

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES 11 NOVEMBER 2019

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Services Australia

Topic: Single Status Verification

Question reference number: 504 (SQ19-000700)

Senator: Siewert

Type of question: Hansard pages 25 - 26

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 12 December 2019

Number of pages: 2

Question:

- a) Senator SIEWERT: No, sorry, the reaffirmation. The single status verification—sorry. Have you completed that process now? Do you know what I'm talking about?
Ms Rule: I do. That's just not my area.
Senator SIEWERT: Okay. I want to know how far you have got into that process. Have you now covered everybody that's on parenting payment single?
Ms Rule: We'll just see whether there's somebody here who can answer that.
Ms Leon: We may not have everyone here tonight.
Senator SIEWERT: Fair enough.
Ms Leon: If we don't, we may need to take it on notice.
Ms Rule: Sorry, Senator. We're going to have to take that on notice.
Senator SIEWERT: Okay. Can I ask, then: how many people have you now verified? Obviously there are new recipients.
Ms Rule: Yes.
- b) Senator SIEWERT: But do you have people going back further to contact? How many people have you changed payments for because of the verification process?
Ms Rule: Yes, we'll take that on notice.
- c) Senator SIEWERT: Okay, thank you. Do you do that for family tax benefit? Do you contact parents to check that they've still got the kids? I'm linking this back to the grandparent carers and one way of verifying and supporting grandparent carers.
Ms Rule: I suspect we do, but I don't know. I'll have to take that on notice. I'm sorry.

Answer:

- a) The Third Party Relationship Status Review process for existing customers in receipt of Parenting Payment Single and single parents in receipt of Newstart Allowance commenced 1 January 2018. The reviews are being conducted over four years. For the period 1 January 2018 to 1 November 2019, 75,598 reviews were finalised; this includes single parents who receive Parenting Payment Single or Newstart Allowance.

- b) 950 reviews were finalised where the customer's relationship status was verified as partnered.
- c) A review process to confirm relationship status does not exist for the purposes of Family Tax Benefit (FTB).

Where notified of a change in care arrangements, including children going into the care of grandparents, Services Australia will contact customers to verify the information.