

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES - 27 FEBRUARY 2014 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Face to Face Services

Question reference number: HS 121

Senator: Cameron

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 24 April 2014

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Has there been staff reductions affecting the delivery of face to face services? If so, how many, where located and what is the effect on service delivery performance?

Answer:

Since 7 September 2013, staffing levels have reduced by 3.1 per cent (281 employees) in face to face services when comparing staff numbers as at 28 February 2014.

To provide further staffing numbers breakdown by location is difficult to do accurately as staff are moved flexibly between sites within a zone, between zones and other service delivery channels depending on operational demand.

Through a focus on efficiently deploying resources the department has been able to ensure that the changes in staffing levels have not impacted on customer wait times. In 2013–14, as at the week ending 15 September 2013, the average wait time in shopfronts was 17 minutes 25 seconds. In comparison, as at the week ending 2 March 2014, the average wait time in shopfronts was 17 minutes 27 seconds.

Wait times for services vary on a daily, weekly and monthly basis as the department manages its day-to-day business, seasonal peaks such as end of financial year reconciliations and responds to specific events such as bushfire and flood emergencies.