

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2013-2014**

Outcome 3 - Employment

DEEWR Question No. EW0142_14

Senator Cash asked on 4 June 2013, Hansard page 53

Question

Transitioned from Parenting Payment Single to Newstart

Senator CASH: I will move now to Improving incentives to work: extended pensioner concession card entitlement for single parents. With regard to this measure, how many income support recipients will now be eligible to receive the pensioner concession where they would not previously have been eligible? Ms Taylor: I do not know that we have forward projections of the numbers who would be able to, but I can take that on notice. What I can tell you is that, since 1 January 2013, 1,168 parenting payment single recipients lost eligibility for income support. When their youngest child turns eight and their earnings are such that they are not eligible to go to any other benefit, and therefore move off income support, they would have lost the pensioner concession card. I can take on notice from 1 January 2014—those forward numbers—but as an indication there are the numbers since 1 January 2013. Senator CASH: Please take this on notice: how many of the new recipients are persons who were transitioned from parenting payment single to Newstart following the eligibility changes? Ms Taylor: They would be able to retain their pensioner concession card. Retaining the pensioner concession card relates to those who are totally moving off income support; they are not moving to any other payment. Senator CASH: Again, what were the reasons for these changes commencing on 1 January as opposed to 1 July? Ms Taylor: In this case I would say part of the main reason is the time to put the changes into place. A lot of those go to the system changes required to do that. But the timing is also a decision of government. Senator CASH: Ms Paul, I have the same question as I had previously: when was the department directed to model these changes and by whom? Were these changes considered at all when the government was modelling changes to the eligibility for parenting payment ahead of the 2012-13 budget? Ms Paul: The answer is the same. It was in the budget consideration—the same—and we will have to take on notice the other questions.

Answer

From 1 January 2014, approximately 2000 single principal carer parents each year will qualify for extended access to a Pensioner Concession Card.

It is not appropriate for the Department to comment on modeling the Australian Government may have undertaken in the context of Cabinet Budget processes.