

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2011-2012**

Outcome 4 - Employment

DEEWR Question No. EW1124_12

Senator Siewert asked on 15 February 2012 , Hansard page 94

Program Assurance activities

Question

Program assurance reviews

Senator SIEWERT: Could I assume from that that, of the 17, some have been escalated to the national level?

Mr Parsons: Yes.

Senator SIEWERT: So how many of the national ones have been escalated from a state?

Mr Parsons: To give you the correct answer I would have to take that on notice, I am sorry.

Senator SIEWERT: You will probably have to take this on notice too. This is tied up with the next question that is going on in my head, I am sorry; that's why you can hear that funny noise—that's the gears crashing! When the issue gets elevated to the national level, or gets a more state-wide focus, are we talking about one particular extensive provider, a national provider, or are you talking about a specific issue, or is it a combination of both?

Mr Parsons: All of the above.

Ms Parker: It depends on the issue.

Senator SIEWERT: How many of those various audits have resulted in people or providers having to repay, pay other penalties or in fact discontinue?

Mr Parsons: Again, I do not have that with me. I have a gross figure for the amount of money recovered, but I cannot break it down.

Senator SIEWERT: Give me that, because I might as well get that now. But if you could take those other questions I just rattled through—I am sorry, I could not repeat them—on notice, that would be good.

Answer

1. Since January 2010, two of the 17 state initiated Program Assurance activities were escalated to the national level.

2. Action taken as a result of these program assurance activities since January 2010 is as follows:

State program Assurance activities

- 2 resulted in financial recoveries
- 5 resulted in no financial recoveries (see note below)
- 5 have recommended financial recoveries but investigations are incomplete, and
- 5 are still in the assessment phase.

For National Program Assurance activities:

- 2 resulted in financial recoveries
- 3 resulted in no financial recoveries (see note below)
- 2 have recommended financial recoveries but investigations are incomplete, and
- 1 is still in the assessment phase.

Note for those activities where no financial recoveries were made, the findings have led to process improvements, the reviewing of program guidelines and additional educational opportunities to assist providers in complying with their employment services contract(s).