

## **Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee**

### **SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES – 23-24 OCTOBER 2014 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

#### **Department of Human Services**

**Topic:** Client Telephone Wait Times in 2013-14

**Question reference number:** HS 34

**Senator:** Cameron

**Type of question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 12 December 2014

**Number of pages:** 6

#### **Question:**

- a) For each of DHS's customer specific call lines (and the fraud info line) for each month of 2013-14: how many people had to wait less than 10 minutes, 10-20 minutes; 20-30 minutes; more than 30 minutes; more than 1 hour, to talk to a Customer Service Adviser?
- b) For the Basics Card line for each month of 2013-14 how many people had to wait less than 10 minutes, 10-20 minutes; 20-30 minutes; more than 30 minutes; more than 1 hour, to talk to a Customer Service Adviser?
- c) For the National Participation Solutions Line for each month from of 2013-14 how many people had to wait less than 10 minutes, 10-20 minutes; 20-30 minutes; more than 30 minutes; more than 1 hour, to talk to a Customer Service Adviser?
- d) Provide a breakdown of all data sets that DHS collects about telephone wait times?

#### **Answer:**

- a), b), c) The department manages over 50 Centrelink-related telephony lines. The lines that have been included in the response make up over 70 per cent of answered calls in 2013–14.

The following tables show 2013–14 Centrelink answered calls by month by time interval. Note: Place in Queue (PiQ) callbacks are not included in aggregated answered calls data in the following tables. Interval data is only available up to 30 minutes.

<b>July 2013</b>	<b>Number of Answered Calls by Time Interval</b>			
	<b>Under 10 Mins</b>	<b>10 – 20 Mins</b>	<b>20 – 30 Mins</b>	<b>Over 30 Mins</b>
Disability, Sickness and Carers	52,604	30,173	40,231	58,341
Employment Services	62,274	50,560	48,793	100,842
Families and Parenting	561,159	77,439	54,973	125,954
Indigenous	6,264	3,852	8,294	9,712
Older Australians	44,321	18,569	20,146	28,016
Youth and Students	24,841	13,208	17,922	65,794
IM - BasicsCard After Hours	33,768	4,221	631	98
IM - BasicsCard Enquiries	27,912	1,899	56	1
DHS Tip Off Line - Centrelink	4,796	0	0	2
Participation Solutions	20,306	19,630	21,348	36,416

<b>August 2013</b>	<b>Number of Answered Calls by Time Interval</b>			
	<b>Under 10 Mins</b>	<b>10 – 20 Mins</b>	<b>20 – 30 Mins</b>	<b>Over 30 Mins</b>
Disability, Sickness and Carers	20,800	14,136	17,888	63,501
Employment Services	32,472	23,949	38,796	119,817
Families and Parenting	453,725	47,845	29,836	85,877
Indigenous	5,693	3,131	6,010	4,861
Older Australians	19,692	10,542	12,263	38,939
Youth and Students	14,328	5,509	13,145	59,210
IM - BasicsCard After Hours	36,243	1,880	754	95
IM - BasicsCard Enquiries	13,503	3,733	1,463	51
DHS Tip Off Line - Centrelink	4,318	3	0	2
Participation Solutions	9,111	10,059	14,498	60,374

<b>September 2013</b>	<b>Number of Answered Calls by Time Interval</b>			
	<b>Under 10 Mins</b>	<b>10 – 20 Mins</b>	<b>20 – 30 Mins</b>	<b>Over 30 Mins</b>
Disability, Sickness and Carers	23,843	25,830	32,125	29,126
Employment Services	48,005	52,201	65,703	65,744
Families and Parenting	417,809	29,863	44,041	52,939
Indigenous	7,666	3,648	5,380	2,553
Older Australians	22,981	19,259	22,071	18,840
Youth and Students	17,756	12,108	26,581	33,987
IM - BasicsCard After Hours	41,192	1,286	291	24
IM - BasicsCard Enquiries	17,215	2,768	62	0
DHS Tip Off Line - Centrelink	4,096	5	1	2
Participation Solutions	9,667	10,733	13,423	54,652

<b>October 2013</b>	<b>Number of Answered Calls by Time Interval</b>			
	<b>Under 10 Mins</b>	<b>10 – 20 Mins</b>	<b>20 – 30 Mins</b>	<b>Over 30 Mins</b>
Disability, Sickness and Carers	15,165	8,832	22,907	59,405
Employment Services	29,174	24,910	42,422	117,527
Families and Parenting	142,062	118,724	71,413	74,032
Indigenous	5,495	2,904	5,688	5,453
Older Australians	14,364	6,608	17,369	40,044
Youth and Students	15,391	6,280	14,665	56,254
IM - BasicsCard After Hours	34,642	2,924	1,227	243
IM - BasicsCard Enquiries	11,928	5,607	1,080	11
DHS Tip Off Line - Centrelink	4,233	19	2	9
Participation Solutions	14,574	17,355	14,185	52,097

<b>November 2013</b>	<b>Number of Answered Calls by Time Interval</b>			
	<b>Under 10 Mins</b>	<b>10 – 20 Mins</b>	<b>20 – 30 Mins</b>	<b>Over 30 Mins</b>
Disability, Sickness and Carers	11,349	3,266	10,938	59,898
Employment Services	17,129	10,787	17,386	127,917
Families and Parenting	79,067	51,631	67,661	120,737
Indigenous	2,989	1,419	2,658	8,401
Older Australians	7,850	2,776	8,147	37,902
Youth and Students	11,089	4,085	6,234	66,764
IM - BasicsCard After Hours	34,533	3,630	1,843	952
IM - BasicsCard Enquiries	5,116	4,219	4,654	371
DHS Tip Off Line - Centrelink	4,082	26	2	8
Participation Solutions	12,046	13,528	12,487	55,010

<b>December 2013</b>	<b>Number of Answered Calls by Time Interval</b>			
	<b>Under 10 Mins</b>	<b>10 – 20 Mins</b>	<b>20 – 30 Mins</b>	<b>Over 30 Mins</b>
Disability, Sickness and Carers	30,650	17,425	25,729	36,933
Employment Services	37,630	19,106	22,043	117,085
Families and Parenting	145,787	74,345	63,871	69,407
Indigenous	3,505	2,012	3,179	7,664
Older Australians	20,464	12,100	14,865	20,533
Youth and Students	14,988	5,275	7,471	63,924
IM - BasicsCard After Hours	57,577	4,004	1,927	971
IM - BasicsCard Enquiries	19,066	2,972	1,313	65
DHS Tip Off Line - Centrelink	2,789	25	5	11
Participation Solutions	21,891	12,978	12,088	46,897

<b>January 2014</b>	<b>Number of Answered Calls by Time Interval</b>			
	<b>Under 10 Mins</b>	<b>10 – 20 Mins</b>	<b>20 – 30 Mins</b>	<b>Over 30 Mins</b>
Disability, Sickness and Carers	17,814	9,834	23,675	60,699
Employment Services	35,172	23,687	54,176	118,521
Families and Parenting	90,108	46,658	109,510	143,141
Indigenous	2,858	1,369	2,396	10,778
Older Australians	12,560	6,641	17,143	39,345
Youth and Students	17,368	5,794	10,196	61,345
IM - BasicsCard After Hours	51,866	4,124	1,094	166
IM - BasicsCard Enquiries	22,318	5,221	1,540	122
DHS Tip Off Line - Centrelink	4,604	81	11	4
Participation Solutions	22,257	14,206	15,205	35,593

<b>February 2014</b>	<b>Number of Answered Calls by Time Interval</b>			
	<b>Under 10 Mins</b>	<b>10 – 20 Mins</b>	<b>20 – 30 Mins</b>	<b>Over 30 Mins</b>
Disability, Sickness and Carers	26,807	29,089	35,537	28,785
Employment Services	49,839	54,161	31,585	101,782
Families and Parenting	153,020	137,443	80,428	53,871
Indigenous	5,507	2,739	4,780	4,958
Older Australians	24,140	24,761	29,229	17,143
Youth and Students	15,345	9,820	9,660	75,031
IM - BasicsCard After Hours	48,839	1,879	473	116
IM - BasicsCard Enquiries	28,515	1,553	252	33
DHS Tip Off Line - Centrelink	4,345	105	9	2
Participation Solutions	17,147	15,833	26,855	39,246

<b>March 2014</b>	<b>Number of Answered Calls by Time Interval</b>			
	<b>Under 10 Mins</b>	<b>10 – 20 Mins</b>	<b>20 – 30 Mins</b>	<b>Over 30 Mins</b>
Disability, Sickness and Carers	27,063	34,168	42,777	24,195
Employment Services	35,773	64,077	40,341	96,081
Families and Parenting	141,690	136,575	96,425	20,532
Indigenous	5,592	3,240	5,845	5,142
Older Australians	23,427	29,808	33,417	12,531
Youth and Students	14,800	14,425	14,716	69,778
IM - BasicsCard After Hours	62,811	2,371	117	0
IM - BasicsCard Enquiries	34,958	790	43	19
DHS Tip Off Line - Centrelink	3,981	71	2	0
Participation Solutions	13,753	13,409	17,203	63,865

<b>April 2014</b>	<b>Number of Answered Calls by Time Interval</b>			
	<b>Under 10 Mins</b>	<b>10 – 20 Mins</b>	<b>20 – 30 Mins</b>	<b>Over 30 Mins</b>
Disability, Sickness and Carers	30,543	22,527	38,809	28,140
Employment Services	34,995	65,275	46,133	97,517
Families and Parenting	100,889	116,546	87,998	28,774
Indigenous	4,472	2,871	5,068	6,282
Older Australians	24,209	20,942	31,245	15,977
Youth and Students	18,239	15,365	13,971	56,083
IM - BasicsCard After Hours	62,958	4,182	652	38
IM - BasicsCard Enquiries	38,421	1,263	69	3
DHS Tip Off Line - Centrelink	3,450	18	0	0
Participation Solutions	10,185	9,587	14,633	72,178

<b>May 2014</b>	<b>Number of Answered Calls by Time Interval</b>			
	<b>Under 10 Mins</b>	<b>10 – 20 Mins</b>	<b>20 – 30 Mins</b>	<b>Over 30 Mins</b>
Disability, Sickness and Carers	61,620	30,133	32,926	22,382
Employment Services	55,113	64,222	51,857	93,531
Families and Parenting	163,322	102,392	87,276	44,877
Indigenous	7,323	4,090	5,936	3,583
Older Australians	43,247	24,700	25,065	10,752
Youth and Students	23,397	16,003	15,517	49,455
IM - BasicsCard After Hours	63,405	3,818	579	2
IM - BasicsCard Enquiries	43,901	75	5	0
DHS Tip Off Line - Centrelink	3,982	57	2	0
Participation Solutions	10,540	14,516	24,526	62,137

<b>June 2014</b>	<b>Number of Answered Calls by Time Interval</b>			
	<b>Under 10 Mins</b>	<b>10 – 20 Mins</b>	<b>20 – 30 Mins</b>	<b>Over 30 Mins</b>
Disability, Sickness and Carers	61,387	22,022	27,169	38,122
Employment Services	51,058	49,146	48,186	85,058
Families and Parenting	145,320	73,622	74,102	89,696
Indigenous	4,967	2,678	5,015	6,495
Older Australians	41,382	19,766	16,095	16,840
Youth and Students	25,154	12,770	15,434	45,566
IM - BasicsCard After Hours	69,360	2,046	63	11
IM - BasicsCard Enquiries	45,791	3	0	0
DHS Tip Off Line - Centrelink	4,112	26	0	0
Participation Solutions	18,588	20,334	31,141	35,150

- d) The department routinely collects the following data on telephony wait times:
- **Average Speed of Answer:** the average time a caller is in the queue before being answered by a Service Officer (SO).
  - **Number of Calls Answered by Time Interval:** the number of calls answered in various time interval ranges.
  - **Maximum Wait Time:** the maximum time a caller waited in the queue before speaking with a SO.