

# Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

## BUDGET ESTIMATES – 27 MAY 2010 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

### Human Services Portfolio

**Topic:** Child Support Liability

**Question reference number:** HS8

**Senator:** FIFIELD

**Type of question:** Hansard, F&PA page 94

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

**Number of pages:** 1

#### **Question:**

**Senator FIFIELD**—In 2008-09 what value of liability would have been written off for one reason or another?

**Ms Godwin**—I do not have that figure with me. I could get it.

...

**Senator FIFIELD**—And also, just out of interest, for 2008-09 what was the value of liability represented by those cases that you deemed not worth while to pursue?

**Ms Godwin**—Do you mean the ones that we have marked at that point for non-pursuit?

**Senator FIFIELD**—The cold cases, yes.

**Ms Godwin**—Yes.

#### **Answer:**

Where a person owes a debt to the Commonwealth they can request that their debt be waived. Only the Minister of Finance and Deregulation and delegated decision makers in the Department of Finance and Deregulation (Finance) have the authority to waive Commonwealth debts. In 2008-09 \$634,729 of maintenance liability owed was waived.

Child Support Program (CSP) can decide a debt is not to be actively pursued (i.e. non-pursuit of debt). A decision not to pursue debt must only be made if all appropriate collection action has been exhausted and there is no possibility the debt can be collected. It is important to note that while a debt is not being pursued it is still owed and the CSP may re-raise the debt if relevant collection information becomes available. In June 2009 total Child Support debt was \$1088.7 million of which \$94.3 million was marked as non-pursuit.