

**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: HS18**

**Outcome 1, Output 1.1**

**Topic: Centrelink - Compliance**

**Hansard Page/Written Question on notice: F&PA 132**

**SENATOR SIEWERT** asked on 31/10/2006:

Senator SIEWERT—I need to take a step back. There are 1,921 [instances of job seekers having an eight-week non-payment period applied as at 29 September]. How does that correspond to the previous quarter?

Mr Whalan—It was a completely different regime in the previous period. In 2005-06, there were around 11,000 income support rate reductions per month.

Senator SIEWERT—Rate reductions?

Mr Whalan—Correct. Different regimes. Those rate reductions varied from 16 per cent reductions for six months through to the eight-week non-payment period. So it is apples and oranges, but there was a much higher volume.

Senator SIEWERT—Can you break it down into the eight-week non-payment period? Are you able to provide those figures and separate those figures?

Mr Whalan—I would like to be clear about what you would like.

Senator SIEWERT—The figure you gave me of 11,000 per month is all the rate reductions, isn't it?

**Answer:**

During the previous quarter (1 April 2006 to 30 June 2006) there were 1,910 eight-week non-payment periods applied to Centrelink customers.

To prepare this answer it has taken approximately 2 hours and 21 minutes at an estimated cost of \$140.