

# Senate Finance and Public Administration Standing Committee

## SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES – 20 October 2009 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

### Human Services Portfolio

**Topic:** Child Support Program – Optical Surveillance

**Question reference number:** HS12

**Senator:** Bernardi

**Type of question:** *Written*

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 4 December 2009

**Number of pages:** 1

**Question:**

- a) At the May Estimates, it was also stated that six cases were being investigated for prosecution action, due to the surveillance trial. (see F&PA Estimates Hansard, 28.5.09, p.105 and Department of Human Services, Annual Report 2008–09, p.46) But the Annual Report says that only one customer was referred on to the Director of Public Prosecutions. Why did this happen?
- b) And what of the three cases that were referred to other areas of the CSP?

**Answer:**

- a) As at 30 June 2009, the CSP had referred one optical surveillance case (involving both a customer and an employer) to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions (CDPP). Of the remaining five cases:
  - one received warning letters advising that any future offences may be referred to the CDPP;
  - three matters were finalised with no further action due to a lack of evidence to support a criminal prosecution; and
  - one case remains an ongoing investigation.
- b) The current status of the three cases referred to other areas of the CSP is as follows:
  - one case is currently linked for deductions from the customer's Centrelink benefits;
  - one case is currently paying payments of \$1,000 per month in child support, including a contribution of \$118.50 per month towards the child support debt; and
  - one case currently has a Departure Prohibition Order in place and there have been no other enforcement options identified.