

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

BUDGET ESTIMATES – 5-6 JUNE 2014 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Income Support Payments - administration of Emergency Relief to those within the proposed Under 30s Measure.

Question reference number: HS 43

Senator: Cameron

Type of question: Hansard pages 31-32, 6 June 2014

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 25 July 2014

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator CAMERON: Yes, but I am asking because this is a different engagement practice. This is something that has never happened before, to my knowledge, in modern Australia where people will have absolutely no income for six months. So I am putting to you, will you have to increase your engagement with soup kitchens, charities and welfare organisations?

Ms Golightly: Mr Tidswell might be able to add to this, but our engagement is pretty regular as it is now. So, you know, that would—

Senator CAMERON: But I am not asking about now; I am asking about this massive change, unheard of in modern Australia, where Australian citizens will have no money, no means of support, by deliberate government decision, for six months.

Ms Golightly: As we also mentioned before, it may be that they are customers of ours for other reasons anyway. But, we have very regular engagement with local community groups and that will continue.

Senator CAMERON: I have not got a lot of time. Can you take on notice how you will maintain engagement, what additional resources you will need to maintain engagement because of the government changes and the circumstances of people living in abject poverty—I mean, abject poverty, no income whatsoever for six months. So if you can take that on notice and come back to me on that.

Answer:

The Department of Human Services will utilise its current practices to ensure that there is continued close engagement with local community groups, welfare agencies and support services.