

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES - 18 OCTOBER 2012 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Family Tax Benefit – Northern Territory

Question reference number: HS 58

Senator: Siewert

Type of question: Written question

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 7 December 2012

Number of pages: 1

Question:

- a) How many Family Tax Benefit non-lodger debts have been raised since 1 January 2012 in the Northern Territory?
- b) How many people's Family Tax Benefit payments have been suspended because they have not lodged a tax return since 1 January 2012?
- c) How many people in the Northern Territory are not receiving the full rate of Family Tax Benefit because of no maintenance action has been taken? Of this amount, how many of these people are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

Answer:

- a) Since 1 January 2012, 32 Family Tax Benefit non-lodger debts have been raised for people in the Northern Territory (as at 28 September 2012).

These customers may have resolved their non-lodger status since having a non-lodger debt raised, either by lodging their tax return or by advising the Department that they were not required to lodge a tax return.

The majority of Family Tax Benefit non-lodger debts are raised in November each year for the entitlement year that finished around 16 months earlier.

- b) Since 1 January 2012, 351 customers in the Northern Territory have had their Family Tax Benefit fortnightly instalment payments prohibited as a result of a failure to lodge a tax return for a previous entitlement year.

These customers may have subsequently resolved their non-lodger status and had their Family Tax Benefit fortnightly instalment payments restored.

These figures represent customers whose Family Tax Benefit fortnightly instalment payments were prohibited in January and early February 2012 as a result of the Family Tax Benefit non-lodger debts which were raised in November 2011 (see question a).

- c) As at 26 October 2012, there were 1,199 customers in the Northern Territory who are receiving the base rate of Family Tax Benefit because they:

- have failed to take maintenance action; or
- have made an informed decision to receive base rate rather than pursue maintenance.

The breakdown of Indigenous/non-Indigenous customers is as follows:

Indigenous	628
Not Indigenous/unknown	571
Total	1,199