

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: HS16

Senator: Bernardi

Type of question: *Written*

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Question:

If the CSP is successfully able to prosecute people and collect overdue payments from them due to the surveillance trial, isn't it possible to get the totals of those collected payments and add them up to see how much was collected from the trial?

Answer:

The use of optical surveillance does not of itself achieve a collection outcome. Similarly, any resulting prosecution will not necessarily lead directly to child support payments. Prosecution arising from optical surveillance may lead to the imposition of a penalty, either a fine or custodial sentence, but no direct child support payment. However, there may be a general deterrence effect on these customers and others that results in better compliance with child support obligations in the future.