

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2013-14 Supplementary Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: Cross Outcome - Across Programs

Question No: 159

Topic: Staffing reductions

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

- a) Are there any plans for further staff reductions/voluntary redundancies? If so, please advise details including if there is a reduction target, how this will be achieved, and if any services/programs will be cut.
- b) If there are plans for staff reductions, please give the reason why these are happening.
- c) Are there any plans for involuntary redundancies? If yes, provide details.

Answer:

a) Staff reductions will be necessary to reach an affordable budget position. At this stage the Department of Social Services (DSS) envisages reductions of between 250 to 300 employees. These reductions will be achieved through a range of mechanisms including:

- natural attrition;
- a review of non-ongoing and contractor arrangements with any non-ongoing contracts to cease at the expiration of their term;
- external recruitment only in exceptional circumstances, and only with Executive and APSC endorsement;
- use of an internal redeployment register, supplementing the APS-wide redeployment register prior to advertising any vacancies;
- priority consideration to potentially excess employees for ongoing DSS vacancies;
- collaborating with incoming machinery of government agencies on management of vacancies and FTE levels; and
- voluntary redundancies.

DSS is not planning to reduce services or programs, and will continue to review the delivery of services to achieve further efficiencies in the use of departmental resources.

- b) Staffing reductions will be required as DSS needs to reduce expenditure and staffing levels to manage its workforce within its budget.
- c) DSS is not planning any involuntary redundancies.