

Senate Community Affairs References Committee

Response to questions on notice

Public hearing, 19 April 2-17

Portside Centre, Sydney

Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman

Question 1

Hansard page reference: 60

Response:

As part of the Commonwealth Ombudsman's own motion investigation, the Department of Human Services (DHS) provided this office with the project documentation for the Online Compliance Intervention (OCI). This project documentation did not include a copy of the data matching program protocols set out in the *Guidelines on Data Matching in Australian Government Administration* issued by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC).

Question 2

Hansard page reference: 62

Response:

In the period July 2016 to March 2017, the Commonwealth Ombudsman investigated 44 complaints about the OCI system. The outcomes of these investigations are set out below:

| Outcome for each issue investigated                           |    |
|---|----|
| <b>Debt - Automated data matching (20)</b>                    |    |
| No further investigation - Appropriate remedy provided        | 1  |
| No further investigation - Not warranted in all circumstances | 4  |
| No outcome (ongoing)  | 15 |
| <b>Debt - Raising and notification (24)</b>                   |    |
| Advised to pursue with agency complained of                   | 2  |
| Investigation declined - Not warranted in all circumstances   | 1  |
| No further investigation - Appropriate remedy provided        | 6  |
| No further investigation - Not warranted in all circumstances | 11 |
| No outcome (ongoing)  | 4  |
| TOTAL   | 44 |

### **Questions 3**

**Hansard page reference 62:**

**Response:**

In the period July 2016 to March 2017, the Commonwealth Ombudsman recorded five debt collection issues in complaints received.

Debt complaints usually include several issues and are frequently recorded as issues related to payment rates and debt raising and notification. In the period July 2016 to March 2017, the Commonwealth Ombudsman's office recorded 582 debt raising and notification issues in complaints received.