

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: HS30

Outcome 1, Output 1

Topic: Core Department – Staffing, Late responses to questions on notice

Hansard Page/Written Question on Notice: Written

SENATOR EVANS asked on 1/11/05:

1. Please provide an update of the information that was provided in response to question on notice HS 69 from May Estimates.
2. For all questions on notice asked of the Department of Human Services and its agencies at May Estimates, please indicate:
 - The date the answer was cleared by the Department of Human Services,
 - The date the answer was submitted to the Minister's office for clearance, and
 - The date the answer was submitted to the Secretariat of the Finance and Public Administration Committee.
3. Are all questions cleared through the Department of Human Services? If so, why? Surely questions asked of Centrelink are the responsibility of Centrelink and not the Department of Human Services?
4. Why doesn't Centrelink submit its own responses straight to the Minister's office for clearance? Does Human Services now sign off on all responses to questions on notice submitted by Centrelink? If so, why?
5. Were any of the responses to questions on notice arising out of the May Estimates hearings originally supplied by Centrelink changed by officials of the Department of Human Services? Why?

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Answer:

1. The Department of Human Services comprises the core department, the Child Support Agency and CRS Australia. The following information is provided in relation to the core department. The following table reports the current planned establishment range for the core department as at 1 July 2006.

	Executive		Service Delivery – Policy and Strategy Division		Comprehensive Work Capacity Assessment Division		Delivery Analysis, Legal and Corporate Division		Total	
	<i>HS69</i>	30/06/06	<i>HS69</i>	30/06/06	<i>HS69</i>	30/06/06	<i>HS69</i>	30/06/06	<i>HS69</i>	30/06/06
SES	5	5	3	4	1	1	2	3	11	13
EL2	1	1	8	13	3	4	8	14	20	32
EL1			5	11	3	5	7	13	15	29
APS6	1	1	1		1	1	5	8	8	10
APS5							1	2	1	2
APS4	4	4	1	4			2	2	7	10
Graduates/cadets								2		2
TOTAL	<i>11</i>	11	<i>18</i>	32	<i>8</i>	11	<i>25</i>	44	<i>62</i>	98

2. Answers were submitted as they became available. A substantial number were submitted at the start of July and were considered by the Minister's Office as their workflow permitted. Some answers were submitted in late July. A number were delayed pending finalisation of consultation with policy departments about the provision of information online.
3. Yes. All responses are processed and cleared through the Department of Human Services. This is to ensure quality, clarity and consistency in answers.
4. All parliamentary matters are cleared by the Department of Human Services. This is the case for all of the Human Services agencies.
5. No. In the case of some answers, officials of the Department requested answers be clarified, updated and corrected for errors. Typically the changes suggested by DHS are made in Centrelink by Centrelink.