

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO**  
**2014-15 Supplementary Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome Number:** SSAT - Social Security Appeals Tribunal

**Question No:** 470

**Topic:** Appeals

**Hansard Page:** Written

**Senator Moore** asked:

Can you provide the number of staff within or available to the SSAT who have the expertise to assist appellants who have a mental illness with their appeals?

**Answer:**

Persons with a mental illness can make applications for review by the SSAT orally in person at an office of the SSAT or by telephone (as can all applicants). A minimal amount of information is required. SSAT staff then request the relevant documents from the Department of Human Services. All staff employed in the SSAT's registries have been trained in application taking functions and how to handle difficult interactions at any time during case management.

Training has been conducted for all staff on understanding mental illness and communicating with persons with a mental illness.

In addition, some registry staff have qualifications and experience in a profession (such as social work and nursing) which assists them in dealing with applicants who have a mental illness.