

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2012-2013**

**Finance and Deregulation Portfolio**

**Department/Agency: Department of Finance and Deregulation**

**Outcome/Program: 3/3.1**

**Topic: Certification of Entitlements Usage**

**Senator: Moore**

**Question reference number: F51**

**Type of question: Hansard, F&PA Committee page 11, 24 May 2012**

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday, 6 July 2012**

**Number of pages: 2**

**Question:**

**Senator MOORE:** This is an ongoing interest of mine, as you know. Of those, how many are in regular communication with the department about their reasons for not doing it. I have been told in previous Senate estimates that we have some philosophical objectors to the way the process operates and they may well have never completed a certification return. For the record I want to get a bit of a snapshot of the people who have not completed something from the 29th, last year.

**Answer:**

Finance does not have any record of any routine or regular contact from any particular Senator or Member in relation to the reason for non-certification of monthly management reports (MMRs) or a specific reason for non-certification of Tabling reports (noting certification of MMRs was removed from July 2011 onwards). As part of the MMR, up to June 2011, a table was included in each Senator and Members' report with information as to their provision of each month's certification for that financial year to date.

On 28 June 2011, the Special Minister of State (SMOS), via Ministerial Circular 2011/56, advised Senators and Members that their certification of entitlements usage forms an integral part of the accountability and transparency framework for expenditure of public monies and assists in meeting community accountability standards. The SMOS advised that the requirement for Senators and Members to certify their entitlements usage on a monthly basis has been removed; that certification would be aligned with the six-monthly entitlements expenditure reports; and a record of certifications would appear on the Department of Finance and Deregulation's (Finance) website once the reports are tabled in Parliament.

While it remains the prerogative of Senators and Members to certify their six-monthly entitlements reports, Finance encourages all Senators and Members to do so once they have checked the details. Finance also follows up any outstanding certifications prior to tabling.

As at 21 June 2012 certification had not been received from 27 current Parliamentarians for the Tabling reports published for the period 1 January 2011 to 30 June 2011.

The record of certifications is available on the Finance website at the following link with information current as at 8 June 2012: [www.finance.gov.au/publications/parliamentarians-reporting/index.html](http://www.finance.gov.au/publications/parliamentarians-reporting/index.html).