



Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee
Budget Estimates 2018-19
Thursday, 31 May 2018
Daily summary

Here is the summary of today's proceedings in the Community Affairs Legislation Committee estimates hearing.

The committee met from 9.00am until 10.37pm.

The committee called entities of the Social Services Portfolio and the Human Services Portfolio, as follows:

- Department of Social Services (DSS)
- Department of Human Services (DHS)

Topics discussed by the committee included:

- abolishment of the energy supplement—including, proposed timeframes and consequential savings;
- proposed changes to access to social security payments for newly arrived migrants—including, potential savings from the changes and the number of people affected;
- Pension Loans Scheme—including, the quantum of loans issued by DSS and the process by which the Minister sets the scheme's interest rate;
- drug testing trial—including, support for drug and alcohol services in trial sites and factors considered in the selection of trial sites;
- Centrelink's telephony capacity—including, an update on the number of busy signals experienced by callers and the average speed of answers across various phone lines;
- DHS staffing levels—including, attrition rates, staffing caps, labour hire and outsourcing of labour;
- childcare rebates—including, policies on co-parenting arrangements;
- Online Compliance Intervention—including, debts raised and recovered and appeals; and
- upgrades to child support payment ICT systems.

The committee concluded its consideration of the Human Services Portfolio.

Tomorrow morning at 9.00am, the committee is scheduled to recommence its consideration of the Social Services Portfolio starting with Outcome 3: Disability and Carers.