

Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

BUDGET ESTIMATES – 27 MAY 2010 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Complaints and tip-offs.

Question reference number: HS11

Senator: FIFIELD

Type of question: Hansard, F&PA page 96

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 9 July 2010

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Senator FIFIELD—Do you have a breakdown of the nature of complaints or tip-offs that you receive? Can you break those down into categories?

Mr Lodge—I do not have them with me, but we could look at getting that information for you.

Senator FIFIELD—If you could. I would be interested in what percentage of the complaints are pursued and what percentage of the complaints made actually result in some form of enforcement action.

Mr Lodge—We will get that information to you if we have it.

Senator FIFIELD—Thank you. I would be interested in whether it is only one per cent of complaints that are made that result in any sort of enforcement action being required—or whatever it is.

Answer:

The Child Support Program (CSP) receives tip-offs:

- through information provided directly to the CSP, either from the CSA website or information obtained by Customer Service Officers; and
- directly from Centrelink, where Centrelink has made a decision that the information may be beneficial to the CSP.

All tip-offs are initially sorted under the following key identifiers:

- a) Business;
- b) International;
- c) Property;
- d) Travel;
- e) Video;
- f) Surveillance; and
- g) No further action.

The selected tip-off information is then reviewed and forwarded to the appropriate CSP area for follow up. Tip-offs are also referred to external agencies if the information may be relevant to them, e.g. information on possible tax evasion is forwarded to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Whilst the CSP retains information about where these cases are referred, there is no reporting to identify the outcome of the tip-off information.

From 1 July 2009 to 30 May 2010, CSP received 1,791 tip-offs. Of the 1,791 tip-offs, 403 (22.5 per cent) have been selected and allocated for further investigation.

Category	Jul-09	Aug 09	Sep 09	Oct-09	Nov 09	Dec 09	Jan-10	Feb 10	Mar-10	Apr-10	May 10	YTD Total
Business	13	25	22	31	25	19	15	18	26	19	20	233
International	1	1	2	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	1	9
Property	15	9	16	14	20	8	13	10	5	11	10	131
Travel	4	0	6	4	1	2	2	1	3	3	0	26
Video	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Surveillance	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
No further action	222	142	147	181	135	86	100	96	118	78	83	1388
TOTAL	255	178	193	230	181	116	131	128	152	111	116	1791