

Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Finance and Administration Portfolio

Department of Human Services and Agencies

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2006-2007, 31 October, 2006

Question: HS40

Outcome #, Output #

Topic: Job Capacity Assessments

Written Question on Notice:

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

- 1) By 30 September, how many Job Capacity Assessments (JCAs) had been:
 - a) submitted?
 - b) finalised?
- 2) What are the numbers of “did not attend” to date, broken down by state and territory, and as a percentage of appointments?
- 3) How many JCAs were submitted for:
 - a) people seeking an activity test exemption on the grounds of medical incapacity?
 - b) new Disability Support Pension (DSP) claimants?
 - c) existing DSP claimants subject to a medical or work capacity review?
 - d) people identified through the Job Seeker Classification Instrument (JSCI) as having severe or multiple barriers to employment?
- 4) How many JCAs have been finalised for:
 - a) people seeking an activity test exemption on the grounds of medical incapacity?
 - b) new Disability Support Pension (DSP) claimants?
 - c) existing DSP claimants subject to a medical or work capacity review?
 - d) people identified through the Job Seeker Classification Instrument (JSCI) as having severe or multiple barriers to employment?
- 5) For those JCAs that have been finalised seeking an activity test exemption on the grounds of medical incapacity, how many have been upheld?
- 6) For those JCAs that have been finalised for new claims to the DSP, how many have been upheld? For those people that were assessed as ineligible for DSP, what other payments have they been assessed as eligible for instead?
- 7) Of those finalised JCAs that involved reviewing existing DSP recipients, how many people were assessed as eligible to continue to receive the DSP? For those people that were assessed as ineligible for DSP, what other payments have they been assessed as eligible for instead?
- 8) For those JCAs that have been finalised for people with severe or multiple barriers, what payments have people been recommended to receive?

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- 9) Of all JCAs that have been finalised, how many recommended a referral to:
 - a) Job Network?
 - b) Disability Employment Network?
 - c) Vocational Rehabilitation Services?
 - d) Personal Support Program?
 - e) Job Placement, Education and Training?
 - f) other services?
- 10) What is the average time taken to complete the assessments? How many completed on 2, 4 and 4 or more weeks?
- 11) How many reports have been re-submitted?
- 12) How many JCA's done by telephone or on the papers?
- 13) What is the average time between referral by a Job Capacity Assessment to, and commencement in:
 - a) Job Network?
 - b) Disability Employment Network?
 - c) Vocational Rehabilitation Services?
 - d) Personal Support Program?
 - e) Job Placement, Education and Training?
 - f) other services?
- 14) For those people who were not referred to an employment service, what was the reason for non-referral?
- 15) How many specialists' reports have requested so far?

Answer:

- 1) All reports are classified as finalised 28 days after being submitted by the assessor unless Centrelink has not finalised the client's eligibility for income support payment within that period.
 - a) As at 29 September 2006, 37,357 Job Capacity Assessments had been submitted but not yet finalised which, as noted above, are generally reports that were submitted within the previous 28 days.
 - b) As at 29 September 2006, 33,964 Job Capacity Assessments had been submitted since 1 July 2006 and had been finalised. This is a lower number than in a) because of the initial gradual build up in referrals since 1 July 2006 and the 28 day delay before submitted reports are finalised. For future periods, the number of reports finalised since 1 July 2006 will exceed the number of reports submitted but yet to be finalised at any one time.

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- 2) Where clients do not attend a second appointment their referral is cancelled and they are returned to the Agency that referred them to the assessment. Up to 17 November 2006, 16,180 assessments could not be completed due to non-attendance by the client. The break-down by State and Territory is shown below.

	No. JCA reports finalised as unable to complete due to the client not attending	% of all submitted JCA reports
ACT	178	12.2
New South Wales	4,610	9.7
Northern Territory	313	14.5
Queensland	3,744	11.9
South Australia	1,218	11.0
Victoria	3,228	9.5
Western Australia	2,465	16.5
Tasmania	421	10.3
AUSTRALIA TOTAL	16,180	11.1

- 3) As at 6 October 2006 for assessments that had been submitted but not yet finalised (as discussed in point 1):
- 8,687 JCAs had been submitted for people seeking an activity test exemption on the grounds of medical incapacity.
 - 6,562 were for new Disability Support Pension claimants.
 - 582 were for existing DSP recipients subject to a review.
 - 4,047 were for people identified through the JSCI: Of these, 2,772 were for JSCI Disability Assessments, 2,795 were for JSCI Personal Factors Assessments and 1,853 were for JSCI Special Needs Assessments.
- 4) As at 6 October 2006 for assessments that had been submitted since 1 July 2006 and had been finalised (as discussed in point 1)
- 10,507 JCAs had been finalised for people seeking an activity test exemption on the grounds of medical incapacity.
 - 5,921 were for new Disability Support Pension claimants.
 - 671 were for existing DSP recipients subject to a review.
 - 3,996 were for people identified through any JSCI: Of these 2,993 were for JSCI Disability Assessments, 2,513 were for JSCI Personal Factors Assessments and 2,109 were for JSCI Special Needs Assessments.
- 5) Question has been redirected to DEWR to provide response as policy owner for social security decisions.
- 6) Question has been redirected to DEWR to provide response as policy owner for social security decisions.
- 7) Question has been redirected to DEWR to provide response as policy owner for social security decisions.
- 8) Job Capacity Assessors do not recommend the payments people should receive.

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- 9) All data to 6 October 2006 for assessments that have been submitted since 1 July 2006.
- a) 16,453 recommended a referral to Job Network
 - b) 11,230 recommended a referral to Disability Employment Network
 - c) 14,455 recommended a referral to Vocational Rehabilitation Services
 - d) 13,620 recommended a referral to Personal Support Programme
 - e) 773 recommended a referral to Job Placement, Education and Training
 - f) 4,822 recommended a referral to other services, including Business Services and complementary programmes, some of which may have also had a recommended referral to one of the above programmes.
- 10) All data to 6 October 2006 for assessments that have been submitted since 1 July 2006.
- 53,267 reports were submitted within 5 business days inclusive of the day the client was referred for the assessment;
 - 11,798 reports were submitted between 6 and 10 business days inclusive;
 - 5,766 reports were submitted between 11 and 15 business days inclusive;
 - 3,390 reports were submitted between 16 and 20 business days inclusive;
 - 1,713 reports were submitted between 21 and 25 business days inclusive; and
 - 2,119 reports were submitted over 25 business days from the day the client was referred for the assessment.
- 11) A JCA report can be reopened by the JCA for amendment, or returned by Centrelink if more information is needed to make a Social Security determination or if new evidence is received that will alter the original assessment. The assessor will then amend the report and resubmit it. As at 6 October 2006, 159 reports had a status of 'reopened' and 809 had a status of 'returned'.
- 12) As at 6 October 2006, 2,704 (3.5%) assessments were completed by telephone and 2,953 (3.8%) were completed as a file assessment.
- 13) Question has been redirected to DEWR to provide response as that department has policy responsibility for Providers of Government Employment Services.
- 14) There are three reasons why a Job Capacity Assessor would not refer a customer to a programme of assistance - client has very limited capacity, client already participating in a programme and other which includes a range of circumstances such as client in crisis, client experiencing domestic violence, incarceration or legal restriction etc.
- 15) As at 6 October 2006, there were 295 assessments where a referral to a specialist was recorded.

To prepare this answer it has taken approximately 17 hours at an estimated cost of \$887.