

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Finance and Administration Portfolio

Department of Human Services and agencies

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2005-2006, 1 November 2005

Question: HS25

Outcome 1, Output 1.3

Topic: Australian Hearing – Community Service Obligation and AHSPIA

Hansard Page/Written Question on Notice: Written

SENATOR CROSSIN asked on 1/11/05:

1. What is the total number of clients who received services under the Community Service Obligation (CSO) from March 2003 to July 2005?
2. What % of clients identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders?
3. What was the total number of vouchers issued in this time and what % of these vouchers were issued to people who identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders?
4. Could you provide a copy of the last Australian Hearing quarterly reports (in the same format as the answer to question EO3-/68)?
5. In how many communities, and where, were AHSPIA programs provided in the last 12 months?
6. What was the amount budgeted for and then expended on the AHSPIA program in the last 12 months?
7. In the last 12 months how many CSO who received audiological services under the CSO and who identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders were adults and how many were children?
8. How many people who identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders received hearing services under the voucher program in the last 12 months?
9. Please provide a list of the permanent and visiting sites for Australian Hearing as at 31 July 2005 and a list of the other sites visited under the AHSPIA program.
10. How many people received services under the CSO in the last 12 months?
11. Please provide a breakdown of funds under the AHSPIA program including total expenditure, travel costs and administration.
12. Please provide an update of the review of the bonus scheme.

Answer:

1. Total CSO clients seen

Year	Total CSO clients seen
April – June 2003	6,789*
2003-04	36,162
2004-05	36,407

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* Clients are only counted the first time they are seen. Therefore by Q 4 many clients seen for appointments would have been counted in earlier quarters. Client numbers are reported on a quarterly basis.

2. Percentage of CSO clients identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders

Year	% Indigenous Australians seen
April – June 2003	7.3%
2003-04	6.8%
2004-05	8.8%

3. The issue of vouchers is managed through the Office of Hearing Services, Department of Ageing.
4. Australian Hearing produces Annual Reports rather than quarterly reports. A copy of Australian Hearing's 2004-2005 Annual Report can be viewed on the website www.hearing.com.au. Australian Hearing provides quarterly statistical reports to OHS. Copies of these reports would have to be sought from OHS.
5. In 2004-2005 Australian Hearing provided 386 visits to 119 Indigenous outreach sites. These sites are listed on page 3 of the 2004-05 Annual Report which can be viewed at www.hearing.com.au.
6. The Office of Hearing Services stipulates the amount of funding for each CSO client category. The arrangement allows for a tolerance level of +/- 10% on expenditure between client categories.

In 2004-05, \$32.713m was allocated to CSO services and \$32.726m was expended. \$2m was allocated for the AHSPIA Program and \$1.736 million was expended. Set out below is a table showing the shortfall in AHSPIA expenditure was internally reallocated to children's services.

	2004/2005 \$000's Budget	2004/2005 \$000's Actual
Children	15,446	16,070
Adults	9,405	9,358
Cochlear	2,821	2,901
AHSPIA	2,000	1,736
Research	3,041	2,661
Total Funding	32,713	32,726

The Office of Hearing Services increased the AHSPIA funding in 2004-05 by \$432k. The additional funding allowed for an increase in visits to existing sites and to also assess the need for new or renewed visiting services at Stirling (Willowra), Canteen Creek, Epenarra,

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Ngukurr, Urupunga, Oenpeli, Jabiru in the Northern Territory, Casino in NSW and Cape Barren Island in Tasmania.

Visiting services are arranged in consultation with the community and take some time to establish. Some of these new sites were established late in the financial year and therefore did not receive a full year of service. This resulted in expenditure being below budget for the year. It is expected that expenditure will increase to match funding levels in 2005-06.

7. In 2004-05, 339 Indigenous adults and 2,882 Indigenous children were seen for CSO services.
8. The Voucher Program is managed through the Office of Hearing Services, Department of Ageing.
9. Australian Hearing's permanent and visiting sites are listed on pages 2-3 of the 2004-05 Annual Report. The Annual Report can be viewed on Australian Hearing's website at www.hearing.com.au

A list of AHSPIA sites is provided in response to question five.

10. In 2004-05 36,407 CSO clients were seen.
11. In 2004-05, \$1.736 million was expended on the AHSPIA program of which \$155,000 was spent on travel and \$687,000 on administration and equipment costs.
12. Australian Hearing initiated a new bonus platform effective 1 July 2005
 - The review of Australian Hearing's bonus scheme was completed.
 - The majority of staff in Australian Hearing will get bonuses based on team performances.
 - In particular, the specialist audiologists who deliver CSO services will get an additional allowance per year if they meet certain thresholds. If they deliver more than 70% of work in the CSO area they will get a special allowance to recognise their highly developed knowledge and understanding of client standards and protocols.