

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: HS45

Outcome 1, Output 1.1

Topic: Centrelink - Search and Seizure Powers

Hansard Page/Written Question on Notice: Written

SENATOR WONG asked on 31/10/2006:

With regard to the current “search and seizure” powers how many private homes were raided in 2004-05 and 2005-06? Provide a breakdown of the purpose of these raids (e.g. suspected Marriage-like Relationship, suspected double/multiple identity, suspected of working and not declaring income, etc). What action resulted from these raids (e.g. debts raised, prosecution action, payment cancelled, etc)?

What action resulted from these raids on family homes (i.e. number and amount of debts raised, number of people prosecuted)?

How many of these raids occurred when young children were on the premises?

Can you outline the procedures about the return of confiscated documents? Are clients told that these will be returned within 72 hours?

Answer:

Centrelink does not collect any national data on the number of warrants executed by the Australian Federal Police in relation to Centrelink matters.

Centrelink does not collect details on the presence of young children during the execution of warrants by the Australian Federal Police in relation to Centrelink matters.

The Australian Federal Police or Centrelink advise customers that they can have a copy of any documents that are seized as soon as practicable. If objects such as computers are seized they are returned within 72 hours.

Once a document has been determined as having no evidentiary value, the person from whom it was obtained is contacted and the return of the material is arranged. The return of the documents is recorded and a receipt is issued to the original possessor upon delivery of the confiscated material.

To prepare this answer it has taken approximately 9 hours and 41 minutes at an estimated cost of \$505.