

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2013-14 Additional Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: Cross Outcome - Across Programs

Question No: 92

Topic: Government Payments of Accounts

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

- a) From Supplementary Budget Estimates in November 2013 to date, what has been the average time period for the department/agency paid its accounts to contractors, consultants or others.
- b) How many payments owed (as a number and as a percentage of the total) have been paid in under 30 days.
- c) How many payments owed (as a number and as a percentage of the total) have been paid in between 30 and 60 days.
- d) How many payments owed (as a number and as a percentage of the total) have been paid in between 60 and 90 days.
- e) How many payments owed (as a number and as a percentage of the total) have been paid in between 90 and 120 days.
- f) How many payments owed (as a number and as a percentage of the total) have been paid in over 120 days.
- g) For accounts not paid within 30 days, is interest being paid on overdue amounts and if so how much has been paid by the portfolio/department agency since 7 September 2013.
- h) Where interest is being paid, what rate of interest is being paid and how is this rate determined.

Answer:

Department of Social Services:

- a) The average time was 22.4 days
- b) 2268 (97.05%)
- c) 56 (2.40%)
- d) 6 (0.25%)
- e) 4 (0.17%)
- f) 3 (0.13%)
- g) Yes, interest is paid to small companies when the invoice is paid late as per Finance Circular 2012/02. Since September 2013 \$451.42 interest has been paid.
- h) Interest is calculated following the General Interest Charge (GIC) rates as per guidance provided by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

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Social Security Appeals Tribunal

a) 15.93 days.

Note: The answers which follow include cases in which a payment was not “owed” because the SSAT had not received the goods and/or services, or a tax invoice. The SSAT’s system is being changed so that instances of a payment not yet being owed are excluded.

b) 738 payments (96.2%).

c) 16 payments (2.1%).

d) 7 payments (0.9%).

e) 4 payments (0.5%).

f) 2 payments (0.3%).

g) No interest has been paid on overdue accounts as the provision of goods and/or services had not been received, invoices had not been received and vendor had not updated the SSAT on changes to their contact details.

h) N/A.

Australian Institute of Family Studies

a) Since Supplementary Budget Estimates in November 2013, payment of invoices has taken on average 15 days.

b) Total of 317 payments owed have been paid in under 30 days.

c) Total of 5 payments owed have been paid between 30 and 60 days.

d) Nil.

e) Nil.

f) Nil.

g) No interest has been paid on overdue amounts.

h) Not applicable.

National Disability Insurance Agency

a) The average time period for the Agency to process all payments between 21 November 2013 and 18 March 2014 has been 16.1 days.

b) 969 payments (80 per cent) were processed in under 30 days.

c) 216 payments (18 per cent) were processed from 30 to less than 60 days (93 of these payments were processed in 30 days).

d) 16 payments (1 per cent) were processed from 60 to less than 90 days.

e) 7 payments (half of 1 per cent) were processed from 90 to less than 120 days.

f) 10 payments (1 per cent) were processed in over 120 days.

g) The government policy on payment of interest on overdue invoices does not apply to agencies under the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*.

h) Not applicable.

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Australian Aged Care Quality Agency

- a) 14 days
- b) 100%
- c) Nil
- d) Nil
- e) Nil
- f) Nil
- g) Nil
- h) No interest paid.