public relations matters in the Group.