

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES – 26 FEBRUARY 2015 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Payment processing – Liquid Assets Waiting Period

Question reference number: HS 15

Senator: Siewert

Type of question: Hansard page 37

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 17 April 2015

Number of pages: 2

Question:

- a) Senator SIEWERT: If you could take that on notice it would be appreciated. Do you keep figures on people that apply—I am thinking of Newstart in particular—whose assets are above the threshold?

Ms Campbell: I believe we do; those people that we reject. Yes.

Ms Golightly: I think we do record that as a reason. But we will check.

Senator SIEWERT: Could you take that on notice—if you do, obviously, and, if you do, how many?

Ms Campbell: Yes.

- b) Senator SIEWERT: Can you take this on notice: how long does it take people to use up their assets and come back on? I know that is a bit difficult, because people have different levels of assets.

Ms Campbell: There is a liquid waiting asset period which identifies if someone is likely to be going onto payment and that they have these liquid assets. There is a set of criteria around those. We work that out upfront, depending on how much money it is, how long before they will be able to go onto payment. We could provide some information on that.

Answer:

- a) Depending on what money a person has readily available when claiming Newstart Allowance, they may have to serve a Liquid Assets Waiting Period of between one and 13 weeks.

The Liquid Assets Waiting Period is the period a person must wait before being paid an allowance. A waiting period will apply if a person has funds equal to or above \$5,500 if single with no dependants or \$11,000 if partnered, or single with dependants.

During the 2013-14 financial year 29,509 Newstart Allowance applicants served a Liquid Assets Waiting Periods that ended within the financial year.

b) The following table lists the Liquid Assets Waiting Periods referred to in a) by duration:

Duration	Newstart Allowance Liquid Asset Waiting Periods
Up to 1 week	908
1 to < 2 weeks	1,236
2 to < 3 weeks	1,010
3 to < 4 weeks	1,018
4 to < 5 weeks	847
5 to < 6 weeks	919
6 to < 7 weeks	646
7 to < 8 weeks	749
8 to < 9 weeks	550
9 to < 10 weeks	951
10 to < 11 weeks	514
11 to < 12 weeks	544
12 to < 13 weeks	19,617
Total	29,509