

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES 2014-15

Finance Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of Finance

Outcome/Program: 2/2.3

Topic: Time taken to resolve Act of Grace Claims

Senator: Xenophon

Question reference number: F112

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Wednesday, 31 December 2014

Number of pages: 2

Question:

In the previous Estimates I asked about the average time taken to resolve an act of grace claim. I was advised that as at 25 June 2014, the average time to resolve to date was 282 days. Over the past 12 months at 25 June, the time taken was 141 days.

1. Can the Department provide the average time for processing in the past 12 months from October?
2. Can the Department provide a breakdown of the processing times in the past 12 months from October, including claims processed:
 - a) In under 50 days;
 - b) Between 51-100 days;
 - c) Between 101-150 days;
 - d) Between 151-200 days;
 - e) Between 201-250 days;
 - f) Between 251-300 days; and
 - g) Over 300 days.
3. What are the Department's KPIs for processing times?
4. What are the barriers to faster processing of these claims?

Answer:

1. 261 days. The average time has increased as a result of the finalisation of several old matters.
2. Please refer to table one below.

Table one – Breakdown of processing times.

Time period	Number of claims
Under 50 days	7
Between 51-100 days	1
Between 101-150 days	2
Between 151-200 days	1
Between 201-251 days	1
Between 251-300 days	1
Over 300 days.	7
Total number of <i>Cornwell</i> -type act of grace requests resolved in the 12 months prior to October 2014.	20

3. Finance's key performance indicator for act of grace claims—as set out in the Portfolio Budget Statement—is to complete 50% of all act of grace and waiver of debt requests within 60 days.
4. Resolving *Cornwell*-type act of grace requests is a time consuming process, requiring the analysis of voluminous and, at times, complex material. Information needs to be obtained from several sources, including the claimant, former employing entities (often several), Comsuper and legal advisers—a process which often needs to be repeated as new information is identified. Specialist knowledge and expertise is also required to assess applications.