

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

BUDGET ESTIMATES – 3 JUNE 2015 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Staffing

Question reference number: HS 45

Senator: Cameron

Type of question: Written

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Number of pages: 3

Question:

I refer to QON HS 24 from Additional Estimates concerning staffing.

- a) What is the change in headcount for non-ongoing staff (excluding casuals) at each of the points in time in the table in HS24 (a) compared to the previous year?
- b) What is the change in headcount for permanent staff in each of the points in time used in HS24 (a) compared to the previous year?
- c) In HS 24 (c) the department provided a breakdown of total IIE employed at each location. What is the change in permanent staffing numbers in each of those locations since 30 June 2012? What is the change in non-ongoing excluding IIEs staffing numbers in each of those locations since 30 June 2012?
- d) What changed in the nature of the work undertaken by the department between 30 June 2012 and 30 June 2013 to cause total numbers of IIE to increase by multiple of more than 12.5 times?
- e) What changed in the nature of the work undertaken by the department between 30 June 2013 and 28 February 2015 to cause total numbers of IIE to more than double?
- f) What is irregular and intermittent about the work that is undertaken by IIEs employed by the department?
- g) What was the average number of IIEs scheduled to work each weekday between 30 June 2013 and 28 February 2015?
- h) What was the average number of IIEs scheduled to work each weekend between 30 June 2013 and 28 February 2015?
- i) Of the 2,099 Irregular and intermittent employees what is the total number employed for:
 - i) one-off short term tasks/duties that do not fit within either the specified term or specified task categories; or
 - ii) circumstances when duties need to be performed on an intermittent basis but where there is no regular pattern of work and part time work is therefore inappropriate; or
 - iii) people on call or on a relief roster.

- j) How does the department review the schedules/work of IIEs to determine whether the work is irregular and intermittent and not more suited to full time permanent, part time or fixed term employment?
- k) Have schedulers been asked not to roster IIEs on regular days to avoid creating a regular pattern of attendance?

Answer:

- a) The totals and changes in headcount of non-ongoing employees (excluding irregular and intermittent) in the Department of Human Services as at dates specified are outlined in the table below.

Totals and changes in headcount of non-ongoing employees (excluding irregular and intermittent employees) for points of time comparison						
	As at 30 June 2010	As at 30 June 2011	As at 30 June 2012	As at 30 June 2013	As at 30 June 2014	As at 30 June 2015
Headcount	1,980	1,135	1,483	950	537	1,124
Change in headcount since previous year	N/A	Decrease of 845 since 30 June 2010	Increase of 348 since 30 June 2011	Decrease of 533 since 30 June 2012	Decrease of 413 since 30 June 2013	Increase of 587 since 30 June 2014

- b) The totals and changes in headcount of ongoing employees in the Department of Human Services as at dates specified are outlined in the table below.

Totals and changes in headcount of ongoing employees for points of time comparison						
	As at 30 June 2010	As at 30 June 2011	As at 30 June 2012	As at 30 June 2013	As at 30 June 2014	As at 30 June 2015
Headcount	37,528	36,371	35,412	33,868	32,403	31,094
Change in headcount since previous year	N/A	Decrease of 1,157 since 30 June 2010	Decrease of 959 since 30 June 2011	Decrease of 1,544 since 30 June 2012	Decrease of 1,465 since 30 June 2013	Decrease of 1,309 since 30 June 2014

- c) Location data for 30 June 2012 included state but did not include the level of detail for each employee by location/suburb in the same format as 30 June 2015. To provide a comparison between these two dates by location/suburb would require manual processing that would involve an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources.
- d) In the 2013-14 Budget, the department received an additional \$30 million (\$10 million for 2012-13 and \$20 million for 2013-14) to address the peak period. A significant portion was directed to the initial engagement of IIEs due to the flexibility to roster shifts for telephony and claim processing.
- e) The nature of the work undertaken by the department did not change. IIEs are engaged to assist in managing demand.
- f) An IIE's employment is based on irregular, sporadic and unpredictable working hours which may be regular for short periods but always, or often, subject to change on the basis of seasonal demand or other demand factors.
- g) Not Available. To provide the average number of IIEs scheduled to work each weekday between 30 June 2013 and 28 February 2015 would require an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources, as individual work schedules would need to be investigated for the requested period. A manual calculation would then be required to determine the day of the week worked and number of IIEs working on those days. Due to the large amount of data that would need to be extracted for this period, the comparative would require extensive time and resources to be analysed.

- h) Not Available. To provide the average number of IIEs scheduled to work each weekend between 30 June 2013 and 28 February 2015 would require an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources, as individual work schedules would need to be investigated for the requested period. A manual calculation would then be required to determine the day of the week worked and number of IIEs working on those days. Due to the large amount of data that would need to be extracted for this period, the comparative would require extensive time and resources to be analysed.
- i)
 - i) The employment of all IIEs is based on irregular and sporadic working hours which may be regular for short periods but often subject to change on the basis of demand. It is not possible to quantify specific tasks performed by IIEs.
 - ii) See response to part (i)(i).
 - iii) IIEs are not on call or on a relief roster.
- j) Suitable work for IIEs is determined on the basis of demand. Schedules are reviewed by way of shift offers and allocation on the basis of the IIE employment conditions.
- k) IIEs are scheduled on the basis that they are required to undertake irregular or intermittent duties during periods when the department is unable to meet its work demands using its existing ongoing and non-ongoing employees. They form a pool of casual employees who may be called upon to perform irregular or intermittent duties at any time during the casual pool period specified. Schedulers have been advised of the conditions of employment.