

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

BUDGET ESTIMATES – 3 JUNE 2015 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Telephony Services – recorded messages

Question reference number: HS 7

Senator: Cameron

Type of question: Hansard page 18

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 24 July 2015

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Senator CAMERON: Can you give me details of how long the recorded message is on each different source of incoming?

Mr Tidswell: We will take that on notice, but I expect that would be quite a challenging thing—

Senator CAMERON: Would it?

Mr Tidswell: because it is a very complicated IVR with numerous utterances that will direct you to various places depending on points of time.

Senator CAMERON: I do not want to put the department to any unnecessary work on this—I want to be clear about that—but I would like to get some rough idea, even. The argument that you are putting back to me—that is, the department—is that yes, you look at that nine minutes and you are putting to us that people are getting genuine help during that nine minutes—

Mr Tidswell: Yes.

Senator CAMERON: But how long does the genuine help last for? If you are telling me that the genuine help lasts for one minute, then we have another eight minutes that people are hanging. If that help goes for five minutes, it is less that people are hanging. These are some of the issues—

Senator Payne: Could we provide you with a sample across a couple of different lines?

Senator CAMERON: Yes, that would be handy.

Answer:

The length of recorded messages will vary depending on the options the caller selects. When a caller enters the Interactive Voice Response (IVR), they are presented with an opening message about authentication which on the Families and Parenting Line (as an example) is twelve seconds. The opening message and authentication would take approximately one minute. The caller would then be presented with a number of hot topics relevant to that telephony line. Depending on their response they can be played one of a large number of bulletin board messages relevant to their issue. Once placed in a queue to a customer service officer there are also hold messages about other options to conduct their business and key initiatives. These may include information on using online services, apps or information that are available on the website.

The following are examples of the lengths of IVR messages on four main telephony lines.

Families and Parenting line

- School Kids Bonus Hot Topic – 2 minutes 8 seconds
- Single Income Family Supplement Bulletin Board – 1 minute 23 seconds

Employment Services line

- Employment Service Provider Bulletin Board – 37 seconds
- Claims Bulletin Board – 37 seconds

Disabilities, Sickness and Carers line

- Claim Bulletin Board – 1 minute 27 seconds
- Review Bulletin Board – 55 seconds

Participation Solutions line

- Employment Service Bulletin Board Transfer to Queue message – 34 seconds