

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND**  
**INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO**  
**2012-13 Supplementary Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome Number:** Cross

**Question No:** 249

**Topic:** Social Security Appeals Tribunal (SSAT)

**Hansard Page:** Written

**Senator Siewert** asked:

Are there any guidelines or direction for the sort of cases where you might have two member panels rather than one person?

**Answer:**

Prior to the transition in 2011 to the SSAT being constituted by a single member for most reviews, the Principal Member and Senior Members identified reviews for which the SSAT would usually be constituted by two members.

The SSAT is likely to be constituted by two or more members where:

- a legal issue is novel or unusually complex;
- the legal issues warrant hearing by a legally qualified member and the factual issues warrant expertise in a different discipline (and a member qualified in both disciplines is not available);
- the hearing is likely to be long and difficult due to such issues as the extent of the evidence which needs to be taken, the need for an interpreter, enmity between the parties;
- a Senior Member, Assistant Senior Member or other full-time member is mentoring, or evaluating the performance of, a member.

As delegates of the Principal Member, the Senior Members determine who is to constitute the SSAT for a particular review.