Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace Relations

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2011-2012

Agency - Comcare

DEEWR Question No. EW0764_12

Senator Xenophon asked on 19 October 2011, Hansard page 73

Question

Comcare - Ombudsman's report

Senator XENOPHON: My final question is has Comcare fully implemented the second recommendation in the Ombudsman's report, namely that Comcare should develop a procedure to assist any person to make a written request for reconsideration? If they make a request that is not in writing or indicate a wish to courier a payment; in other words, to help facilitate that?Mr O'Connor: Correct, that has been undertaken. We have revised our procedures to be able to make sure we do not take such a black-and-white view as that and to have a broad interpretation, as is intended under our legislation. But any offer to facilitate a remedy for the equivalent of defective or deficient administration is still subject to the legislative constraints that we have talked about at this committee before. Senator XENOPHON: If it were possible perhaps to table the new procedures, on notice, I would be very grateful.

Answer

Comcare has provided the following response.

Comcare has implemented a new practice which enables a request for reconsideration to be made by telephone as an alternative to only in writing. An employee can telephone Comcare, speak to an independent Review Officer and be guided through the information they need to provide over the phone. This information is recorded in a form and held on the employee's claim file.

This form is also available on Comcare's website and can be downloaded and sent to Comcare via email or post by employees. This form is designed to make it easier for employees or their representatives to request reconsiderations of Comcare's decisions. Revised guidance material on the website provides information about the reconsideration process and what an employee can expect to occur during the process.