

## **Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee**

Budget Estimates – 03 June 2024  
**ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

The Hon Bill Shorten MP  
Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme  
Minister for Government Services

**Topic: Income Apportionment Debts**

**Question reference number: SA SQ24-000468**

**Outcome Number: 1**

**Senator:** Penny Allman-Payne

**Type of Question:** Spoken. Hansard Page: 21

**Date set by the Committee for the return of answer:** 25 July 2024

### **Question:**

Senator ALLMAN-PAYNE: At this point in time, in relation to income apportionment, how many debts have been reviewed and how many incorrectly calculated debts have been identified?

Mr Birrer: I'll take that on notice, but, in terms of review, do you mean debts under recovery? What we've done is pause debts that are potentially impacted by income apportionment. So we're not recovering those debts.

### **Answer:**

Service Australia's (the Agency's) systems are unable to conclusively determine if income apportionment has been used to calculate a debt without the manual review of customer records by staff.

The Agency examined 4,286 activities across two different sampling exercises to better understand the extent to which income apportionment was relied upon to calculate debts relating to employment income earned prior to 7 December 2020. Both sampling exercises were conducted as desktop reviews and did not involve seeking additional information from customers or third parties.

Of these activities, 2,886 (67 per cent) were related to employment income. Of the 2,886 activities related to employment income, 2,038 (71 per cent) were impacted by income apportionment.

Of those 2,038 activities, 781 (38 per cent) had sufficient information already on file to support a recalculation. Those recalculations affirmed that debts or potential debts would still exist in approximately 98 per cent of cases.