

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

BUDGET ESTIMATES - 29 MAY 2012 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Centrelink – Complaints Against Staff

Question reference number: HS 35

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 complaints were lodged against Centrelink staff in 2010-2011?
- b) How many complaints were lodged against Centrelink staff in 2011-2012? How many of these complaints were upheld and what was the action taken against the staff member in question?
- c) How many Centrelink staff have been formally disciplined between 2010 and 2012 as a result of complaints relating to customer service?

Answer:

- a) In the 2010-11 financial year, the Department received 16,534 complaints about Centrelink staff; 5,293 complaints were in relation to staff attitude and 11,241 for staff knowledge and practice.
- b) In the 2011-12 financial year, the Department received 15,284 complaints about Centrelink staff; 5,224 complaints were in relation to staff attitude and 10,060 for staff knowledge and practice.

All complaints are taken seriously and both investigated and actioned at the local level. To collect the data required to answer the second part of this question would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.

- c) Between 1 July 2010 and 30 June 2012, there were 39 occasions where customer complaints resulted in the commencement of formal code of conduct investigations.