Senate Select Committee on COVID-19

INQUIRY INTO THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Services Australia

Topic: JobKeeper and Social Security Payment - Dual Payments

Question reference number: IQ20-000088

Member: Katy Gallagher
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Question:

How many people are receiving JobKeeper and a social security payment, broken down by payment type?

Answer:

The JobKeeper data provided to Services Australia (the Agency) by the Australia Taxation Office does not confirm that nominated employees have received a payment under the JobKeeper programme. It is therefore not possible to state how many people are receiving JobKeeper and a social security payment.

As at 24 July 2020, there were approximately 134,000 people identified as social security payment customers, who have been nominated by their employer as part of the JobKeeper programme.

Social security customers receiving income tested payments must report their earnings to Services Australia fortnightly to allow calculation of the correct rate of payment. JobKeeper income received from an employer is treated as ordinary income. Most individuals who receive the $1,500 per fortnight rate of JobKeeper payment, will not receive income support payments during that period. There are limited circumstances where this will occur, including people who are single principal carers and some pensioners.

Services Australia undertakes extensive communication efforts to inform customers of their obligation to report JobKeeper income. The Agency has also begun targeted contact via SMS, letter and/or phone with social security payment customers identified as nominated for the JobKeeper programme, to support and remind them of their income reporting obligations. This will minimise the possibility of customers receiving an overpayment of welfare benefits.