

Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

BUDGET ESTIMATES – 27 MAY 2010 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Child Support referrals

Question reference number: HS9

Senator: FIFIELD

Type of question: Hansard, F&PA page 94

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Question:

Senator FIFIELD—Do you keep records of the number and nature of referrals you do?

Mrs Cooke—We do.

Senator FIFIELD—Could they be provided?

Mrs Cooke—Sure.

Answer:

The Child Support Program (CSP) refers parents to Centrelink, the Family Relationship Advice Line (FRAL) and the Parent Support Service – Priority Referral.

The CSP directly transfers mutual child support and Centrelink customers to the Centrelink Family Assistance Office when their enquiry impacts upon their family tax benefit or the customer is seeking exemption from receiving child support due to family violence. For 2009-10 to the end of May 2010 the CSP has directly transferred 113,038 mutual customers through to the Family Assistance Office call centre.

The FRAL is a national telephone service to assist families affected by relationship or separation issues. For 2009-10 to the end of May 2010 a total of 6,487 child support customers have called FRAL. Of that total the CSP has transferred 2,546 customers directly through to the advice line.

The Parent Support Service – Priority Referral is a confidential telephone counselling service for customers who are distressed, at risk of self harm or harm to others. For 2009-10 to the end of May 2010 the CSP has directly transferred 524 separated parents through to the service.