

## Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

### SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES – 22 OCTOBER 2015 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### Department of Human Services

**Topic:** Centrepay

**Question reference number:** HS 193

**Senator:** Siewert

**Type of question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 11 December 2015

**Number of pages:** 5

#### **Question:**

- a) How many people access Centrepay currently? Provide a breakdown by use of Centrepay by:
  - 1) payment type,
  - 2) age,
  - 3) gender,
  - 4) state and territory, and
  - 5) Indigenous status/non- Indigenous status.
- b) Provide a breakdown of the number of Indigenous Centrepay users by payment type, age, gender and state and territory.
- c) If possible, indicate how many Indigenous people in remote areas use Centrepay.
- d) Please provide an update to the Department of Human Services Independent Review of Centrepay:
- e) In the past 12 months, how many complaints have been lodged about Centrepay?
- f) How many businesses currently operate through Centrepay?
- g) In the last 12 months, how many businesses have had their contracts with Centrepay cancelled?

#### **Answer:**

To obtain answers in the limited time available, data reports as at different dates have been used. Consequently, the totals of different categorisations of Centrepay customers do not necessarily match, as the Centrepay customer base fluctuates over time.

Note that it is optional for customers to identify as an Indigenous Australian and this limitation should be considered in any application or use of this information.

- a) The number of customers using Centrepay in October 2015 was 665,153.
  - 1) The following table shows the number of Centrepay customers in October 2015 by payment type.

<b>Customers by payment type</b>	
Disability Support Pension	181,458
Newstart Allowance	135,578
Family Tax Benefit	104,106
Age Pension	89,183
Parenting Payment – Single	72,384
Carer Payment	38,419
Youth Allowance	21,794
Parenting Payment – Partnered	9,887
Austudy	3,890
Carer Allowance	3,257
Widow Allowance	1,615
Abstudy	1,438
Wife Pension DSP	568
Sickness Allowance	522
Wife Pension Age	352
Special Benefit	270
Income Management	187
Partner Allowance	114
Mobility Allowance	76
Paid Parental Leave	23
Pensioner Education Supplement	21
Bereavement Allowance	5
Double Orphan Pension	3
Widow Pension	3

- 2) Data on Centrepay customers in October 2015 by age is not available. The following table shows the number of Centrepay customers as at 6 November 2015 by age.

<b>Customers by age group</b>	
0-14	28
15-19	12,684
20-29	129,111
30-39	148,290
40-49	140,064
50-59	96,404
60-69	67,589
70-79	45,604
80-89	16,210
90+	1,798

- 3) The following table shows the number of Centrepay customers in October 2015 by gender.

<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
411,240	253,913

- 4) The following table shows the number of Centrepay customers in October 2015 by state and territory.

<b>Customers by state or territory</b>	
ACT	6,678
NSW	225,353
NT	11,901
QLD	147,808
SA	61,264
TAS	24,587
VIC	128,874
WA	57,231
Unknown	1,457

- 5) Data on Centrepay customers in October 2015 by Indigenous/non-Indigenous status is not available. The following table shows the number of Centrepay customers as at 6 November 2015 by Indigenous/non-Indigenous status.

<b>Customers by Indigenous status</b>	
Indigenous	102,943
Non-Indigenous	554,839

- b) The following table shows the number of Indigenous Centrepay customers as at 27 November 2015 by payment type.

<b>Indigenous customers by payment type</b>	
Newstart Allowance	26,975
Disability Support Pension	24,509
Family Tax Benefit	16,335
Parenting Payment - Single	15,946
Age Pension	6,105
Carer Payment	5,793
Youth Allowance	3,998
Parenting Payment - Partnered	2,486
ABSTUDY	1,399
Carer Allowance	391
Widow Allowance	157
Austudy	69
Sickness Allowance	50
Income Management	44
Wife Pension DSP	37
Wife Pension Age	25
Special Benefit	8
Partner Allowance	6
Mobility Allowance	4
Paid Parental Leave	4
Bereavement Allowance	2
Double Orphan Pension	1

The following table shows the number of Indigenous Centrepay customers as at 6 November 2015 by age.

<b>Indigenous customers by age group</b>	
0-14	6
15-19	3,330
20-29	28,924
30-39	25,182
40-49	21,229
50-59	13,414
60-69	7,252
70-79	2,844
80-89	694
90+	68

The following table shows the number of Indigenous Centrepay customers as at 6 November 2015 by gender.

<b>Indigenous female</b>	<b>Indigenous male</b>
65,877	37,066

The following table shows the number of Indigenous Centrepay customers as at 6 November 2015 by state and territory.

<b>Indigenous customers by state or territory</b>	
ACT	639
NSW	32,117
NT	8,661
QLD	28,622
SA	7,596
TAS	2,371
VIC	6,125
WA	16,516
Unknown	296

- c) The following table shows the number of Indigenous Centrepay customers located in remote or very remote areas as at 6 November 2015.

<b>Indigenous customers in remote or very remote areas</b>	
<i>ARIA Locality</i> <sup>^</sup>	
Remote	9,177
Very Remote	14,498

<sup>^</sup>Locality defined using Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA) endorsed by Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

- d) The Department of Human Services has published summary information about its responses to the recommendations of the Independent Review of Centrepay. That information is available through <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/corporate/publications-and-resources/centrepay-review/response-to-recommendations>.
- e) In the period 1 November 2014 to 31 October 2015, there were 127 complaints lodged with the Department about Centrepay service delivery.

- f) The number of Businesses (including government and non-government entities) receiving at least one Centrepay deduction in October 2015 was 13,118.
- g) In the period 1 November 2014 to 31 October 2015, 6,993 businesses had their Centrepay contracts cancelled. Of the cancellations, 6,247 occurred in September 2015, in the context of transition to the new Centrepay Policy and Terms.