

## Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

### QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018

#### Outcome 1 - Employment

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ17-004338

Senator Kakoschke-Moore provided in writing.

#### Question

##### Job seeker penalties

- How many total jobseeker penalties were given in the last year?
- What were those penalties for, for example how many were for failing to attend appointments?
- How many of those penalties were found to be incorrectly applied, and so overturned?
- How many job seekers had their payments partially cut in the last year?
- What were those cuts for?
- How many of those cuts were found to be incorrectly applied, and so overturned?
- What is the number of job seekers who have had their payments suspended in the past year?
- What were those suspensions for?
- How many of those suspensions were found to be incorrectly applied, and so overturned?

#### Answer

(a), (b), (d), (e) The table below shows the number of financial penalties applied to activity tested job seekers, by type, in the 2016 calendar year.

| Financial penalty type  | Number of penalties | Number of job seekers <sup>^</sup> |
|---|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| No Show No Pay – Failure to attend or behave appropriately at an Activity in the Job Plan or at a Job Interview                               | 270,529             | 73,125                             |
| Reconnection – Failure to attend a Re-engagement appointment or meet another Reconnection requirement without reasonable excuse               | 11,393              | 9,659                              |
| Non Attendance Failure – Failure to attend usual provider appointment without reasonable excuse, or without prior notice of reasonable excuse | 31,662              | 25,532                             |
| Serious – Failure to accept a suitable job offer, or to commence in a suitable job after having accepted it                                   | 1,161               | 1,141                              |
| Serious – Failure applied for persistent and wilful non-compliance following a Comprehensive Compliance Assessment                            | 35,657              | 15,661                             |
| Unemployment Non Payment Period - Job seeker left a suitable job without reasonable excuse, or was dismissed from job due to misconduct       | 10,240              | 10,198                             |
| Total   | 360,642             | 105,813                            |

Source: Department of Employment data (DSS Extract)

<sup>^</sup>Job seekers are counted once against each penalty type and once in the 'total' figure. Because job seekers can be subject to multiple compliance events during the year, the sum of job seeker counts exceeds the 'total' job seeker count.

(c) (f) These parts of the question have been referred to the Department of Human Services for response.

(g), (h) The table below shows the number of income support payment suspensions applied to activity tested job seekers, by type, in the 2016 calendar year.

| <b>Income support payment suspension type</b>      | <b>Number of suspensions</b> | <b>Number of job seekers<sup>^</sup></b> |
|--|------------------------------|--|
| Job seeker missed usual provider appointment       | 1,693,990                    | 623,100                                  |
| Job seeker missed reconnection appointment         | 14,067                       | 13,198                                   |
| Job seeker disengaged from an activity in Job Plan | 139,444                      | 71,040                                   |
| Job seeker missed third party appointment          | 1,754                        | 1,689                                    |
| <b>Total</b>                                       | <b>1,849,255</b>             | <b>635,659</b>                           |

*Source: Department of Employment data (DSS Extract)*

<sup>^</sup> Job seekers are counted once against each suspension type and once in the 'total' figure. Because job seekers can be subject to multiple compliance events during the year, the sum of job seeker counts exceeds the 'total' job seeker count.

(i) In calendar year 2016, 119,276 income support payment suspensions were rejected.