

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO**  
**2016-2017 Additional Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome Number: 4.2 Affordable Housing**

**Question No: SQ17-000284**

**Topic: Commonwealth Rent Assistance**

**Hansard page: Written**

**Senator Rachel Siewert asked:**

- a) Please provide the total number of Commonwealth Rent Assistance recipients, by category and state.
- b) The number of Commonwealth Rent Assistance recipients currently in housing stress (>30 per cent of gross income on housing costs unless otherwise defined)
- c) The number of Commonwealth Rent Assistance recipients who would be in housing stress if Rent Assistance was increased by:
  - i) \$15
  - ii) \$25.

**Answer:**

(a) The answer to this question consists of two tables:

- . Table 1 dealing with category of primary payment type, and
- . Table 2 dealing with category of income unit type.

**Table 1 - Number of Commonwealth Rent Assistance recipients (by income units<sup>1</sup>) by state and category of primary payment type<sup>2</sup>, September 2016<sup>3</sup>**

Primary payment type	State/Territory								
	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total <sup>4</sup>
Disability Support Pension	86,157	62,081	63,755	17,327	19,511	9,068	1,794	1,332	<b>261,040</b>
Age Pension	89,396	54,668	68,185	21,998	18,347	6,703	1,307	1,064	<b>261,675</b>
Carer Payment	23,755	12,788	13,405	2,723	3,685	1,668	170	149	<b>58,345</b>
Parenting Payment (Single)	42,314	26,728	36,903	12,483	10,796	4,158	866	739	<b>134,988</b>
Newstart Allowance	83,783	66,060	73,130	28,980	25,720	8,229	1,846	1,705	<b>289,463</b>
Youth Allowance (student)	18,137	20,586	16,123	4,821	5,226	1,891	2,252	122	<b>69,178</b>
Youth Allowance (other)	3,974	2,902	5,000	1,634	1,434	675	171	97	<b>15,889</b>
Austudy	6,411	6,841	6,066	2,042	1,936	567	378	83	<b>24,333</b>
Parenting Payment (Partnered)	8,792	5,634	6,140	1,667	1,769	692	167	91	<b>24,952</b>
FTB (Only)	63,050	45,668	54,862	17,557	12,823	3,227	2,625	1,462	<b>201,275</b>
Other payments	5,434	3,445	3,160	1,079	947	256	115	69	<b>14,505</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>431,203</b>	<b>307,401</b>	<b>346,729</b>	<b>112,311</b>	<b>102,194</b>	<b>37,134</b>	<b>11,691</b>	<b>6,913</b>	<b>1,355,643</b>

<sup>1</sup> An income unit comprises a single person (with or without dependent children) or a couple (with or without dependent children). Single social security recipients living together in the same household are regarded as separate income units.

<sup>2</sup> One member of a couple is treated as the reference person for the income unit, based on the type of payment they receive. The general order of priority is: Pensions; Allowances; Family Tax Benefit (FTB). Parenting Payment (Partnered) will be reported for income units where one member receives Parenting Payment and their partner is not receiving any other income support payment. They will only be reported as receiving FTB Part A if neither receives a social security payment.

<sup>3</sup> As at fortnight ending 30 September 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Total include other territories and unknown addresses

**Table 2 - Number of CRA recipients (by income units) by state and income unit type, September 2016\***

Income unit type	State/Territory								
	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Single, no children, Sharers	51,443	46,681	48,499	16,601	13,163	3,699	2,150	877	<b>183,137</b>
Other single, no children	175,459	125,442	129,616	43,318	42,732	16,648	4,650	2,812	<b>540,712</b>
Couple no children	39,053	22,691	31,484	9,215	7,788	3,222	622	380	<b>114,461</b>
Sole parent, 1 or 2 children	70,001	47,833	60,954	19,669	18,408	6,694	1,547	1,191	<b>226,298</b>
Sole parent, 3 or more children	17,711	10,668	15,571	4,410	3,944	1,685	295	269	<b>54,553</b>
Couple, 1 or 2 children	52,353	37,667	38,484	12,681	11,367	3,287	1,732	854	<b>158,426</b>
Couple, 3 or more children	24,191	15,780	21,300	6,069	4,492	1,810	680	450	<b>74,772</b>
Couple, temp or ill separated	992	639	821	348	300	89	15	80	<b>3,284</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>431,203</b>	<b>307,401</b>	<b>346,729</b>	<b>112,311</b>	<b>102,194</b>	<b>37,134</b>	<b>11,691</b>	<b>6,913</b>	<b>1,355,643</b>

\* Notes 1, 3 and 4 of Table 1 apply to this Table also

(b) The number and percentage of CRA recipients (income units) under rental stress as at 30 September 2016 were 547,564 and 40.8 per cent of all CRA recipients at September 2016 respectively (note that about 1 per cent of income units in receipt of CRA are excluded from housing stress calculations due to data limitations).

(c) The Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) architecture does not allow for modelling these scenarios. The Department would be unable to answer this question without making significant assumptions or heavily qualifying the response and may provide misleading housing stress scenarios.