

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

BUDGET ESTIMATES - 29 MAY 2012 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Centrelink – Staff Misconduct

Question reference number: HS 32

Senator: Fifield

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 27 July 2012

Number of pages: 1

Question:

- a) How many recorded instances of privacy breaches have there been by Centrelink staff in 2011-2012?
- b) What is the detail of these breaches?
- c) How many staff have been formally disciplined as a result of these breaches?
- d) Have any staff been sacked as a result of these breaches?

Answer:

On 1 July 2011, the department integrated to include Centrelink, Medicare Australia, the Child Support Agency and Commonwealth Rehabilitation Services Australia. The following information is provided in relation to staff who work for the Centrelink Program.

- a) From 1 July 2011 to 31 May 2012, there have been 126 formal investigations for substantiated privacy breaches.
- b) The majority of these investigations relate to unauthorised access to customer information and unauthorised release of departmental information.
- c) Of those 126 investigations:
 - 72 resulted in a written warning or formal counselling;
 - 14 are still under consideration;
 - 10 employees resigned prior to the investigation being finalised; and
 - 30 were found to have breached the APS Code of Conduct and were sanctioned accordingly.
- d) Of the 30 employees sanctioned for a breach of the APS Code of Conduct, two employees had their employment terminated.