

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES - 16 FEBRUARY 2012 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Centrelink Call Wait Times

Question reference number: HS 15

Senator: Fifield

Type of question: Hansard page 110

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 29 March 2012

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator FIFIELD: There are allegations from constituents about waits of three hours on hold. Is that possible?

Mr Tidswell: I do not have figures that will tell me of on-hold wait times of three hours. Over this financial year our average wait time has been approximately 10 minutes. Certainly there are busy times of the day. You have a bell curve distribution of wait times but I do not have information before me of three hours. We put as much capability into our call channel as possible, moving work around and the like, so that we can ensure we get the best possible service.

Ms Campbell: We are also encouraging the use of other channels, such as the online services, so that people do not have to use the phone.

Senator FIFIELD: Would you take on notice whether there were periods where people were on hold for up to three hours?

Mr Tidswell: Yes.

Answer:

The department has no examples of customers being on hold for periods exceeding three hours.