

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES - 20 OCTOBER 2011 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: School Enrolment and Attendance Measure

Question reference number: HS 20

Senator: Siewert

Type of question: Hansard pages 107, 109

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 9 December 2011

Number of pages: 2

Question:

- a) **Senator SIEWERT:** Can you tell me how long it normally takes to go back on in these particular circumstances?

Mr Dunn: The time it takes to go back on will vary again depending on the individual circumstances. I am just trying to find out from my data here whether I can help you.

Ms Campbell: I do not think we have the date they were cancelled.

Senator SIEWERT: Okay.

Mr Dunn: I do not have how long they were off in front of me.

Senator SIEWERT: Presumably there would be different processes if they were new people coming on to income support. There would be different circumstances.

Mr Dunn: Even in the interim it would depend on whether their circumstances had changed, their family relationships or whatever. That would also impact on the speed of getting them back on payment as well.

Senator SIEWERT: Could you take it on notice to get back to me and tell me how long. I know there are only two and it makes it a bit harder. If this process expands, it will become more of an issue, if people get cut off, when they go back and things like that.

Mr Dunn: We can take that on notice.

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- b) **Senator SIEWERT:** In terms of social workers could you take me through how that process has been operating? How many do you have associated with the trial and where are they located?

Ms Gannon: I do not actually have the number of social workers. I can take that on notice.

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- c) **Senator SIEWERT:** So that I don't waste people's time, could you provide me with a table with the breakdown of those costs, please? Could you break them up between the Northern Territory and Queensland for me? Is that possible?

Ms Parkes: We'll have a look at that. I'll take it on notice.

Answer:

- a) The time taken between when the customer re-applies and when they are re-granted varies depending on the individual circumstances of the customer. Two customers have been cancelled under the attendance component of the School Enrolment and Attendance Measure (SEAM) as a result of failing to take reasonable steps to ensure the regular attendance of their children at school. The first customer was re-granted after eight days and the second customer was re-granted after 34 days.
- b) The offer of Social Worker assistance has been available since the SEAM trial was implemented in 2009. Social Workers adopt a strengths based approach when engaging with SEAM parents to address issues surrounding their child/ren's attendance and/or enrolment. The strengths based approach aims to identify a parent's strengths and focuses on these strengths in addressing the current barriers the parent may be experiencing. There are three Social Workers assisting with the SEAM trial in Northern Territory; there is a Social Worker in Logan and a Social Worker makes community visits to Doomadgee and Mornington Island.

c)

	2008-09 \$'000	2009-10 \$'000	2010-11 \$'000	2011-12 \$'000
National Support Office	1,141	1,339	635	945
Information Technology	10,047	800	123	451
Queensland	0	515	596	1,654
Northern Territory	779	446	783	1,769
Other Areas	230	0	0	0
Call Centre Network	9	166	4	31
Overheads*	3,003	668	225	756
	15,209	3,934	2,366	5,606

* Overheads include property operating expense, infrastructure, etc.