

# Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

## ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES – 9 FEBRUARY 2010 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

### Human Services Portfolio

**Topic:** Property Value Checks for Disability Support Pensioners

**Question reference number:** HS 65

**Senator:** BOYCE

**Type of question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 26 March 2010

**Number of pages:** 1

**Question:**

- a) Please advise if qualified valuers will undertake this work and how, and on what basis, these valuers will be retained and how long the process of valuations of affected disability pensioners will extend?
- b) What is the cost of this process?

**Answer:**

- a) Yes. Centrelink uses the services of the Australian Valuation Office to assess entitlements on behalf of client agencies.

The Australian Valuation Office employs dedicated, full time valuers for the purposes of undertaking valuations on behalf of the Australian Government. These valuers are qualified, appropriately registered in relevant states and territories, and members of the Australian Property Institute. All valuations are conducted in accordance with Australian Property Institute governance codes, including its Constitution, By Laws, Rules of Conduct and Codes of Ethics.

Valuations of a customer's investment real estate will occur on a regular and ongoing basis. Property valuations are to occur every two years.

This process would prevent debts from arising from non-reporting, or under reporting, of real estate asset values. It will improve the accuracy of Disability Support Pension payments, whilst building on a strategy of early detection and prevention of debts to ensure customers receive their correct entitlement on an ongoing basis.

- b) The financial arrangement between Centrelink and the Australian Valuation Office is Commercial-In-Confidence. However, an indicative average cost per valuation of affected Disability Support Pensioners is \$385.