



SENATOR KIM CARR
MINISTER FOR HUMAN SERVICES

STATEMENT TO THE COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE ROOM 2S1
PARLIAMENT HOUSE

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*****CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY*****

Its strengths include its exceptional reliability in the daily delivery of payments. A significant crisis capacity. A genuine commitment to exciting and innovative programs to be scaled across the network.

And above all, a workforce for whom public service has a special meaning, built on their personal experience of the lives and aspirations of our people.

I expect this report to be made public shortly – but you will already read the same story in the documents before you.

In the delivery of the Schoolkids Bonus to 1.3 million families, within two months of the announcement.

In the opening of one-stop shops, for more than two hundred communities.

In the launch of two SmartPhone apps, both of them well-received.

In a staff of 36,000, it is reasonable to expect that flexibility.

It is also reasonable for the staff to expect the right tools to do their jobs well.

The Department has prioritised this work, with better call technology and a more flexible working structure. It is doing all it can to help people move online.

Today the average wait time is six minutes and 15 seconds. The number of calls has also fallen sharply, from 3.5 million in July to 2.3 million in September.

This is in part a reflection of seasonal trends – but it is also the return on genuine innovation.

The second matter of concern is the violence in the service centres: behaviour that the staff and the citizens should never have to tolerate. Advice I have received suggests this problem is increasing; and we have urged the staff to be more proactive in reporting.

These debts relate to:

- the late or non-provision of treatment plans and quotes for audited dental practitioners' claims made before April 2010; and
- cases after this time where an audited practitioner has shown their intent to meet the Scheme's requirements.

This intent is established if treatment plans and quotes were provided within a reasonable timeframe after the service was delivered.

The significance of April 2010 is that from this date there is agreement that dental practitioners should have understood, and been compliant with, the Scheme's requirements.

The officers will continue to work collaboratively with the Australian Dental Association, the Australian Dental Prosthetists Association and all the relevant departments to achieve the outcomes I set out in May.

On that note, I will seek leave to table my Statement.