

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Finance and Administration Portfolio

Department of Human Services and agencies

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2005-2006, 1 November 2005

Question: HS20

Outcome 1, Output 2

Topic: Child Support Agency

Hansard Page/Written Question on Notice:

SENATOR SIEWERT asked the Minister for Human Services, upon written notice:

1. Is the Agency aware that they can receive two different assessments from Child Support if they enter the system as both a client and a payee?
2. How do they reconcile the divergence of these assessments?
3. Will the proposed changes to the assessment system address this problem?

Answer:

1. The exact meaning of this question is unclear. Both the payee and payer of a child support assessment are considered to be 'clients' or 'customers' of CSA. Some context around this question would be useful to provide an accurate, thorough, response.
2. In each individual assessment where the care of the children of a relationship is shared or divided between the parents, the amount payable by each parent to the other is calculated, and the two amounts are offset. Even where there are two of these separate assessments, it would be extremely rare for both parents to be assessed to pay the other. The parent on the lower income will almost always be assessed to pay no child support.
3. CSA is not in a position to answer this question.