

## Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

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

#### Human Services Portfolio

**Topic:** Fraud Line and Tip-offs

**Question reference number:** HSW 15

**Senator:** Siewert

**Type of question:** Written

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

**Number of pages:** 2

**Question:**

In the financial year in the financial periods 2010-11 and 31 July 2011 to 31 December 2011:

- a. How many "tip-offs" were made to the Centrelink fraud hot-line?
- b. Of the total number of calls to the "fraud line" indicate the percentage and number of cases that are eventually investigated, that are made each day and annually.
- c. How many "tip-offs" to the Centrelink fraud line resulted in no change? (Provide numbers and percentages)?
- d. How many "tip-offs" to the Centrelink fraud line resulted in a payment increase? (Provide numbers and percentages)?
- e. How many "tip-offs" to the Centrelink fraud line resulted in a payment decrease? (Provide numbers and percentages)?
- f. How many "tip-offs" to the Centrelink fraud line resulted in a payment being cancelled? (Provide numbers and percentages)?
- g. Does Centrelink (DHS) keep a record of what could be termed "vexatious dob-ins"? Could you provide the Committee with a copy of the DHS e-reference or instruction detailing how these cases are handled? How many of this type of tip-off were received?
- h. What was the cost to the taxpayer of investigating tip-offs that proved to be groundless and led to no change in payment?

**Answer:**

- a. In 2010-11: 108,010. From 1 July 2011 to 31 December 2011: 48,368.
- b. In 2010-11: 1,840 or 1.7 per cent received were investigated with a view to prosecute. From 1 July 2011 to 31 December 2011: 604 or 1.2 per cent were investigated with a view to prosecute. The number of tip-offs leading to review or investigation is not available.

- c. In 2010-11: 19,785 or 74.6 per cent. From 1 July 2011 to 31 December 2011: 23,729 or 95.9 per cent
- d. In 2010-11: 326 or 1.2 per cent. From 1 July 2011 to 31 December 2011: 39 or 0.2 per cent
- e. In 2010-11: 2,660 or 10 per cent. From 1 July 2011 to 31 December 2011: 336 or 1.4 per cent
- f. In 2010-11: 1 302 or 4.9 per cent. From 1 July 2011 to 31 December 2011: 144 or 0.6 per cent
- g. Tip-offs that may be considered vexatious are not separately identified. There are no special or separate instructions for dealing with tip-offs that may be considered vexatious.
- h. The cost of dealing with tip-offs that were found to be groundless is not readily available, nor would it be cost effective to obtain.