

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES - 18 OCTOBER 2012 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment

Question reference number: HS 148

Senator: Humphries

Type of question: Written question

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

Number of pages: 5

Question:

- a) What is the total number of claims for assistance under the AGDRP since the 2010/11 disaster season to date? Breakdown by month.
- b) What has been the total cost of AGDRP claims since the 2010/11 disaster season to the current date? Breakdown by month.
- c) What is the total figure from 2010/11 to the current date of AGDRP claims that have become a debt payable to the Commonwealth due to fraud, ineligibility et cetera? Breakdown by month.
- d) How many of these debts have been waived due to financial difficulties or for any other reason? Provide specific details on each instance.

Answer:

- a) See Attachment A Financial Year 2010-11, Attachment B Financial Year 2011-12 and Attachment C Financial Year 2012-13.
- b) See Attachment A Financial Year 2010-11, Attachment B Financial Year 2011-12 and Attachment C Financial Year 2012-13.
- c) The following table shows the number and value of debts raised and value of debts waived relating to the 2010-11 disasters. This includes debts raised for payments relating to the Queensland, Victorian, New South Wales and Western Australian floods, Cyclone Yasi, Western Australian bushfires as well as the New Zealand Citizens Assistance.

2010-2011 Disaster Payment Debt Information			
	Number Raised	Value Raised	Value Waived
2010-11	3,942	\$4,999,032.00	\$1,218,600
2011-12	2,863	\$3,469,146.00	\$1,011,403
July 2012	19	\$23,693.42	\$3,127
August 2012	6	\$4,548.70	\$1,549
September 2012	3	\$3,544.00	0
October 2012	3	\$4,872.00	0
TOTAL	6,836	\$8,504,836.12	\$2,234,679

The Department is unable to break down the debt figures by month for the previous financial years. However, this has been provided for the current year to date.

The Department is unable to give a detailed breakdown of reasons for the debts. However, as at 1 November 2012, there have been 55 referrals of customers in receipt of AGDRP to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions for consideration of prosecution. Of these, 33 have been successfully prosecuted.

- d) The Department is not able to provide the number of waivers, only the value of the amount waived. Waiver provisions exist in legislation where a debt arises solely due to administrative error or where there are special circumstances.

The elements for consideration in determining application of administrative error provisions are that:

- the debt was attributable solely to administrative error; and
- the customer received the money in good faith; and
- the debt is not raised within a period of six weeks from the first payment that caused the debt.

Special circumstances waiver provisions provide that a debt may be waived where it did not result in any part from the customer, or another person:

- knowingly making a false statement, or false representation, or
- knowingly failing or omitting to comply with the relevant Act, and
- special circumstances (other than financial hardship alone) make it desirable to waive.

A customer's financial situation alone does not constitute special circumstances. Financial hardship may be one of a number of circumstances which, when combined, give rise to special circumstances.

AGDRP Claims and Program Outlays 2010/11 Disaster Season- As at 31 October 2012													Attachment A		
Event	Jul-10	Aug-10	Sep-10	Oct-10	Nov-10	Dec-10	Jan-11	Feb-11	Mar-11	Apr-11	May-11	Jun-11	Total		
Queensland Floods Dec 2010/ Jan 2011	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$347,837,450	\$103,491,000	\$15,579,855	\$2,969,697	\$3,240,914	\$1,946,271	\$475,065,187		
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	290,612	88,194	12,634	3,497	2,528	1,749	399,214		
NSW Floods Jan 2011	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$3,269,800	\$7,557,200	\$1,440,200	\$558,200	\$433,800	\$252,800	\$13,512,000		
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,733	6,364	1,186	517	319	212	11,331		
Victorian Floods Jan 2011	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$10,281,800	\$17,346,000	\$7,238,800	\$1,731,400	\$1,317,800	\$1,165,600	\$39,081,400		
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	9,077	14,747	5,659	1,870	974	900	33,227		
Cyclone Yasi Feb 2011	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$269,210,100	\$24,656,100	\$10,385,800	\$3,304,400	\$2,403,600	\$309,960,000		
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	233,060	20,408	10,394	2,628	1,868	268,358		
Western Australian Floods Dec 2010	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$1,030,000	\$633,800	\$72,200	\$61,200	\$25,400	\$1,822,600		
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	863	494	91	N/A	<20	1,507		
Western Australian Bushfires Jan 2011	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	<\$20,000	\$2,753,200	\$1,692,600	\$463,800	N/A	\$445,200	\$5,798,000		
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	<20	2,408	1,428	490	N/A	363	5,030		

- All financial information provided relating to claims is represented in Gross Program outlays.

- The Department confidentialises data that is less than 20 in claim numbers and less than \$20,000 in value in order to meet its obligations under the Privacy Act 1988 and the confidentiality or secrecy provisions in the legislation it administers. This includes not releasing of information in small data-sets that may lead to an individual's identity being ascertained.

- All data supplied is point in time data which means that the data is reflective of the point in time when the snap shot was taken. The date that the snap shot was taken can be found in the title of this report

- The abbreviation N/A has been used where the activation of AGDRP has not yet occurred, or where data that might lead to the identification of an individual can be derived

AGDRP Claims and Program Outlays 2011/12 Disaster Season - As at 31 October 2012													Attachment B		
Event	Jul-11	Aug-11	Sep-11	Oct-11	Nov-11	Dec-11	Jan-12	Feb-12	Mar-12	Apr-12	May-12	Jun-12	Total		
Queensland Floods Dec 2010/ Jan 2011	Amount	\$1,000,604	\$81,400	\$33,600	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	\$1,179,702		
	Claims	1,076	57	33	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	1,219		
NSW Floods Jan 2011	Amount	\$91,600	\$63,400	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	\$70,400	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	\$312,400		
	Claims	102	41	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	174		
Victorian Floods Jan 2011	Amount	\$724,400	\$415,600	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	\$1,171,425		
	Claims	806	314	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	1,148		
Cyclone Yasi Feb 2011	Amount	\$2,686,800	\$3,651,000	\$49,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	\$6,442,207		
	Claims	2,992	2,968	49	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	6,051		
Western Australian Floods Dec 2011	Amount	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000		
	Claims	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20		
Western Australian Bushfires Jan 2011	Amount	\$289,800	\$419,200	\$123,200	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	\$859,800		
	Claims	300	342	125	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	789		
Queensland Floods Jan 2012	Amount	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$10,719,200	\$1,481,600	\$227,000	\$96,400	\$91,000	\$12,615,200		
	Claims	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8,845	1,085	177	78	71	10,256		
Northern NSW Floods Jan 2012	Amount	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$13,586,400	\$2,561,100	\$1,460,800	\$432,400	\$138,000	\$18,178,700		
	Claims	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	11,364	2,101	923	243	105	14,736		
Southern NSW Floods Feb/ March 2012	Amount	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$9,250,200	\$13,364,600	\$6,713,000	\$1,694,000	\$31,021,800		
	Claims	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	9,120	9,177	5,252	1,215	24,764		
Victorian Floods Feb/ March 2012	Amount	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$4,428,800	\$2,713,200	\$823,400	\$227,400	\$8,192,800		
	Claims	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3,787	2,021	648	170	6,626		

The figures in this table should be read in conjunction with the footnotes provided in Attachment A

AGDRP Claims and Program Outlays 2012/13 Disaster Season - As at 31 October 2012							Attachment C
Event	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12	Oct-12	Total		
Queensland Floods Dec 2010/ Jan 2011	Amount	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000
	Claims	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20	<20
Queensland Floods Jan 2012	Amount	\$30,600	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	\$49,200
	Claims	22	<20	<20	<20	<20	37
Northern NSW Floods Jan 2012	Amount	\$83,400	\$35,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	\$138,200
	Claims	54	28	<20	<20	<20	98
Southern NSW Floods Feb/ March 2012	Amount	\$819,000	\$763,000	\$716,000	\$109,200	\$109,200	\$2,407,200
	Claims	632	650	565	88	88	1,935
Victorian Floods Feb/ March 2012 Dollars Paid	Amount	\$176,200	N/A	\$124,200	<\$20,000	<\$20,000	\$414,400
	Claims	127	N/A	80	<20	<20	271

The figures in this table should be read in conjunction with the footnotes provided in Attachment A