

Senate Finance and Public Administration Standing Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Finance and Public Administration Portfolio

Department of Human Services and agencies

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2006-2007, 31 October 2006

Question: HS13

Outcome 1, Output 1.1

Topic: Contact Model

Hansard Page: F&PA 130

[In relation to Contact Model]

Senator WONG—It is already in the public arena. There have been a number of comments made by your minister and others that about 60 per cent of people on the dole have to report fortnightly to Centrelink. Is that about right as a national figure?

Mr Whalan—The figure now would be just over 60 per cent. Our ambition in the offices where we are moving to put in this new model is to try and increase it to as close to 90 per cent as we can.

Senator WONG—Can you tell me the raw number? What does that jump of 30 per cent from 60 per cent mean? How many more people across the country? How many contacts? How many more contacts per fortnight?

Mr Whalan—We will take that on notice.

Senator WONG—Perhaps we could do it this way. How many more people will need to move to fortnightly contact to get to the 90 per cent? Is it still intended to be a three-minute interview or more?

Mr Whalan—3.5 minutes.

Senator WONG—How many additional staff hours per fortnight are estimated to be required in order to achieve that?

Mr Whalan—We will take that on notice.

Answer:

1. The National figure of Newstart and Youth Allowance job seekers reporting fortnightly as at 3 November 2006 was 346,075 (61.27%).
2. In Customer Service Centres that have implemented the Contact Model the total number of job seekers expected to be fortnightly reporters is 120,954 (90 per cent). The difference from those already reporting fortnightly to those that will need to contact fortnightly is 37,780.
3. To achieve the goal of 90 per cent under the Contact Model, it is anticipated that approximately 2 or 3 extra staff per office will be required.

To prepare this answer it has taken approximately 4 hours and 36 minutes at an estimated cost of \$252.