

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2015

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Australian Public Service Commission

Outcome/Program: 1.1

Topic: Industrial Action – Wage bargaining

Senator: Bernardi

Question reference number: 4

Type of question: Spoken

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 10 July 2015

Number of pages: 1

Question:

CHAIR: Thank you. Commissioner, may I ask you now about protected industrial action over wage bargaining. In the same press release I referred to earlier, 18 May, Ms Flood talked about 'a week of rolling stoppages across the Commonwealth Public Service which has already seen tens of thousands of CPSU members walk off the job in Centrelink, Medicare, child support and the tax office'. Commissioner, the claim that tens of thousands of workers in Centrelink, Medicare, child support and the tax office have walked off the job – is this correct?

Mr Lloyd: My sense is a very low level of industrial action. Some have had the odd hourly meeting where some staff might have been away to attend a meeting or protest rally, but the incidence of industrial action is low and the impact on government operations also has been low.

CHAIR: Are you able to tell me the highest number of workers that have participated in any one protected industrial action, say in the Department of Human Services?

Mr Lloyd: I do not have that figure at my disposal.

CHAIR: Would you be able to obtain it on notice for me?

Mr Lloyd: I will take it on notice, yes.

CHAIR: Thank you. What about somewhere like the tax office? Or do you need to take that on notice too?

Mr Lloyd: Yes, I would.

Answer:

The Department of Human Services and the Australian Taxation Office, advised that at 25 May 2015 the highest number of workers participating in any single occurrence of a particular type of industrial action is 4,678 and 1, 314 respectively. This action was taken as part of a nationwide one hour work stoppage.