

## Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

### SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES - 21 NOVEMBER 2013 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### Department of Human Services

**Topic:** Complaints against Staff - Centrelink

**Question reference number:** HS 63

**Senator:** Siewert

**Type of question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 24 January 2014

**Number of pages:** 1

#### **Question:**

- a) How many complaints were lodged against Centrelink staff in 2011-12?
- b) How many complaints were lodged against Centrelink staff in 2012-13? How many of these complaints were upheld and what was the action taken against the staff member in question?
- c) How many Centrelink staff have been formally disciplined between 2011 and 2013 as a result of complaints relating to customer service?

#### **Answer:**

- a) Since integration in July 2011, data in relation to the previous master programs is no longer maintained and to disaggregate and respond specifically for previous Centrelink employees represents an unreasonable diversion of resources to obtain the information.

However, data can be provided for the whole department. In the 2011-12 financial year 15,284 complaints were lodged by Centrelink customers against department staff.

- b) As above.

In the 2012-13 financial year, 14,194 complaints were lodged by Centrelink customers against department staff. The database used to record complaints does not record information about whether or not a complaint is upheld. To collect the data to answer the second part of the question would therefore require an unreasonable diversion of resources.

- c) As above.

In the two financial years 2011-12 and 2012-13 there have been 43 department employees undergo formal action as a result of customer complaints.