

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES - 16 FEBRUARY 2012 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Paid Parental Leave

Question reference number: HSW 1

Senator: Cash

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 29 March 2012

Number of pages: 2

Question:

- a) How many parents have waited more than 1 month after the birth of their child for payment of their Paid Parental Leave to be made?
- b) How many complaints has the Family Assistance Office received regarding the administration of the PPL?
- c) How many staff are currently dedicated to the PPL scheme in the Family Assistance Office? How does this compare to the first 6 months of Paid Parental Leave?

Answer:

- a) The date that a Parental Leave payment is due for a customer can vary due to a number of factors, including:
 - the date of the child's birth or adoption;
 - the customer's nominated start date of their Paid Parental Leave period (this can be within 52 weeks following the birth or adoption);
 - employer payroll processing cut-off dates; and
 - employee pay dates and pay frequencies.

In order to make a Parental Leave payment, the department must ensure that a customer is eligible for the payment, which requires information to be provided to the department from the customer, such as proof of birth or adoption.

Additionally, the department must ensure that employers accept responsibility to provide payment to their eligible employees, and have registered and provided all of the information required to fulfil this obligation.

The department does not collect information specifically about the number of parents who have waited more than one month after the birth of their child, as in many circumstances parents voluntarily choose to commence payments after this timeframe.

- b) Since the Paid Parental Leave scheme commenced on 1 January 2011, there were 646 complaints registered with the Department's Customer Relations Unit up until the end of December 2011.
- c) In 2010-11, a total of 99.2 departmental Average Staffing Level (ASL) worked on the Paid Parental Leave scheme. In 2011-12, a total of 163 departmental ASL will have worked on the scheme. These figures include Service Centre, Call Centre, Processing Services and Business Hotline staff.