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Comcare charge against Services Australia for Airport West matter

Issue

Why has Services Australia been charged by the Health and Safety Regulator over the stabbing of a staff member?

Headline Response

Services Australia has cooperated with Comcare during its 2-year investigation. The matter is now before the Magistrates Court and it is not appropriate for the Government to comment on the matter at this stage.

Facts and Figures

- On 23 May 2023, Elijah Chase entered the Airport West Service Centre and stabbed a staff member, Joanne Cassar.
- On the same day, Services Australia (the Agency) notified Comcare of a serious incident. Comcare investigators attended the site to commence a monitoring compliance activity. Following the site visit, Comcare commenced an investigation.
- On 24 May 2023, the former Minister for Government Services, the Hon Bill Shorten announced the engagement of the former Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police, Mr Graham Ashton AM APM, to conduct a review of the Agency's security risk management practices.
- In July 2023, Mr Ashton concluded his Security Risk Management Review and made 44 recommendations.
- On 13 October 2023, the former Minister announced that the Government would act on all 44 recommendations. The Agency commenced a Security Risk Management Review Program to implement the recommendations.

Policy Commitments

- The Government has committed \$361 million, \$46.9 million through the 2023–24 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook and \$314.1 million over the 2024–25 and 2025–26 financial years through the 2024–25 Budget to the Agency to respond to the Security Risk Management Review.

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Division: Wellbeing and HR Support, and Legal Services Divisions	PDR Number: QB25-000058
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 4:25:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 4:25:00 PM

Background

Between 25 May 2023 and October 2024, Comcare issued the Agency with statutory notices requiring the Agency to produce documents and answer questions. The Agency responded to all notices and produced over 1,000 documents.

The Agency has knowledge of Comcare having conducted interviews with 30 Agency workers.

On 7 March 2024, Comcare advised the Agency that it had received a request for Comcare to prosecute an alleged work health and safety breach regarding the incident. Comcare are not obliged to and did not advise who requested for the Agency to be prosecuted. Comcare advised that its investigation was ongoing.

On 20 November 2024, the Comcare inspector advised the Agency that he had reached the view there were reasonable grounds to believe the Agency may have committed criminal offences under the Act. The Agency declined Comcare's invitation to participate in a voluntary interview.

On 22 May 2025, Comcare filed and served on the Agency a charge and summons alleging that the Commonwealth (through the Agency) failed to comply with its health and safety duty and that failure exposed one or more individuals to the risk of death or serious injury.

The charge alleges the Agency failed to take five measures to protect workers, relating to security guard staffing, managed entry into the Service Centre and sharing of images of aggressive customers.

The first mention scheduled for 1 July 2025 was adjourned. The next mention is on 24 September 2025 at the Broadmeadows Magistrates Court.

Maddocks and Garry Livermore KC are engaged to advise and represent the Agency in the proceedings.

Public comment about the charge, or the safety and security enhancements made by the Agency since the incident in direct response to a question about the charge, could be criticised as interfering with the proceedings.



Government agency charged after worker assault

26 May 2025

Services Australia has been charged with breaching federal work health and safety laws after a worker was violently attacked at a Melbourne Centrelink office.

Following a Comcare investigation, the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions has filed a single charge alleging Services Australia failed to comply with its duties under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act).

The incident happened at the Airport West Centrelink office on 23 May 2023. A Centrelink worker suffered serious injuries when they were stabbed by an individual at the workplace.

Comcare's investigation found that Services Australia failed to comply with its primary health and safety duty to ensure, so far as was reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers (section 19(1) of the WHS Act).

The charge alleges Services Australia failed to undertake a range of measures to eliminate or minimise the risk of physical violence to workers, including:

- Providing at least two uniformed security guards at the workplace at all times, including one guard inside the public entrance
- Managing entry to the workplace
- Giving the service centre manager the authority to decide whether managed entry to the workplace should be implemented and remain in place.

The charge is a Category 2 criminal offence under the WHS Act, carrying a maximum penalty of \$1.5 million.

The matter is listed for mention in the Broadmeadows Magistrates' Court on 1 July 2025.

Media contact

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Services Australia 2025-26 Budget Measures

Headline Response

The goal of Services Australia is to make government services simple, so people can get on with their lives.

As part of the 2025-26 Portfolio Budget Statements, the Government has provided Services Australia with additional funding for Budget measures of \$53.2 million in 2025-26 and a total of \$173.7 million from 2025-26 to 2028-29.

BUDGET MEASURES LED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, DISABILITY AND AGEING

Strengthening Medicare

- This measure will expand eligibility for all GP bulk billing incentives to all Australians, supporting GPs to bulk bill an additional 15 million people. The measure is expected to increase the GP bulk billing rate from 77.4 per cent to 87.6 per cent.
- This measure will also implement the Stronger Medicare Bulk Billing Clinics Program, which provides an additional payment valued at 12.5 per cent of Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) benefits for GP non-referred attendance services if practices commit to bulk bill all of these services.
- This measure will provide MRI licences to 3 hospitals from 1 July 2025:
 - Lakeview Private, Norwest NSW,
 - Barwon Health North, Geelong VIC, and
 - Sandringham Hospital, Sandringham VIC.
- This measure will also list new and amended services on the MBS.
- Services Australia (the Agency) has received \$214.5 million from 2025-26 to 2028-29 to implement this measure.

Strengthening Medicare – Women's Health

- This measure increases access to long-acting reversible contraception MBS items, including:
 - Increase the MBS fee for 4 existing MBS items.
 - Create 3 new MBS items for nurse practitioners to use for long-acting reversible contraception items.

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- Create 2 new MBS items that provide a percentage additional fee loading (at 40 per cent) to encompass the existing 4 long-acting reversible contraception items.
- Services Australia has received \$2.9 million in 2025-26 and \$3.8 million from 2025-26 to 2028-29 to administer this measure.

Strengthening Medicare – Expanding Medicare Urgent Care Clinics

- This measure will boost the Medicare Urgent Care Clinics program with a further 50 Medicare Urgent Care Clinics (bringing the total to 137 nationally).
- This measure will also extend MBS billing for 10 state-funded urgent care sites in Victoria and extend the Batemans Bay Medicare Urgent Care Clinic's opening hours.
- Services Australia has received \$2.4 million from 2025-26 to 2027-28 to cover MBS flow-on costs associated with the additional clinics.

Strengthening Medicare – Health Workforce

- This measure will help attract more doctors to vocational GP training by allowing more leave types for GP registrars.
- This includes:
 - 5 days of paid leave per year to prepare for exams and assessments
 - 20 weeks of paid parental leave for eligible GP registrars
 - a \$30,000 incentive payment to first-year GP registrars on Commonwealth-funded pathways, paid in monthly instalments, and
 - indexation of existing non-cash payments (NCP), consistent with Wage Cost Index.
- Services Australia has received \$1.3 million from 2025-26 through to 2028-29 to support the implementation of this measure.

Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme – New and Amended Listings

- The Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme provides subsidised access to medicines to Australian residents and overseas visitors from countries under Reciprocal Health Care Agreements.
- The Agency has received \$0.5 million from the 2025–26 financial year through to the 2028–29 financial year to list new medicines on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and expands access to others. It will provide better treatment and improved health for Australians.
- The Agency also received \$0.4 million in 2024-25 for this measure.

Improving Access to Medicines and Pharmacy Programs

- This measure will strengthen pharmaceutical services within Australia through:
 - changing the wholesale mark-up tiers of pharmaceutical benefits, and
 - continuing the mandate to use an electronic prescribing system for all dangerous and high-cost drugs.
- The wholesale mark-up is paid directly to community pharmacies, who then pass on to their relevant wholesaler.
- The mandate for electronic prescribing was introduced in the 2023-24 Budget to increase patient safety and reduce inappropriate access to dangerous drugs. This measure continues this mandate to 30 June 2026.
- This measure builds on the 2024-25 Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements measure *New Government Offer for a Pharmaceutical Wholesaler Agreement*.
- Services Australia has received \$0.8 million in 2025-26 to implement this measure.

CROSS PORTFOLIO BUDGET MEASURES**Savings from External Labour – Further Extension**

- This measure extends the 2024-25 Budget measure Savings from External Labour – extension to 2028-29.
- This measure will harvest \$54.4 million from the Services Australia Budget in 2028-29 as a result of savings from external labour utilised by the Agency.

BUDGET MEASURES LED BY THE NATIONAL INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS AGENCY**Closing the Gap – Further Investments**

- This measure will re-profile funding for the Community Development Program.
- The re-profile of funding reduced the Agency's budget by \$2.8 million in 2024-25 and by \$7.1 million in 2025-26, before an \$11.8 million increase in the Agency's budget in 2026-27.

BUDGET MEASURES LED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**Building Australia's Future – Improving Outcomes in Australian Schools**

- This measure is for Services Australia to update websites and systems for the new 3-day guarantee of the childcare subsidy. Families will get 3 days of Child Care Subsidy per week without needing to complete an activity test.
- Services Australia will be partially funded via a Section 74 arrangement with the Department of Education for this measure.

PRE-ELECTION ECONOMIC AND FISCAL OUTLOOK MEASURES**Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme**

- This measure provides a 25 per cent increase in rates of assistance over two years to the Tasmanian Freight Equalisations Scheme.
- The Agency has been provided \$3.5 million in 2025-26 and \$0.5 million in 2026-27 to provide updates to information and communications technology systems, new communications products and to process additional claims under the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme.

Services Australia Call Wait Times & Processing Wait Times

Issue

What action is the Government taking to address wait times for payments and services?

Headline Response

To ensure Services Australia was able to sustainably deliver services to Australians, government funding was increased to support an additional 3,000 frontline staff in the latter part of 2023 and into January 2024. This has brought service delivery performance back into expected timeframes. Services Australia continues to make improvements to its services to support Australians in need.

Facts and Figures

- Following the injection of an extra 3,000 staff approximately 18 months ago, Services Australia (the Agency) has made significant improvements in the delivery of services.
- These extra staff helped reduce call wait times, significantly reduced congestion messaging and vastly improved processing times across nearly every work type.
- Since these new staff commenced, the Agency has reduced Centrelink claims from over 238,100 (or 66 per cent) to just over 123,200. Medicare activities have dropped by over 622,000 activities (or 73 per cent) to just under 234,000. Since 30 November 2023, Child Support work on hand has reduced by 59,234 activities (or 31.8 per cent).
- The Agency is now answering Centrelink calls approximately 5 minutes faster and Medicare customer calls 14 minutes faster than in January 2024. Child Support calls are 6 minutes slower than in January 2024. Congestion messaging has reduced by 85 per cent.
- These reductions have enabled further improvements, like offering callbacks on some phone lines, so customers don't have to stay on the phone while waiting to get to the front of the queue.
- Additionally, most customers (67.5 per cent) are being served within 15 minutes at 318 service centres across Australia.

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Calls & Processing

If pressed on current delivery times

- The Agency hosts approximately 8.9 million Centrelink, Medicare and Child Support customer contacts each week across face-to-face, digital and telephony channels.
 - Of these, approximately 88 per cent arrive by digital channels and 12 per cent by face-to-face service centres or over the phone.
- In the last 7 days ending 17 July 2025, 1.5 million customer outcomes were completed by staff:
 - 209,000 people were served in person at one of 318 face-to-face service centres.
 - 239,000 Centrelink calls were answered, 53,500 claims and 203,000 non-claim work items were finalised.
 - 126,000 Health calls were answered, 230,000 claims and 33,600 non-claim work items were finalised.
 - 27,600 Child Support calls were answered, and 82,800 work items were finalised.
 - 321,000 calls received were self-managed by customers through phone self-service.
- In the last 7 days ending 17 July 2025, the average speed of answer for:
 - Centrelink was approximately 26 minutes.
 - Medicare Customer was approximately 15 minutes.
 - Medicare Provider was 5 minutes.
 - Child Support was 16 minutes.
- During the 2024-25 financial year, the Agency processed more than 484.1 million Centrelink claims and Medicare services, and 3.8 million Child Support activities, supporting families to help with the costs of raising children.

If pressed on Social Security Processing Improvements

- The Agency has made significant inroads to reduce processing times. Across Social Security, the average days to process activities are as follows:

Social Security claim type	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
ABSTUDY - Non-Schooling A	28	25
ABSTUDY - Pensioner Education Supplement	11	7
ABSTUDY - Schooling A	22	15
Additional Child Care Subsidy Child Wellbeing Application	11	4
Additional Child Care Subsidy Child Wellbeing Certificate –	12	4

Calls & Processing

Social Security claim type	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Exceptional Circumstances		
Additional Child Care Subsidy Child Wellbeing Determination Exceptional Circumstances	12	4
Additional Child Care Subsidy Grandparent	47	23
Additional Child Care Subsidy Temporary Financial Hardship	51	21
Additional Child Care Subsidy Transition to Work	68	26
Age Pension	76	37
Assistance for Isolated Children	0	0
Austudy	56	32
Carer Allowance	42	12
Carer Payment	54	15
Child Care Subsidy	24	8
Crisis Payment	3	1
Dad and Partner Pay	63	4
Disability Support Pension	93	52
Double Orphan Pension	8	5
Essential Medical Equipment	42	19
Ex-Carer Allowance (Child) Health Care Card	8	5
Family Tax Benefit Lump Sum	13	3
Family Tax Benefit New Claim	47	8
Fares Allowance	0	0
Farm Household Allowance	48	35
Foster Child Health Care Card	22	14
Home Equity Access Scheme	65	60
JobSeeker Payment	22	9
Low Income Card	53	20
Mobility Allowance	29	24
Paid Parental Leave	25	3
Parenting Payment Partnered	52	22
Parenting Payment Single	28	18
Pensioner Education Supplement	20	21
Seniors Health Card	42	20
Special Benefit	20	14
Status Resolution Support Services	11	12
Stillborn Baby Payment	8	5
Tertiary Access Payment	42	16
Youth Allowance Apprentice	62	37
Youth Allowance Jobseekers	26	11
Youth Allowance Students	54	29

Calls & Processing

If pressed on Disability Support Pension Processing Improvements

- The Agency is committed to improving service delivery for people with disability.
- Disability Support Pension claims are very complex and take longer to assess as they are lifelong payments, and, as such, more information is often required than for other income support payments.
- As at 30 June 2025, when compared to the end of the 2023-24 financial year, Disability Support Pension claims on hand have reduced by 14,900 (55 per cent) and over standard claims by 10,100 (94 per cent).
 - Of the 12,000 claims on hand 3,700 (31 per cent) are actionable and 8,300 (69 per cent) are on hold awaiting further information or assessment.
- Around 68 per cent of customers receive another payment (e.g. Jobseeker payments) while waiting on a Disability Support Pension outcome.
- Agency decisions on Disability Support Pension claims are informed by comprehensive assessments by its qualified health professionals. Assessments are based on each person's circumstances and consider all available medical evidence from treating doctors and health professionals, including specialists.
- The Agency prioritises and fast-tracks Disability Support Pension claims for people experiencing financial hardship or for those who are likely to be manifestly eligible, including due to a terminal illness.
- Some Disability Support Pension claims can take longer than others for varying reasons, including the need for comprehensive medical assessments, complex circumstances, or time required to get more details to help finalise claims.

Disability Support Pension Claims on Hold	
Awaiting the return of an external medical assessment	1,400
Awaiting an internal Medical Assessment	1,000
Referred for a Job Capacity Assessment	4,200
Awaiting customer to supply information	600
Other	1,100

If pressed on Age Pension Processing Improvements

- The Agency is committed to improving service delivery for older Australians.
- Age Pension claims are very complex and take longer to assess as they are lifelong payments, and as such, more information is often required than for other income support payments.

Calls & Processing

- As at 30 June 2025, when compared to the end of the 2023-24 financial year, Age Pension claims on hand have reduced by 10,800 (37 per cent) and over standard claims by 8,800 (53 per cent).
 - Of the 18,500 claims on hand 6,700 (36 per cent) are actionable and 11,800 (64 per cent) are on hold.
- Claims may be placed on hold due to additional information required from the customer. Many customers have complicated financial affairs (e.g. family or business trusts, investments, superannuation, real estate assets, foreign pensions and inheritances) requiring assessment against the income and assets test.
- These assessments can take an extended period to conduct and complete the corresponding report/s.
- Delays can often occur if customers fail to provide all the required documentation in a timely manner.
- The Agency continues to train more staff in this complex work and expects to see the average processing time fall even further as their proficiency grows.
- The Agency urges anyone waiting on these claim types to go online and check there are no tasks that need to be completed.
- Those nearing Age Pension age can apply up to 13 weeks earlier so their claim can be assessed before they turn Age Pension age.

Age Pension Claims on Hold	
Awaiting customer to supply information	5,700
Awaiting complex assessments of income and assets for specialised staff	5,200
Awaiting Centrelink International Services Assessment	100
Other	800

If pressed on Health (Medicare) Processing Improvements

- As at 30 June 2025, the Agency has made significant inroads to reduce processing times. Across Health, the average days to process activities are as follows:

Health Services - Claims	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Aged Care - Customer	52	72
Aged Care - Customer - Home Care	42	44
Aged Care - Customer - Residential Care	46	45
Aged Care - Provider	10	6
Aged Care - Provider - Home Care	33	1
Aged Care - Provider - Residential Care	0	1
Australian Immunisation Register	6	4
Australian Organ Donor Register	10	3

Calls & Processing

Health Services - Claims	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Bulk Bill	3	1
Complex Drugs	6	1
Continence Aids Payment Scheme	49	16
Disaster Health Care Assistance Scheme	14	12
eBusiness	19	12
External Breast Prosthesis	6	3
Healthcare Identifiers	8	6
Incentives	0	0
Medicare Eligibility & Enrolment	49	10
Medicare Entitlement Statement	82	27
Medicare Safety Net	15	17
Organisation Register	12	14
Patient Claims	9	2
Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme Patient Refunds	119	24
Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme Safety Net	98	12
Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme	6	3
Provider Registration	17	8
Simplified Billing	4	2
Veterans Affairs Processing	5	3

Health Services – Non-Claims	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Aged Care - Customer	18	21
Aged Care - Customer - Residential Care	148	163
Aged Care - Provider	96	15
Aged Care - Provider - Home Care	70	17
Aged Care Provider - Residential Care	0	1
Australian Immunisation Register	10	2
Australian Organ Donor Register	20	2
Boutique	36	3
Bulk Bill	154	144
Complex Drugs	4	1
Continence Aids Payment Scheme	60	18
eBusiness	89	51
eServices	75	16
Healthcare Identifiers	16	25
Home Vacation Review	151	182
Incentives	11	3
Medicare Eligibility & Enrolment	28	13
Medicare Entitlement Statement	69	19
Medicare Payments - Customer	54	14
Medicare Payments - Provider	172	182
Medicare Safety Net	194	202

Calls & Processing

Health Services – Non-Claims	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
My Medicare		11
Organisation Register	66	4
Patient Claims	63	78
Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme	7	3
Provider Registration	8	21
Simplified Billing	247	233
Veterans Affairs Processing	30	35

If pressed on Medicare pressure points

- The Medicare Entitlement Statement peak period commenced in July and will extend through September/October. An additional 70 staff are being upskilled in Medicare Entitlement Statement to help manage the expected increase in workload, increasing the overall workforce to just over 200.
 - There were 2,900 Medicare Entitlement Statement claims processed per day of the second week in the 2025-26 financial year, compared to 2,200 per day for the comparative week in the 2024-25 financial year.
- Veterans Affairs Processing continues to be a focus for the Agency, with upskilling of existing staff occurring to boost capacity. The learning pathway for Veterans Affairs is complex and requires staff to learn a number of separate processes to become fully proficient.
 - There have been significant improvements to the Veterans' Affairs work on hand during the 2024-25 financial year. As at 30 June 2025, there was 5,725 items on hand, compared to 15,053 items on hand at 30 June 2024.
 - There has been a significant increase in the number of Veterans' Affairs claims made through the online channel. This channel is more efficient for both claimants and processing staff. There has been an increase of 10.6 per cent of Veterans' Affairs claims received via the online channel for the 2024-25 financial year with 1.76 million lodged through the online channel, as opposed to 1.57 million in the 2023-24 financial year.

If pressed on Aged Care

- The Agency is committed to improving service delivery for Aged Care customers in preparation for the Aged Care Reform from 1 November this year.
- As at 30 June 2025, when compared to the end of the 2023-24 financial year, there are 5,900 (46 per cent) more Aged Care work claims on hand.
- The Agency has been focussed on completing the older and more complex work for our customers. This has meant the average days to process increased by 21 days for Aged Care Customers and by 2 days for Home Care.

Calls & Processing

- Some Aged Care claims can take longer than others for varying reasons including complex financial circumstances, or additional time required to gather further details to help finalise claims.
- The Agency has expanded its workforce to support the upcoming Aged Care Reform, increasing from 285 in July 2024 to 540 staff in July 2025 (an increase of 90 per cent or 255).

If pressed on Formal Reviews

- The Agency is committed to improving service delivery for people who lodge a formal review.
- Formal reviews are very complex and are carried out by specialised Authorised Review Officers.
- As at 30 June 2025, there were 72,772 formal reviews on hand. When compared to the end of the 2023-24 financial year, there are 18,410 (25 per cent) more formal reviews on hand.
- The Agency is boosting its Authorised Review Officer workforce to target additional effort on more complex and sensitive reviews with recruitment efforts commencing from 30 June 2025.

If pressed on Child Support

- The Agency is committed to improving service delivery for people who access Child Support.
- The Agency continues to reduce the Child Support backlog, and work on hand is around 129,836, which is 9.7 per cent (14,030) lower compared to 28 June 2024. Of this, 51,031 are work items relating to objections, changes of assessment and care changes.
- The Agency received further funding in the 2024-25 Budget which has helped to lift performance. The Agency has boosted its Child Support workforce by around 500 (or 37 per cent) during the 2024-25 financial year, enabling the upskilling of more experienced staff to help recover backlogs and service standard for the more complex priorities.
- Child Support is a complex program and staff take time to build capability and confidence in this work. As staff embed their skills, work on hand will continue to reduce.
- Child Support matters often take longer to assess as they are complex and sensitive scenarios, often involving disagreements between separated parties.
- Across Child Support, the average days to process activities are as follows.

Calls & Processing

Child Support Activities	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
New Registrations	31	35
Change of Assessment applications	83	76
Objections (Domestic)	97	194
Objections (International)	122	125
Workload (intrays)	17	17

If pressed on 2021-22 and 2023-24 Performance and Data Comparisons

- The data referenced by some media outlets does not reflect current service delivery performance. Also, it does not include important context necessary for interpreting trends in wait times accurately over time– such as the impact of additional temporary staff during COVID-19.
- Additionally, some of the data used by media outlets reflects the full 2023-24 financial year. This includes 6 months before the progressive recruitment and onboarding of the additional staff when the Agency acknowledges that performance was not at expected levels.
- Since this injection of staff, both claim processing times and call wait times have progressively improved.
- For example, overall Centrelink call wait times have fallen from an average of more than 30 minutes in 2023-24 to just over 21 minutes in 2024-25. For Health customers, its nearly halved, from almost 23 minutes to just over 13 minutes over the same period. Almost half of all Centrelink calls were answered within 15 minutes.
- Congestion messaging has reduced significantly from around 15 million in the 2023-24 financial year to 2 million in 2024-25, allowing more customers to access services when they need it.
- The initial extra funding the Agency received for additional staff was specifically for Social Security and Health, so that's where the improvements have been delivered so far.
- Although Child Support call wait times have increased, the Agency received further funding in the 2024-25 Budget, which will help lift performance across Child Support.
- The Agency will continue to onboard new staff in Child Support to address backlogs and expect to see improvements as these staff are fully trained.
- The Agency has seen significant improvements in the 2024-25 financial year. This data is available on data.gov.au.

Calls & Processing

CLAIM	AVERAGE PROCESSING TIME			% change (from 2018- 19 FY)
	Days to process (2018-19 FY)	Days to process (2023-24 FY)	Days to process (2024-25 FY)	
Age Pension	75 days	76 days	37 days	-50% ▼
ABSTUDY Schooling	15 days	22 days	15 days	0%
Carer Allowance	59 days	42 days	12 days	-80% ▼
Carer Payment	64 days	54 days	15 days	-77% ▼
Crisis Payment	1 day	3 day	1 day	0
Commonwealth Seniors Health Card	73 days	42 days	20 days	-73% ▼
Disability Support Pension	88 days	93 days	53 days	-40% ▼
Family Tax Benefit New Claim	36 days	47 days	8 days	-78% ▼
Family Tax Benefit Lump Sum	22 days	13 days	3 days	-86% ▼
JobSeeker Payment	24 days (Newstart)	22 days	9 days	-63% ▼
Low Income Card	31 days	53 days	20 days	-35% ▼
Paid Parental Leave	21 days	25 days	3 days	-86% ▼
Parenting Payment Single	48 days	28 days	18 days	-63% ▼
Parenting Payment Partnered	58 days	52 days	22 days	-62% ▼
Youth Allowance Jobseekers	27 days	26 days	11 days	-59% ▼

CALLS	2018-19 FY	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Congestion messaging	1,331,654*	14,975,078	2,173,375
Average Speed of Answer (Agency wide)	10:31	19:37	15:22
Average Speed of Answer (Social Security and Welfare)	15:32	30:37	21:48
Average Speed of Answer (Health Customer)	6:59	22:49	13:12
Average Speed of Answer (Child Support)	12:45	10:50	15:24
Calls Answered within 15 minutes (Social Security and Welfare)	8,713,535 (53.7%)	4,168,418 (43.7%)	5,112,733 (46.9%)
Total Handled Calls (Agency wide)	50,115,614*	53,923,043	44,269,308

*During 2018-2019 financial year, the Agency used call blocking. This provided a busy signal to customers and is not included in congestion messages or handled calls numbers.

Centrepay Reforms and Regulatory Actions

Issue

What action is the Government taking to ensure customers who use Centrepay are protected from financial exploitation?

Headline Response

In December 2024, the Government announced its support of Services Australia's proposed reforms to Centrepay, which focus on ensuring Centrepay helps Australians and reduces financial risk. These proposed reforms are expected to be announced in the coming weeks and implemented progressively from September 2025.

Facts and Figures

- In the 2024–25 financial year, 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025:
 - On average, 609,450 customers used the Centrepay service per month.
 - There was a total of 23 million Centrepay deductions worth \$3 billion.
 - 81.9 per cent of the value of deductions through Centrepay were for accommodation and utilities.
 - As at 30 June 2025, there were 10,969 approved Centrepay businesses.
 - 1.88 per cent of the value of all Centrepay deductions made were for consumer leases (down from 7.9 per cent in the 2020-2021 financial year).
- The proposed reforms aim to enhance customer protections and minimise the risk of financial exploitation by:
 - Removing high-risk or underutilised service reasons.
 - Strengthening policy and contracts to impose mandatory conditions on businesses.
 - Strengthening business application and onboarding processes.
 - Implementing strict compliance and complaints processes to ensure accountability.
- Remaining Centrepay products and services will continue with improved safeguards to reduce financial harm.

Contact: John Dunne	Cleared by: Cathy Toze
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Communities	PDR Number: QB25-000036
Date Updated: 18/07/2025 11:52:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 18/07/2025 11:52:00 AM

- Once a decision is made on the proposed reforms, Services Australia (the Agency) will communicate directly with Centrepay registered businesses and Centrepay customers to outline changes to Centrepay and provide details of the phased implementation.
- The Agency has made significant improvements to Centrepay to prevent exploitation including setting target amounts for certain goods, providing better support for overpayment reimbursements, and introducing a dedicated Centrepay complaints process.
- To maintain the integrity of the Centrepay program, the Agency conducts regular assurance and compliance checks. It acts decisively against businesses found non-compliant with their Centrepay obligations, ensuring customers are safeguarded against financial harm.
- The Agency works closely with regulators, including the Australian Securities and Investments Commission and the Australian Energy Regulator, regarding Centrepay businesses that may breach regulatory requirements.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

Centrepay was first established in 1998 as a voluntary free bill paying service offered by the Agency for Centrelink customers. Centrepay helps reduce vulnerability by ensuring payments occur on time, protects against late fees, and allows customers to access goods and services they may otherwise not get without the guarantee of payment by the Centrepay service. Customers who get an eligible income support payment can use Centrepay to pay for approved goods and services with Centrepay registered businesses.

The Agency supports the Australian Securities and Investments Commission messaging around Stop Orders to prevent certain businesses from establishing new Centrepay deductions. This includes Indy-C Fashion and Accessories Pty Ltd, a household goods business, for non-compliance with the design and distribution obligations, and Coral Coast Distributors (Cairns) Pty Ltd, a household goods business, for similar issues.

The Australian Securities and Investments Commission pursued legal action against Darranda Pty Ltd, a consumer leasing business, for breaching the *National Consumer Credit Protection Act 2009* (Cth) (Credit Act) by operating a business model designed to circumvent consumer protections.

On 19 December 2024, following proceedings by the Australian Energy Regulator, the Federal Court of Australia imposed penalties totalling \$25 million on AGL Retail Energy Limited for failing to comply with Centrepay payment obligations.

Following proactive outbound engagement by the Agency in November 2024, Synergy, an energy and gas retailer in Western Australia, advised the Agency in March 2025 that they had identified customers who had account credits accrued through Centrepay deductions on utility accounts that were now closed.

Since the issue was identified, the Agency has been working collaboratively with Synergy to assist with the return of funds back to customers.

Synergy self-reported this issue to the Western Australia Economic Regulation Authority. Following the Economic Regulation Authority's investigation into this matter, they issued Synergy with a compliance enforcement (rectification) notice for breaching its Electricity Retail Licence.

Claims & Payments

Services Australia Claims & Payments Figures

Headline Response

As the Government's primary service delivery agency, Services Australia supports millions of Australians each year by efficiently delivering high quality, accessible services and payments on behalf of government.

Facts and Figures

- Significant figures for the 2024-25 financial year:

CLAIMS	
Centrelink	3.5 million
Medicare (services)	480.6 million
Child support registrations	59,400

PAYMENTS	
Total payments	\$263.0 billion
Centrelink	\$163.8 billion
Medicare	\$97.2 billion
Child support facilitated	\$2.0 billion

CONTACTS	
Online transactions	1.1 billion
Call handled	44.3 million
Face-to-face contacts	10.7 million

- As at 3 July 2025:

AGENCY REACH			
State	Face-to-face Sites	Access Points	Agents
ACT	4	0	0
NSW	102	42	69
NT	16	8	58
QLD	70	32	81
SA	24	21	27
TAS	10	5	15
VIC	59	30	43
WA	33	51	74
Total	318	189	367

Contact: Michelle Saunders	Cleared by: Tenille Collins
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Data and Analytics	PDR Number: QB25-000034
Date Updated: 21/07/2025 1:35:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 21/07/2025 1:35:00 PM

Claims & Payments

- As at 17 July 2025:

MYGOV SIGN-INS	
Peak this financial year (FY) to date	2.8 million in one day (15 July 2025)
Peak in last Fortnight	2.8 million in one day (15 July 2025)
Average in 2025–26 FY to date (17 July 2025)	2.2 million per day
Average in 2024–25 FY	979,000 per day

MYGOV APP REGISTRATIONS	
Total registrations to date (16 July 2025)	8.1 million
Registrations for the week ending (11 July 2025)	107,000

DISASTER PAYMENTS ACTIVATED IN THE 2024-25 FY AS AT 17 JULY 2025	
NSW East Coast Severe Weather and Flooding – May 2025	
• Claims Granted	177,000
• Paid	\$207.9 million
• Individuals supported	239,000
• Portion of online claims	96%
• Calls answered	46,000
Western Queensland Heavy Rain & Flooding – March 2025	
• Claims Granted	2,000
• Paid	\$2.7 million
• Individuals supported	2,600
• Portion of online claims	96%
• Calls answered	1,200
New South Wales Ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred – March 2025	
• Claims Granted	43,600
• Paid	\$66.4 million
• Individuals supported	57,000
• Proportion of online claims	96%
Queensland Ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred – March 2025	
• Claims Granted	286,000
• Paid	\$446.5 million
• Individuals supported	377,000
• Proportion of online claims	97%

Claims & Payments

North Queensland Floods – January-February 2025	
• Claims Granted	55,100
• Paid	\$70.6 million
• Individuals supported	76,000
• Proportion of online claims	95%
Ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred – March 2025 / North Queensland Floods – January-February 2025	
• Calls answered	142,000
Bushfires in Western Victoria – December 2024	
• Claims Granted	200
• Paid	\$690,000
• Individuals supported	200
• Portion of online claims	97%
• Calls answered	300
Far West NSW Storms and Power Outages – October 2024	
• Claims Granted	100
• Paid	\$437,000
• Individuals supported	100
• Proportion of online claims	99 %
• Calls answered	500

*NSW and QLD ex TC share the same telephony queue. *From 11th March 2025 NSW and QLD ex TC DRA share the same telephony queue as Nth QLD Floods DRA – figures cannot be separated.

Social Security Claims Completed – 2024–25 Financial Year

Service Reason	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	UNK	VIC	WA
Families and Child Care	22,701	421,982	13,098	308,194	91,584	25,593	155	379,735	142,017
ACCS CWB Application	959	20,205	339	21,742	5,161	1,111	11	32,713	8,198
ACCS Grandparent	26	659	16	660	228	52	-	680	270
ACCS Temporary Financial Hardship	44	926	18	855	193	45	-	997	359
ACCS Transition to Work	29	756	39	892	260	69	-	736	402
ACCS CWB Certificate - Exc Circ - SA	276	4,931	133	4,152	796	173	<5	4,287	1,524
ACCS CWB Determination - Exc Circ - SA	150	4,329	135	4,192	1,148	353	-	3,359	1,605
Child Care Subsidy	7,496	131,101	3,639	92,905	26,492	6,515	49	110,533	42,516

Claims & Payments

Service Reason	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	UNK	VIC	WA
Dad and Partner Pay	-	23	<5	<5	<5	-	-	16	<5
Double Orphan Pension	-	33	<5	40	13	<5	-	46	17
Family Tax Benefit Lump Sum	329	10,664	301	7,679	2,506	888	7	9,009	3,938
Family Tax Benefit New Claim	5,387	116,682	5,170	88,457	26,593	8,405	58	101,032	41,038
Foster Child Health Care Card	20	342	8	306	119	26	-	340	141
Paid Parental Leave	7,964	130,879	3,245	85,910	27,943	7,921	27	115,652	41,828
Stillborn Baby Payment	21	452	51	402	130	32	-	335	180
Older Australians, Disabilities and Carers	8,159	229,179	5,318	146,483	55,868	18,050	1,914	175,231	66,824
Age Pension	2,525	75,659	1,299	50,288	18,643	6,338	1,759	57,660	24,828
Carer Allowance	1,266	44,203	1,059	27,646	10,863	3,476	10	35,176	11,185
Carer Payment	773	33,768	878	19,549	7,092	2,365	12	24,283	7,599
Disability Support Pension	1,624	42,396	1,687	30,483	10,417	3,707	111	33,685	11,563
Ex-Carer Allowance (Child) Health Care Card	131	1,408	14	1,223	458	138	-	1,766	596
Mobility Allowance	93	2,220	50	1,847	1,085	196	<5	1,909	710
Pensions Loan Scheme									
Home Equity Access Scheme	81	1,734	23	1,358	549	211	<5	1,531	665
Seniors Health Card	1,666	27,791	308	14,089	6,761	1,619	20	19,221	9,678
Youth, Education and Employment	12,264	310,992	15,101	230,860	70,327	22,389	255	279,181	107,232
Assistance for Isolated Children	50	1,726	288	2,611	481	202	<5	966	1,429
Austudy	577	12,898	231	9,515	3,183	929	14	14,692	4,811
Fares Allowance	44	548	82	785	207	241	<5	422	250

Claims & Payments

Service Reason	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	UNK	VIC	WA
JobSeeker Payment	6,298	159,217	8,315	120,098	36,854	11,287	95	143,623	55,629
Parenting Payment Partnered	508	13,825	746	9,657	3,091	928	<5	13,381	4,265
Parenting Payment Single	917	26,090	1,676	23,023	5,615	1,983	18	19,831	10,772
Pensioner Education Supplement	286	9,722	147	6,153	2,030	750	6	6,107	2,634
Special Benefit	154	4,859	72	2,686	744	171	14	3,808	1,251
Tertiary Access Payment	37	2,775	135	1,921	493	379	<5	2,288	568
Youth Allowance Apprentice	112	3,058	36	1,739	515	182	<5	3,105	803
Youth Allowance Jobseekers	1,011	27,333	2,854	25,460	6,771	2,442	61	20,990	10,646
Youth Allowance Students	2,270	48,941	519	27,212	10,343	2,895	36	49,968	14,174
Remote and ABSTUDY	171	8,779	3,100	7,982	2,248	487	13	2,430	3,234
ABSTUDY - Non-Schooling A	137	5,742	2,693	5,269	997	303	11	1,478	2,312
ABSTUDY - Schooling A	27	1,861	337	1,945	353	81	<5	193	696
ABSTUDY - PES	6	480	62	324	46	16	-	83	113
Farm Household Allowance	<5	696	8	444	852	87	<5	676	113
Cross Programme	3,205	73,301	5,481	67,769	22,422	8,288	104	85,658	33,194
Crisis Payment	1,500	45,768	5,032	43,184	11,965	3,896	62	26,517	20,121
Essential Medical Equipment	86	2,359	38	2,738	1,400	401	<5	1,955	762
Low Income Card	1,613	24,909	411	21,742	9,037	3,991	41	56,931	12,284
Status Resolution Support Services	6	265	-	105	20	-	-	255	27

- UNK refers to claims which location is unknown at the time of claim lodgement.
- To protect individuals' privacy, cell sizes of less than 5 are represented as "<5". Caution should be taken in re-calculating values from suppressed figures as it may provide incorrect results.

Claims & Payments

Strategic Performance Measures

- The Agency measures its performance against 7 Strategic Performance Measures, which outline the Agency's results across its 3 major programs: Social Security, Health, and Child Support.
- As at 31 March 2025, of the 7 Strategic Performance Measures:
 - 4 are On Track
 - 2 are Substantially On Track, and
 - 1 is Partially On Track.

Strategic Performance Measures (SPMs) results and targets				
SPM	Target 2023–24	Result 2023–24	Target 2024–25	FYTD Result to 31 March 2024–25
SPM 1: Customer satisfaction	≥85 out of 100	79.1 out of 100	≥85 out of 100	77.6 out of 100
SPM 2: Customer trust	≥72 out of 100	75.8 out of 100	≥74 out of 100	76.9 out of 100
SPM 3: Administrative correctness of payments – Existing methodology	≥98%	97.8%	≥98%	98.1%
SPM 4: Customers served within 15 minutes	≥70%	55.2%	≥70%	58.9%
SPM 5: Work processed within timeliness standards	≥90%	71.8%	≥90%	89.3%
SPM 6: Availability of digital channels	≥99%	99.9%	≥99%	99.7%
SPM 7: Tasks managed by customers in digital channels	≥82%	91.9%	≥83%	95.1%

On Track	Substantially On Track	Partially On Track
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- SPM 4 Result for the 2023-24 financial year represents 17.5 million customers served within 15 minutes.
- SPM 4 Result for the 2024-25 financial year to date represents 13.4 million customers served within 15 minutes.

Ombudsman Own Motion Investigation and Report into Child Support

Issue

What is the Government doing to address family and domestic violence, in particular, financial abuse in Child Support?

Headline

The Government is committed to supporting customers and staff experiencing family and domestic violence, including financial abuse.

Facts and Figures

- Services Australia (the Agency) has agreed to all 8 of the recommendations made by the Commonwealth Ombudsman's report *Weaponising Child Support: when the system fails* families published on 3 June 2025.
- The Agency will implement many of the recommendations by December 2025, with targeted operational-level changes to take effect within the next 3 months.
- To combat financial abuse over the next 3 months the Agency is:
 - Developing new Child Support staff guidance and a response framework to assist staff to identify, escalate and manage the risk of financial abuse through Child Support.
 - Strengthening the capacity and capability of Child Support debt management and collection so that it can proactively focus on customers who can pay but aren't.
 - Improving the accuracy of income estimates by requesting supporting evidence more often. This will reduce flow-on Child Support overpayments and debts, as well as Family Tax Benefit debts.
 - Improving customer and staff understanding of the Maintenance Action Test and exemption options for Family Tax Benefit payments, through better communication and operational materials that assist customers to receive the financial support they are entitled to.
- The Agency will also be prioritising Child Support service delivery resourcing and performance.
- Policy departments are also considering possible legislative and policy reform across government to address financial abuse risks in Child Support and to improve customer outcomes. Any legislative or policy reforms are a decision for Government.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Cathy Toze
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Families and Participation	PDR Number: QB25-000037
Date Updated: 16/07/2025 12:16:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 16/07/2025 12:16:00 PM

Policy Commitments

- The Government is conducting an audit of key Commonwealth systems to identify areas where they are being weaponised by perpetrators of family and domestic violence and stamp out opportunities for abuse.

Background

The Commonwealth Ombudsman commenced an own motion investigation into financial abuse through Child Support in February 2025. Following the report, Financial abuse: an insidious form of domestic violence, from the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services, and in tandem with an investigation of the Inspector-General of Taxation culminating in the report, Identification and management of financial abuse within the tax system. These reports suggest that financial abuse is pervasive and that perpetrators are weaponising the system to harm the other parent in their Child Support case and, in some instances, their children.

The Agency provided substantial and comprehensive information to support the investigation and was invited to review and comment on the findings and recommendations in April 2025.

The Ombudsman made eight broad ranging recommendations, including developing a publicly available strategy to address financial abuse through Child Support, a comprehensive review of the Change of Assessment process, strengthening Child Support compliance and enforcement programs, improving staff knowledge of financial abuse and pursuing options for legislative reform.

The Agency accepted all 8 recommendations and will consider and progress these in the context of the broader audit of Australian Government systems currently under way and coordinated by the Office for Women, which is focussed on strengthening systems to stamp out opportunities for systems abuse.

Some of the recommendations are not able to be implemented solely by the Agency and are dependent on the Department of Social Services, the Australian Taxation Office and future Government decisions. The Agency worked closely with the Department of Social Services and the Australian Taxation Office in developing the response and is currently collaborating with them to respond to the report, and progress broader legislative and policy changes.

To effectively tackle financial abuse, the Agency will review and uplift existing processes, business and system capabilities, as well as compliance and enforcement strategies. It is important that parallel policy and legislative reforms are also made to more effectively and systemically counter financial abuse and weaponisation and better protect vulnerable customers.

Support for Customers Impacted by Third Party Data Breaches

Issue

How does Services Australia support customers whose information has been impacted by third party data breaches?

Headline Response

Services Australia takes the protection of customer information seriously. Services Australia is committed to protecting customers from identity theft and supporting customers if their personal information has been lost, stolen, or exposed by a third party. Services Australia has procedures for how it responds to third party data breaches or compromised events.

Facts and Figures

- Third party organisations and individuals continue to experience data loss, often as the result of cyber-incidents. These incidents and scams, can result in the exposure of personally identifiable information, including identity credentials. This can expose individuals to the risk of identity theft.
- In some cases, these data breaches can involve Services Australia (the Agency) credentials, such as Medicare cards, or information that could be relevant to accessing a Services Australia record.
- The Agency is committed to protecting customers from identity theft and supporting customers if their personal information has been lost, stolen, or exposed by a third party.
- The Agency has procedures for how it responds to third party data breaches or compromised events. These outline how the Agency works with the third-party entity to enable the Agency to strengthen its controls around customer records.
- Many data breaches are high profile, receive significant media commentary, and/or result in large-scale impacts to mutual customers and organisations.
- The Agency collaborates with the National Office of Cyber Security and other Australian Government agencies and industry experts, such as IDCARE, to respond to data breaches and support impacted customers.
- The Agency provides information to customers about steps they can take to safeguard their personal information, which is publicly available on the Agency's website or by calling the Agency's Scams and Identity Theft Helpdesk.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Sharna Bartley
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Fraud Control and Investigation Division	PDR Number: QB25-000050
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 12:59:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 12:59:00 PM

Data Breaches

- Where appropriate, the Agency applies additional security measures to affected customer records to increase security and reduce the risk of future misuse.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Data Breaches

Background

Under the Notifiable Data Breaches Scheme, any organisation or agency covered by the *Privacy Act 1988*, must notify affected individuals and the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner when a data breach is likely to result in serious harm to an individual whose personal information is involved.

Third parties are responsible for managing their own data breaches. The Agency is not responsible for the handling of the incidents, including customer contact.

The Agency works with the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner to prepare any required program protocols for data breach events, which allows the Agency to match data provided with customer records in a way that complies with the Australian Privacy Principles and the *Privacy Act 1988* and remains consistent with good privacy practice.

The data matching process enables the Agency to identify customer records at increased risk of identity compromise and allows the Agency to apply additional security measures to these records where appropriate.

Timeline of significant Data Breaches and Agency consultation

Date	Event
August 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bloom Hearing Specialists – a national hearing specialist. • Meli – a not-for-profit community centre that provides services such as support for family violence, youth, and housing.
September 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texas Family Medical Centre – Family and general medical practice.
October 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Nursing Home Foundation – provides accommodation and community care services for elderly people from Chinese and Southeast Asian backgrounds.
November 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jewish Care – provides a range of aged care, in-home services, social services, disability support and Holocaust survivor support programs.
December 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muswellbrook Shire Council – a local government area in NSW. • Waverley Christian College – a co-educational independent Christian school.
January 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spectrum Medical Imaging – an independent radiology practice.
February 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genea – IVF clinic providing fertility treatments.
March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southern Regional Medical Group – Family and general medical practice.

Data Breaches

Date	Event
April 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hurwitz Geller – a chartered accountancy practice.• Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland – represents the needs and goals of multicultural communities, and provides aged care, health and employment programs.
May 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr Paul B Sparks – Cardiologist & Electrophysiologist at The Royal Melbourne Hospital and Director of Electrophysiology at Epworth Hospital.

Debt Management and Recovery**Issue**

What action is Services Australia taking to recover overpayments and support customers who have been overpaid?

Headline Response

Services Australia provides support to customers to assist them in being paid the correct amount. Customers with a debt can self-manage debt repayments online using the myGov app, Services Australia's 'Money you owe' service, or by contacting Services Australia by phone or face to face in one of its Service Centres.

Facts and Figures

- When customers have been overpaid, Services Australia (the Agency) provides several options to help people manage and repay their debt, taking into account the person's individual circumstances. These include:
 - Withholding a percentage of payments for people in receipt of social security payments or allowances.
 - Providing the ability for people who are no longer receiving payments to use a number of repayment arrangement options.
- Flexible repayment options are also available where the person is experiencing family or domestic violence, financial hardship, or where there are other indicators of vulnerability.
- Anyone who owes a debt and is experiencing difficulty with repayments is encouraged to contact the Agency to discuss their circumstances. They can do this on the dedicated debt phone line (1800 076 072).
- The Agency has made enhancements to online services to allow people the flexibility during a crisis or disaster event to change or pause their repayment arrangements.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Robert Higgins
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Payment and Assurance Program and Appeals Division	PDR Number: QB25-000051
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 3:25:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 3:25:00 PM

Debt Management

- If people who are no longer receiving payments refuse to enter into a repayment arrangement with the Agency, further recovery action can occur. This can include:
 - garnisheeing money held on behalf of, or owed to, a customer, for example, from wages, income tax refunds or money held with a financial institution
 - issuing a Departure Prohibition Order, or
 - through civil legal action.

Total Value of Debts

- As at 30 June 2025:
 - The outstanding value of social security debts totalled \$4.74 billion, with 1.34 million debts owed by 780,404 customers.
 - 123,502 debts are currently temporarily written off to a total value of \$474.41 million.
- For the 2024–25 financial year, as at 30 June 2025:
 - 1.40 million debts have been raised with a total value of \$2.35 billion.
 - Of the raised debts, 513,985 with a value of \$43.75 million have been raised and waived.
- For the 2023–24 financial year there were:
 - 1.50 million debts raised to the total value \$2.50 billion.
 - 939,029 debts raised for recovery.
 - 603,348 debts raised and waived.
 - 110,993 debts temporarily written off to the total value of \$405.41 million.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

Australian National Audit Office Audit

On 31 May 2023, the Australian National Audit Office tabled its performance audit on 'Debt Management and Recovery in Services Australia'. The Audit examined whether the Agency has fit-for-purpose debt management and governance arrangements, effective strategies and processes, and assessed and reported on the effectiveness of activities undertaken. The Australian National Audit Office made 4 recommendations, aimed at:

- debt oversight arrangements,
- effectiveness and usability of policies and procedures,
- establishing a debt management strategy, and
- developing internal targets for performance.

The Agency acknowledges improvements can be made to the management and recovery of debts and is working with the relevant policy agencies to implement the recommendations.

Past use of External Collection Agents

As at 30 June 2023, the Agency ceased using External Collection Agents with all social security debt recovery now managed by Agency staff.

Customers are no longer repaying their debts through External Collection Agents. The Agency has been establishing repayment arrangements directly with customers. This change ensures customers deal with specialist Agency staff who understand their situation best, and who are experienced in supporting vulnerable people.

As at 30 June 2025, there were approximately 327 customers who were previously registered with External Collection Agents who are yet to establish a repayment arrangement with the Agency.

This has reduced from 592 customers since all debts were returned to the Agency in June 2023. The Agency will continue to seek to establish repayment arrangements with these customers.

Emergency Response

Administration of Emergency Payments

Issue

What is the Australian Government doing to support Australians impacted by natural disasters?

Headline Response

The Australian Government is committed to supporting individuals impacted by natural disasters. Services Australia plays a key role in the delivery of support and services to those affected.

Facts and Figures

- For all disaster events activated in the 2024–25 financial year, as at midnight 1 July 2025, 550,000 claims have been granted and \$773.9 million paid:
 - 504,000 claims for Disaster Recovery Payment and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Payment have been granted, with \$577.6 million paid
 - 45,900 claims for Disaster Recovery Allowance and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Allowance claims have been granted, with \$196.4 million paid
 - 184,000 calls were answered on the Australian Government Emergency Information Line (180 22 66), and
 - 96.5 per cent of daily claims received by the Agency were made through a Centrelink online account through myGov.
- In preparation for the 2025–26 disaster season, Services Australia (the Agency) is working closely with the National Emergency Management Agency.
- In the case of an emergency event, the Minister for Emergency Management, Senator the Hon Kristy McBain, has the delegation to activate Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payments, the Disaster Recovery Allowance, and their equivalents for eligible New Zealand citizens.
- Once an emergency response has been activated, the Agency can provide the following disaster payments to eligible persons in declared areas as directed by the National Emergency Management Agency:
 - Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment provides \$1,000 per eligible adult and \$400 per eligible child directly into bank accounts.
 - Disaster Recovery Allowance provides assistance for claimants who have lost income for a period of up to 13 weeks, starting from the first day their income

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Emergency Response

was impacted, which can be from the event start date, as written in the signed Instrument.

- New Zealand Disaster Recovery Payment provides one-off financial assistance to eligible New Zealand citizens residing in Australia who hold a non-protected Special Category Visa (subclass 444).
- New Zealand Disaster Recovery Allowance provides short-term income support to eligible New Zealand citizens residing in Australia who hold a non-protected Special Category Visa (subclass 444).
- There are different ways for people to claim disaster support:
 - The fastest way to claim is online. People with internet access can claim online via myGov.
 - The Agency has staff on the ground, who can assist people face-to-face.
 - People can call to claim on 180 22 66, between 8am and 5pm local time Monday to Friday.
- The Agency can tailor a response that is targeted and provides accessible services for customers in remote or isolated communities. For example, the Agency can:
 - Establish temporary offices and provide access to mobile devices for customers to lodge their claims.
 - Provide on the ground support to assist customers with how to claim and provide any additional assistance where required.
 - Provide information in-language, or link people with interpreters for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customers.
 - Offer dedicated culturally sensitive remote servicing staff to help streamline the claiming process.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Emergency Response

Background

For the 2024-25 financial year, emergency payments were activated for the following events:

- 22 May 2025: New South Wales East Coast Severe Weather and Flooding, May 2025 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 30 March 2025: Western Queensland Heavy Rain and Flooding, March 2025 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 11 March 2025: New South Wales Ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred, March 2025 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 11 March 2025: Queensland Ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred, March 2025 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 5 February 2025: North Queensland Floods – January-February 2025 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 30 December 2024: Bushfires in Western Victoria, December 2024 (Disaster Recovery Allowance and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 29 October 2024: Far West New South Wales Storms and Power Outages, October 2024 (Disaster Recovery Allowance and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Allowance).

For the 2023–24 financial year, emergency payments were activated for the following events:

- 19 February 2024: Western Victoria Bushfires, February 2024 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment only).
- 12 February 2024: Heavy Rainfall and Flooding, City of Moreton Bay, January 2024 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment only).
- 4 January 2024: Southeast Queensland Severe Storms and Flooding, December 2023 to January 2024 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 18 December 2023: Tropical Cyclone Jasper, December 2023 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 27 October 2023: Western and Darling Downs Bushfires, October 2023 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).

Emergency Response

For disaster events activated in the 2023–24 financial year, as at midnight 1 July 2025, 58,700 claims have been granted and \$80.2 million paid:

- 55,100 claims for Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Payment have been granted, with \$64.1 million paid.
- 3,600 claims for Disaster Recovery Allowance and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Allowance claims have been granted, with \$16.1 million paid.
- 36,700 calls were answered on the Australian Government Emergency Information Line (180 22 66).
- 95.4 per cent of daily claims received by the Agency were made through a Centrelink online account through myGov.

Service Centre Network Facts and Figures

Issue

What is the Government doing to meet Australian's need for face-to-face services delivered by Services Australia?

Headline Response

Services Australia is committed to maintaining and modernising the service centre network. Services Australia regularly reviews its progress to ensure a sustainable, accessible, and fit-for-purpose network that meets community and customer needs.

Facts and Figures

- The Face-to-Face Transformation Program was launched in 2019 to modernise service delivery. As at 30 June 2025:
 - 182 service centres have been transformed.
 - 57 of the 102 sites at higher risk of customer aggression have received enhanced security treatments.
- Services Australia (the Agency) is committed to maintaining and modernising the service centre network. The Agency supports other channels such as telephony and digital services to deliver improved government services that are simple, helpful, respectful, and transparent.
- When considering the placement of service centres, the Agency undertakes detailed research and analysis, and considers:
 - Customer and community needs.
 - Accessibility and range of services offered.
 - Proximity to other service centres and government services.
 - Offering a mix of online and face-to-face services.
 - Partnership opportunities with community and government agencies.
 - Public transport availability.
- To meet Australians' needs, face-to-face services are available through:
 - 318 service centres.
 - 376 agent service locations.

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- 192 access points.
- 4 Mobile Service Centres.
- Agent service locations provide personnel trained to assist customers with digital services and provide referrals. They have direct phone support for complex inquiries. In addition to the services provided in access points.
- Access points offer self-help facilities, including internet-enabled computers, printers, document upload, self-service phones, and free Wi-Fi.
- Mobile Service Centres travel to rural, regional, and disaster-affected areas, providing Centrelink and Medicare services. They have disabled access and from time to time include representatives from other government agencies.

If pressed**Dungog Shire Community Centre (Dungog Agent)**

- The Dungog Shire Community Centre (DSCC) is contracted to provide agent services to the community at Dungog.
- The Agency has a contract in place with the Dungog Community Centre until 30 June 2026.
- Should DSCC relinquish the agent service, the Agency will initiate an approach to market to ensure services continue for the community of Dungog. Advertisements will be placed in local print media.
- Dungog residents will continue to have access to service centres located at Raymond Terrace (40 km) and Maitland (41 km), with agent services available at Bulahdelah (42 km), and Access Point services at Clarencetown (20 km).

Policy Commitments

- The Government made a commitment as part of the 2022 election to retain 318 service centres.

Background

Due to the Agency's efforts to improve the digital experience, more customers now use digital services like the myGov website and app.

Phone self-service allows customers to access and update their information quickly and conveniently.

Customers can book and manage appointments online at their preferred time, either by phone or at a service centre. Since the commencement on 22 June 2024, customers have booked over 500,000 appointments online.

Agency Support and Protection for People Experiencing Domestic Violence

Issue

How is Services Australia supporting people experiencing Family and Domestic Violence?

Headline Response

Services Australia's *Family and Domestic Violence Strategic Commitment* was launched in December 2024, which reaffirms the Agency's commitment to supporting people affected by family and domestic violence.

Facts and Figures

- Services Australia (the Agency) has a range of support tools, resources, and processes to:
 - Identify family and domestic violence circumstances early.
 - Tailor services to the person's circumstances.
 - Empower customers and staff with valuable information and resources.
- The Agency's workforce is enhanced through comprehensive training relating to family and domestic violence, including more specialised training packages for managers and leaders.
 - This equips our staff to connect customers with the right payments and services provided by the Agency and refer them to appropriate supports in community.
- To secure the personal information of customers leaving a relationship and those experiencing family and domestic violence, the Agency offers practical support, including:
 - Providing information on the Agency's website for customers and within internal documents for staff on how to keep their information safe when leaving a relationship or living with violence or abuse.
 - De-linking a customer's Centrelink record from their partner's when they inform Centrelink they have separated.
 - Transferring customers onto their own Medicare card when they inform Medicare they have separated.

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Date Updated: 9/07/2025 11:41:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 11:41:00 AM

- Reviewing nominee arrangements.
- Connecting customers with Agency social workers for short-term support and intervention.

Policy Commitments

- On 6 September 2024, National Cabinet announced a comprehensive \$4.7 billion package on practical next steps to accelerate action to end gender-based violence in a generation, deliver on the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032, and support legal assistance.
- This package brings together efforts and funding to:
 - Deliver much needed support for frontline specialist and legal services responding to gender based violence.
 - Provide innovative approaches to better identify and respond to high-risk perpetrators to stop violence escalating.
 - Address the role that systems and harmful industries play in exacerbating violence.
- As part of this package, the Government commenced an audit of key government systems to identify areas where they are being weaponised by perpetrators of family and domestic violence.
- The Agency continues to undertake work with the Department of Social Services and the Office for Women on identifying points of risk for abuse, manipulation and coercion within the social security system, and how we can better support victim-survivors.
- On 3 June 2025, the Commonwealth Ombudsman released the findings from an investigation into the weaponisation of the Child Support system. The investigation produced 8 recommendations aimed at strengthening the Child Support Scheme to better support children and separated parents.
- The Agency has accepted all 8 recommendations and is working with colleagues in the Australian Taxation Office to implement structural reform.

Background

The *Family and Domestic Violence Strategic Commitment* (the Commitment) outlines the Agency's approach to supporting customers and staff impacted by family and domestic violence by aligning to the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032* and *The First Action Plan*.

The Commitment reaffirms the Agency's vision to deliver simple, helpful, respectful, and transparent services and support to people affected by family and domestic violence. It drives the Agency's approach to continually refine and strengthen our systems, processes, and support, to minimise risk to those affected by family and domestic violence.

The Agency is currently operationalising our Commitment through the development of a Ways of Working - Action Plan to be released later in 2025. The Agency will engage internal and external stakeholders to drive tangible and practical initiatives to support people experiencing family and domestic violence and develop a framework to measure outcomes.

Income Apportionment

Agency Response to Income Apportionment

Issue

What action is the Government taking to address the issue of income apportionment?

Headline Response

Services Australia is working in consultation with the Department of Social Services to address and resolve the issue of income apportionment.

Facts and Figures

- On 15 July 2025, the Full Court of the Federal Court of Australia handed down its judgment in the matter of *Chaplin v Secretary, DSS* (before the Tribunal as *DSS v FTXB*).
- The majority has accepted the Secretary of the Department of Social Services' preferred meaning of the word "earned" and has confirmed that employment income may be taken into account when it was received.
- The Secretary has publicly stated that as there is certainty to the legal position, paused debt activities involving the assessment of employment income for social security recipients prior to 7 December 2020 will re-commence in line with the Court's decision.
- The Government will now evaluate the impact of the Court's decision and consider its response.
- Anyone who believes they have a debt which was affected by income apportionment can call the dedicated Services Australia (the Agency) helpline on 1800 560 870 or visit the Agency's website.
- The Agency and the Department of Social Services are working to resolve the complex policy and legal issues this matter presents, including addressing the Ombudsman's recommendations.
- To address and resolve income apportionment, the Department of Social Services and the Agency are preparing options for the Government to consider.
- Between July and September 2021, the Agency paused the raising of undetermined debts (potential debts not yet raised) and reviews relating to income apportionment.

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Income Apportionment

- As at 29 June 2025, these pauses related to approximately 16,000 formal reviews, 6,000 explanations on how debts were calculated, and approximately 88,000 undetermined debts.
- The Agency also paused the recovery of 154,000 debts potentially impacted by income apportionment:
 - Approximately 112,000 debts were paused from 30 October 2023.
 - Approximately 42,000 additional debts were paused from 11 April 2024.
- In December 2024, the Agency wrote to all customers affected by the debt pauses advising them:
 - Recovery of their debts would remain paused due to potentially having been affected by income apportionment.
 - Their options to have their case reviewed or voluntarily repay their debt if they wish.
 - Information about the Federal Court appeal.
- As of 29 June 2025, 57 customers have made requests for their review to progress – these are currently being managed by the Agency.
- The Agency website has been updated to ensure people have access to the most up to date information about income apportionment.

If pressed

What does Income apportionment mean for people who have been prosecuted?

- Convictions and prosecutions are matters managed by the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions.
- Other implications for historical prosecutions are one of the aspects of income apportionment that the Government is considering.
- The Agency only makes a referral to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions for serious matters that are supported by a brief of evidence and are never referred for overpayments alone.
- The Agency is working closely with the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions in relation to historical matters which may be impacted by income apportionment.

Income Apportionment

How many customers have been affected by income apportionment?

- The Agency is still determining the total number of customers who may be affected by income apportionment.
- Estimates provided by the Department of Social Services indicate 5.3 million debts, held by 2.9 million Australians, may be impacted by income apportionment.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Income Apportionment

Background

Services Australia and the Department of Social Services (DSS) became aware of issues regarding the use of income apportionment in late 2020.

Since July 2021, the Agency has paused internal reviews, explanations of decision, and the raising and recovery of debts that may be affected by income apportionment, pending instructions from DSS.

In 2023, the Commonwealth Ombudsman (the Ombudsman) conducted two investigations in relation to income apportionment.

From 29 April 2024, the Agency recommenced activity on a small number of debts impacted by income apportionment, in line with instructions and General Guidance for Decision Makers (General Guidance) provided by DSS.

On 28 August 2024, the Administrative Review Tribunal handed down its decision in *Secretary DSS v FTXB*, setting aside a debt that was calculated using the General Guidance and rejecting the Secretary's submissions on how to lawfully recalculate income apportioned debts.

On 25 September 2024, the decision was appealed by the Respondent.

On 22 October 2024, DSS issued the Agency with updated advice to re-pause activity on debts potentially affected by income apportionment, except in certain circumstances.

On 6 March 2025, the appeal, *Chaplin v Secretary DSS*, was heard by the Full Federal Court.

On 15 July 2025, the appeal was dismissed, with an order for the Respondent to pay the Applicant's costs, as agreed.

Income Management

Enhanced Income Management Program

Issue

How is Services Australia supporting customers transition from Income Management to enhanced Income Management?

Headline Response

Services Australia supports existing Income Management customers to choose to move to enhanced Income Management with a SmartCard or remain on Income Management with a BasicsCard. Newly eligible customers are placed directly on enhanced Income Management.

Facts and Figures

- As at 27 June 2025, there were 21,642 customers on enhanced Income Management, with 10,554 customers on Income Management across Australia.
- Of the customers currently on enhanced Income Management:
 - 7,108 have chosen to move to enhanced Income Management (from Income Management).
 - 14,534 have been placed on the enhanced Income Management program.
- Customers can choose to move to, or volunteer for, enhanced Income Management by calling the SmartCard enhanced Income Management hotline, or by visiting a Services Australia Service Centre or Remote Servicing Team.
- All customers are provided with a personalised SmartCard from their chosen card issuer and have access to temporary SmartCards.
- Enhanced Income Management customers are supported by experienced Agency staff through a dedicated SmartCard enhanced Income Management hotline and face-to-face services.
- For customers in the Northern Territory who choose to have their enhanced Income Management account and SmartCard managed by the Traditional Credit Union, card and account support is provided by Traditional Credit Union.
- The Agency holds comprehensive discussions with all Income Management customers who are considering moving to enhanced Income Management to ensure they understand how the change will apply to their circumstances.
- Customers are offered tailored support from the Agency, such as support using the SmartCard, available payment options (i.e. BPAY, direct debit and Centrepay),

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Income Management

advice on how deductions can be paid, and referrals to internal financial support services, such as Financial Information Service Officers.

Policy Commitments

- The Agency works closely with the Department of Social Services, which has policy responsibility for the Income Management programs. This includes supporting activities to design the future of Income Management.

Income Management

Background

Enhanced Income Management

Enhanced Income Management is a tool that helps customers manage their payments and prioritise spending on essential goods and services such as food, housing, bills and education.

- Income Management program rules apply under the enhanced Income Management program. This means the quarantine rate is 50 per cent (except for Child Protection customers and Cape York and Doomadgee regions), and restrictions apply to the purchasing of tobacco products, pornography, alcohol, gambling products, and cash and cash-like products.

Under the enhanced Income Management program, the Family Responsibilities Commission is responsible for referring participants in the Cape York and Doomadgee region. Participants have a quarantine rate between 60 and 90 per cent, determined by the Family Responsibilities Commission.

A 2023–2024 ANAO Performance Audit found the transition to the enhanced Income Management program from the Cashless Debit Card program was largely effective, and that the Agency's limited tender procurement was largely compliant with Commonwealth Procurement Rules.

Income Management

Income Management is a tool to help customers manage their money to meet essential household needs and expenses.

Customers supported by Income Management have a percentage (varies between 50 per cent or 70 per cent) of their income support payment set aside in an Income Management account.

Customers on Income Management can make payments from their income managed account for priority needs such as rent, bills or food by:

- Using their BasicsCard.
- Asking the Agency to set up regular or one-off payments to approved organisations.

ANAO Financial Statements Audit 2023-24 Finding

Issue

How is Services Australia addressing the Australian National Audit Office's Category A finding (Finding 26) in relation to Medicare Compensation Recovery Program Governance?

Headline Response

Services Australia is progressing an audit Implementation Action Plan to address the audit findings. Services Australia continues to make improvements to its compensation recovery system and its operations to support more timely action and has increased its completion rates to 79.1 per cent of claims completed within legislated timeframes for the 2024–25 financial year. Services Australia continues to work with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing on policy matters in respect to this finding.

Facts and Figures

- Services Australia (the Agency) is addressing the Category A finding. This includes continuing to work with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing as the relevant policy agency on potential legislative and system changes, including:
 - Seeking clarification on the interpretation of the *Health and Other Services (Compensation) Act 1995* (the HOSC Act).
 - Considering legislative reform to the HOSC Act to align to the policy intent of the Medicare Compensation Recovery Program and clarify the law.
- Since June 2023, the Agency has:
 - Implemented over 200 system fixes to improve the efficiency of its Medicare Compensation Recovery System.
 - Reduced work on hand to 3,083 as at 30 June 2025, compared to a 20,939 as at 30 June 2024.
 - Increasing its claim timeliness to 79.1 per cent of claims completed within legislated timeframes for the 2024–25 financial year.
- For the months of May and June 2025, the Agency has achieved approximately 98 per cent of claims completed within timeliness.

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Medicare Compensation

Australian National Audit Office Audit Findings

- During the 2023–24 audit, the Australian National Audit Office identified that over 50 per cent of cases were not assessed by the Agency within the statutory timeframes, contrary to specific requirements in the HOSC Act to process claims within timeframes or to make decisions to not pursue recovery.
- The Act requires that the Agency must issue notices prior to statutory time periods expiring and has no discretion to not pursue recovery. The Australian National Audit Office identified that the Agency did not take sufficient steps during 2023–24 to address these known issues.
- The Agency's non-compliance with the HOSC Act resulted in:
 - Non-collection of revenue from 'non-advance payments' that would have otherwise been owed to the Commonwealth.
 - The identification of an error in the Agency's prior period financial statements, relating to the recognition and treatment of revenue and receivables associated with the Medicare Compensation Recovery System program.
- The Agency has not pursued recovery for non-advance cases closed outside of timeliness since commencement of the program in 1996.

The Agency's performance on claims processing

- In the 2023–24 financial year, the program completed processing of 41,490 claims. Of these, 22,258 (53.65 per cent) were completed outside legislated timeframes.
- In the 2024–25 financial year, the program completed processing of 49,610 claims. Of these, 10,369 (20.90 per cent) were completed outside of legislative timeframes.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Medicare Compensation

Background

When an injured person receives more than \$5,000 in compensation for an injury or illness, the Agency is responsible for recovering Medicare benefits and aged care costs related to that injury under the HOSC Act.

The Agency engages with claimants/injured persons, insurers, legal providers, and third-party representatives to administer the program on behalf of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

There are two pathways within the Medicare Compensation Recovery Program, advance payments and non-advance payments.

Advance payments

Advance payments relate to claims where the compensation payer or insurer has elected to provide the Agency with 10% of the settlement amount to cover any potential Medicare services and care costs that relate to the compensated injury and paying the remaining 90% to the injured person.

When the Agency closes an Advance payment claim outside of legislative timeframes, a full refund of any payments received is made to the compensation recipient, regardless of if a debt is identified during the assessment of the claim in accordance with the HOSC Act.

Non-advance payments

Non-advance payments relate to claims where the insurer has elected to withhold the compensation payment amount until the Agency identifies the amount to be recovered. The insurer then pays the Agency the amount owed for Medicare services and care costs before paying the remaining amount to the injured person.

When the Agency closes a non-advance payment claim outside legislative timeframes, a \$0.00 debt amount is sent to the compensation recipient, regardless of whether a debt is identified during the assessment of the claim.

The Australian National Audit Office findings identified that the Agency should be pursuing the debt from the customer in these instances. This is contrary to the policy intent from the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and is not how the Agency has operated since 1996.

Disruption to Mobile Service Centre – Golden Wattle

Issue

Why does Services Australia currently have only 3 of its 4 Mobile Service Centres supporting regional and remote communities?

Headline Response

One of Services Australia's fleet of 4 Mobile Services Centres, Golden Wattle, is temporarily out of service due to a mechanical failure.

Facts and Figures

- The Government remains committed to providing Mobile Service Centres, that travel throughout rural and regional Australia and disaster-affected communities, bringing government services to people where and when they need it most.
- Mobile Service Centre, Golden Wattle, will remain out of service from 1 July 2025 for approximately 9 weeks until a maintenance issue is resolved.
- Golden Wattle was scheduled to visit north-eastern and north-western New South Wales flood affected towns within the Taree, Coffs Harbour, Kempsey and Port Macquarie regions during this period. Once Golden Wattle is operational again, it will re-commence servicing in these areas.
- Services Australia (the Agency) has contacted local councils and key organisations within these communities to apologise for the change in schedule and provide them with information about the servicing arrangements available via on-line services, over the phone or at one of the closest service centres, agents or access points.
- The Agency Community Engagement Officers will continue to provide assistance to these communities by contacting key organisations and identifying any needs for further support. Agency staff will also continue to provide assistance at open Recovery Centres and attend community events.
- From 2006 to 30 June 2025, Mobile Service Centres have:
 - Travelled 1,210,138 km.
 - Visited 7,497 communities.
 - Helped 222,939 people.
 - Attended 38 emergency events, spending 652 days in 423 disaster affected communities helping 36,960 people.

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Division: Face to Face Services	PDR Number: QB25-000059
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Mobile Servicing

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Mobile Servicing

Background

Mobile Service Centres provide a convenient and personalised service to rural and regional communities. Their mobile capabilities mean during emergencies they can also be quickly diverted to provide rapid response for communities in need.

The disruption to mobile servicing in north-eastern and north-western New South Wales during July to September 2025 is due to a mechanical failure to Mobile Service Centre, Golden Wattle.

The hydraulic leg on Golden Wattle malfunctioned, and the vehicle has undergone assessments by specialist mechanics and engineers at a maintenance centre in Newcastle. The fault has been identified as a custom-built sensor issue.

The sensor and hydraulic leg require replacement. The maintenance provider has engaged a third-party supplier, and sourcing and installation of the parts will take a minimum of 9 weeks.

Itineraries for Mobile Service Centres Desert Rose (Queensland), Kangaroo Paw II (South Australia), and Blue Gum (Victoria), will be maintained.

myGov Funding and Operations including Future Improvements

Issue

How is the Government ensuring that myGov remains a reliable and secure part of Australia's digital infrastructure?

Headline Response

Every day, myGov helps more than 979,000 Australians access critical government services easily, quickly and securely. The Government has made a significant investment in the future of myGov, which will help Australians do more, whilst keeping myGov secure and reliable as critical national infrastructure.

Facts and Figures

- myGov makes it easy for Australians to use one account to access 18 services across the Commonwealth and state and territory governments, including the Australian Taxation Office, Centrelink and Medicare.
- In the 2024–25 Budget, Services Australia (the Agency) received \$630.3 million over four years from the 2024–25 financial year (and \$144.8 million per year ongoing) to sustain and enhance the myGov platform, and ensure the continued development of its capability, including continuing an independent advisory board to provide guidance and advice to Government on potential myGov enhancements until the 2027–28 financial year.
- Since the myGov User Audit, the Agency has delivered significant improvements for customers.
 - The myGov app makes it easier to access services and messages from mobile devices, including 6 cards now available in the digital wallet. Nearly 8 million people are now using the myGov app.
 - A new security dashboard is helping people better secure their myGov accounts, providing extra protection against scams. 1.2 million users have now set up a passkey, which helps protect against phishing scams.
 - Commonwealth Statutory Declarations can now be completed in myGov with Digital ID, saving people time by not having to find an in-person witness.

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Division: Customer and Staff Digital Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000049
Date Updated: 11/07/2025 4:04:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 11/07/2025 4:04:00 PM

- Further improvements in myGov are underway in 2025, including:
 - Providing the option for people to be notified about and complete the 2026 Census through myGov.
 - Migrating the Express Plus apps functionality into myGov, starting with Medicare, so people can get more things done inside the myGov app.
- The Agency is exploring the potential for new whole-of-government capabilities through the myGov Pipeline. This includes making it easy to track appointments and making it simpler for more government services to join myGov.

If pressed on Inadvertent Closure of myGov Accounts

- Since early 2024, myGov has successfully closed over 2.4 million unused myGov accounts. The process of closing inactive accounts is a common security practice to reduce the risk of fraud and unauthorised access through compromised sign in credentials.
- On 27 June 2025, myGov inadvertently closed 1393 active myGov accounts. A post implementation review identified human error as the cause.
- All impacted users were sent an email apologising for the error and inconvenience, with the offer of support from the myGov Helpdesk to open a new myGov account.
- Since the closure, 28 affected customers have sought assistance and advice from the myGov helpdesk.

Policy Commitments

- \$580.3 million over four years from the 2024–25 financial year (and \$139.6 million per year ongoing) to sustain the myGov platform and ensure the continued development of its capability, including continuing an independent advisory board to provide guidance and advice to Government on potential myGov enhancements until the 2027–28 financial year.
- \$50.0 million over four years from the 2024–25 financial year (and \$5.2 million per year ongoing) for enhancements to the myGov platform to continue to respond to the findings of the Critical National Infrastructure myGov User Audit and advice from the independent advisory board, including enhancements to the myGov support tool, strengthening myGov fraud detection capabilities, improving the myGov inbox and other communication tools and supporting users to better secure their myGov accounts.
- This measure builds on the 2023–24 Budget measure, Sustain myGov and the 2023–24 MYEFO measures, Services Australia – additional resourcing, modernising myGov, and Services Australia’s improved safety for staff and customers.

Background

Interim Independent Advisory Board

The establishment of an independently chaired advisory board was a key action from the myGov User Audit (Recommendation 7) to put in place citizen centred governance to drive inclusion and performance.

In the 2024–25 Budget, the Government invested in the Advisory Board, until June 2028, to provide the independent expertise and insights to progress towards making public services more accessible, ethical and effective.

The Advisory Board will continue to provide the Minister for Government Services with advice and assurance on designing, prioritising, and investing in people-centred services and improvements.

Ombudsman’s report on Keeping myGov secure

Issue

What action is the Government taking to ensure that myGov remains a safe and secure platform for government service delivery?

Headline Response

On 6 August 2024, the Commonwealth Ombudsman, Mr Iain Anderson, published the *Keeping myGov Secure* report following an own motion investigation into fraud arising from unauthorised linking to myGov accounts.

Services Australia has completed 3 of the 4 recommendations in the report and has made progress on the final recommendation. Services Australia will provide a formal response to the Commonwealth Ombudsman in August 2025.

Facts and Figures

- Maintaining the security of myGov and the protection of people’s personal information remains a top priority for Services Australia (the Agency), and it remains committed to ongoing improvement.
- The Commonwealth Ombudsman’s report made 4 recommendations and 2 suggestions in relation to:
 - myGov’s security controls for unauthorised linking and high-risk transactions.
 - The management of shared risks across the myGov ecosystem.
 - Supporting people whose member service accounts have been impacted by myGov fraud.
- In response to the recommendations, the Agency has implemented additional security measures to support customers, including:
 - Disrupting fraudulent payment redirection through additional controls on updating payment details online.
 - Introducing the myGov Security Dashboard to help customers switch to stronger sign in methods, such as Digital ID and Passkeys.

Contact: Aaron Wilkins	Cleared by: Jonathon Thorpe
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Customer and Staff Digital Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000053
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 1:01:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 1:01:00 PM

PDR Number: QB25-000053

- obfuscating bank details in online accounts across Centrelink, Medicare, Child Support and myGov.
- The Agency continues work to strengthen customer authentication processes, including when linking myGov accounts to Centrelink, Medicare and Child Support. These updates are due to be delivered in September 2025.
- In recognition of myGov's whole-of-government role, the Agency has also strengthened processes across member services to identify and manage shared risks, share operational updates, and respond to suspected fraudulent activity.
- The Agency identifies and responds to over 300 scams per week that impersonate myGov. In a challenging global security environment, myGov is continually evolving to meet the challenges of increasingly sophisticated and numerous scams, identity theft and other cyber security threats.
- The Agency has observed, analysed, and responded to 13,945 unique agency impersonation scams for July 2024 to May 2025. This does not include additional malicious websites identified and actioned directly by intelligence partners.
- myGov is a significant target, with over 80 per cent of these scams in the 2023–24 financial year referencing myGov in some way.
- Since the introduction of the myGov Security Dashboard, approximately 1.8 million users have now updated to a stronger sign in method, such as Passkeys or Digital ID. In addition, over 780,000 users have switched off their password.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Contact: Aaron Wilkins	Cleared by: Jonathon Thorpe
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Customer and Staff Digital Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000053
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Background

The full list of recommendations and suggestions from the Commonwealth Ombudsman Final Report are:

- **Recommendation 1.** Consistent with its responsibilities for driving improvement in fraud control practices, we recommend Services Australia:
 - a) Assess existing Proof of Record Ownership processes across the myGov ecosystem to identify and document, shared risks, and work with member services to agree and implement appropriate controls.
 - b) Consider establishing baseline Proof of Record Ownership requirements, which must be met by all member services.
- **Recommendation 2a.** We recommend Services Australia implement additional security controls such as two factor authentication across its three member services for all high-risk transactions, including linking a member service account to myGov and updating contact and bank account details.
- **Recommendation 2b.** Services Australia should ensure that a high standard of security settings for high-risk transactions applies consistently across all available service delivery channels for its member services.
- **Recommendation 3.** We recommend Services Australia establish formal processes for managing all shared risks across the myGov ecosystem, including identifying, assessing and documenting shared risks, periodically assessing the effectiveness of agreed controls and responding to indications that risk assessments should be updated.
- **Recommendation 4.** We recommend Services Australia seek external legal advice about options to facilitate a greater level of information sharing across linked member services and support member services to act proactively to reduce fraud risk or other unlawful activity while meeting their other legislative obligations.
- **Suggestion 1.** We suggest Services Australia share learnings and information about its authentication and Proof of Record Ownership processes with other myGov member services to support them to build their capability.
- **Suggestion 2.** We suggest Services Australia regularly reviews and updates its communications regarding potential myGov and member service account breaches, including security notifications, staff guidance and online content, to ensure people are supported to take real time action to mitigate breaches to their myGov and or linked member service accounts.

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Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Customer and Staff Digital Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000053
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 1:01:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 1:01:00 PM

PDR Number: QB25-000053

Services Australia's Response to People Released from Immigration Detention

Issue

How is Services Australia supporting individuals released from immigration detention?

Headline Response

Services Australia continues to work with the Department of Home Affairs regarding people who have been released from held detention or residence determination arrangements because of the High Court ruling in *NZYQ v Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs*.

This includes processing applications from people who, upon release, apply for the Special Benefit payment.

Facts and Figures

- Services Australia (the Agency) supports individuals released from immigration detention when they engage with the Agency.
- The High Court ruling resulted in the Agency engaging with people who:
 - were in residence determination arrangements and may already have been in receipt of the Status Resolution Support Services payment from the Agency, or
 - persons who had been released directly from held detention and at the time of release were not receiving a payment from the Agency.
- As at 1 July 2025, there are approximately 225 customers receiving payments from the Agency on a visa sub-class 070.
- The Agency assesses and processes all claims in line with current arrangements for vulnerable customers with complex needs, including applying servicing arrangements where staff safety concerns are identified.
- The Agency continues to work closely with the Department of Social Services and the Department of Home Affairs to provide information to support impacted people.
- Any questions regarding the total number of people released from immigration detention, including those in receipt of the Status Resolution Support Services

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Sharna Bartley
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Fraud Control Investigations Division	PDR Number: QB25-000041
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payment, should be referred to the Department of Home Affairs as the Agency does not have visibility of this information.

Special Benefit

- Persons released from immigration detention may also test their eligibility for Special Benefit, which is a payment for persons who are not able to receive any other social security payment.
 - The Special Benefit payment has been available to eligible customers since 1945.
 - The Agency administers the Special Benefit payment on behalf of the Department of Social Services.
 - Special Benefit is a discretionary payment designed to assist individuals in financial hardship who:
 - are not eligible for other income support payments, and
 - are unable to earn a sufficient livelihood for themselves and their dependants.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

On 8 November 2023, the High Court handed down the decision, *NZYQ v Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs [2023] HCA 37*, requiring immediate release from immigration detention of an individual on the basis that their detention was unlawful as there was no real prospect of removal from Australia.

The Department of Home Affairs contracted Service Providers to work closely with people impacted by this decision and to support them in lodging their claim for Special Benefit with the Agency. Impacted customers can also claim online.

Customers already in receipt of Status Resolution Support Services payments from the Agency were eligible to receive that payment until their claim for Special Benefit was granted or the Department of Home Affairs cancelled their Status Resolution Support Services payment.

The Agency has put in place processes to assist in the identification of people in this cohort who lodge Special Benefit claims.

Information to support impacted people includes:

- the process Service Providers need to follow to assist a person to initiate a Special Benefit claim
- Proof of Identity requirements
- the application of a 13-week activity test exemption by the Agency for people in this cohort to ensure no impacts to payment, and
- other payments and support people may be eligible for outside of Special Benefit, including Health Care Card, Family Tax Benefit, Parental Leave Pay, Child Care Subsidy, and Medicare.

Status Resolution Support Services Payment

On 1 April 2014, the Agency commenced the administration of the Status Resolution Support Services payment on behalf of the Department of Home Affairs.

The Status Resolution Support Services payment provides financial support to asylum seekers, as part of the broader Status Resolution Support Services program administered by the Department of Home Affairs. The Status Resolution Support Services program provides temporary, needs-based support to asylum seekers who are unable to support themselves while resolving their immigration status.

The Department of Home Affairs determines a person's eligibility for Status Resolution Support Services, and the Agency determines a customer's payability for Status Resolution Support Services payment. The Status Resolution Support Services payment is not a social security payment and customers receiving the payment do not have access to other Agency payments or services.

Discrepancies in Centrelink Payment Summaries

Issue

What is the Government doing to address the system issues that are causing incorrect reportable income amounts (taxable and non-taxable) to display within Centrelink payment summaries?

Headline

Services Australia has informed a cohort of impacted customers of a delay in the availability of their 2024–25 Centrelink payment summary and dedicated over 100 staff to remediation work so that accurate payment summaries can be provided to the customers early in the 2025–26 financial year.

Facts and Figures

Key Dates	
20 May 2025	The Agency engaged with the Australian Taxation Office on the identified payment summary issues.
13 June 2025	The Agency commenced manual remediation of impacted records.
27 June 2025	The Agency started notifying impacted customers of the payment summary issues. Letters issued to customers via mail and myGov.
1 July 2025	Payment summary data transferred to the Australian Taxation Office for s47E(d) customers and withheld for s47E(d) impacted customers.
3 July 2025	Mailout to all impacted customers completed.

- On 1 July 2025, the Agency shared 2024–25 Centrelink payment summary data with the Australian Taxation Office via the standard process for s47E(d) customers. The Australian Taxation Office has confirmed the records have pre-filled into individual tax returns through myTax.
- The Agency has identified a cohort of s47E(d) customers with potential inaccuracies in their 2024–25 Centrelink payment summaries which were withheld from the Australian Tax Office.
- For these customers, system issues are causing incorrect reportable income amounts (taxable and non-taxable) to display within their Centrelink payment summaries where:

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Cathy Toze
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Families and Participation	PDR Number: QB25-000042
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 9:33:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 9:33:00 AM

Payment Summaries

- s47E(d)
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-
-
-
- From 27 June 2025 to 3 July 2025, the Agency issued letters to all s47E(d) customers notifying them of the issue and a delay to the availability of their 2024–25 Centrelink payment summary.
- Customers may not be able to lodge their individual tax return until their record has been remediated. This delay may financially impact customers who are expecting to receive a tax refund.
- The Agency has dedicated over 100 staff to remediate the inaccurate payment summaries and on 6 July 2025, s47E(d) payment summaries had been remediated.
- The Agency is working with the Australian Taxation Office to share remediated payment summaries daily to improve customer experience and reduce customer contact.
- The Agency's current focus is on remediating s47E(d) payment summaries for customers identified by the Australian Taxation Office as likely to lodge a tax return in July 2025, based on analysis of lodgement history.
- The Agency is aiming to remediate approximately s47E(d) payment summaries (for customers who are likely to lodge tax returns) by the end of August 2025, and the remaining impacted payment summaries by late September 2025, ahead of the 31 October 2025 individual tax return lodgement date.
- Where customers contact the Agency and raise concerns about the delay in the availability of their payment summary, the Agency has a process to escalate their payment summary for remediation.
- The Agency has been working closely with the Australian Taxation Office to align website, Interactive Voice Response and staff communications about the payment summary issues.
- The Agency is analysing Information and Communication Technology solutions to prevent the identified issues from occurring in future financial years.
- The Agency is undertaking historical analysis to identify if any previous financial year payment summaries were affected.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Payment Summaries

Background

From 1 July each year, Centrelink payment summary information is made available to customers and shared with the Australian Taxation Office to assist customers with completing their individual tax returns. The Agency produces over 6 million payment summaries each year. Data is transferred to the Australian Taxation Office to be used as pre-fill data for tax returns.

Many Centrelink customers will not be taxable. For example, customers in receipt of an Income Support Payment for at least one day have a tax-free threshold of \$22,575, and customers in receipt of an Income Support Payment for every day of the financial year, who are also a liable parent or a recipient parent under a child support assessment, have a tax-free threshold of \$29,842.

Customers in receipt of Family Tax Benefit and Child Care Subsidy are required to complete a tax return or advise the Agency of non-lodgement to balance their payments at end of the financial year.

Robodebt Royal Commission - Government Response

Issue

What has the Government done in response to the Robodebt Royal Commission?

Headline Response

Many of the Royal Commission's findings align with the priorities and reforms the Australian Government has maintained focus on – rebuilding trust in government, investing in a capable public sector, delivering strong institutions and ensuring people are at the centre of service delivery.

Facts and Figures

- As at 30 June 2025, Services Australia (the Agency) has fully implemented 21 recommendations, partially implemented 2 recommendations (recommendations 16.2 & 20.1), and is well progressed on implementing its remaining 3 recommendations.
- Recommendation 16.2 – Review and strengthen governance of data-matching programs:
 - The Agency continues to work across government, including with the Australian Government Solicitor and the Australian Taxation Office to fully implement this recommendation.
- Recommendation 20.1 – Administrative Appeals Tribunal cases with significant legal and policy issues:
 - The Agency continues to assess the new systems for screening cases flowing from the new Administrative Review Tribunal to fully implement this recommendation.
- Key changes implemented by the Agency to address recommendations include:
 - The Advocates' Channel with Economic Justice Australia has provided opportunities to enhance how advocates can engage with the Agency. The Agency will continue to build on the existing advocacy channel with findings from the pilot to inform a possible scalable solution.
 - Recruited over 160 ongoing social workers in 2024 with 665 social workers in 214 locations.
 - Embedding human-centred design and customer research into core practices, incorporating insights from customers, staff and peak advocacy organisations.

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Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Legal Compliance and Remediation	PDR Number: QB25-000056
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- Proactive and inclusive staff feedback mechanisms, such as surveys, round table meetings, operational feedback, systematic issues register, and a dedicated staff feedback tool.
- Improvements to debt policy including no longer using external collection agencies to recover debts and enabling customers to self-pause their debts when impacted by disaster or crisis.

Timeline of Significant Events

- 11 June 2021: The Federal Court of Australia approved the Class Action Settlement agreement, including the Settlement Distribution Scheme.
- 25 August 2022: Announcement confirming the establishment of the Robodebt Royal Commission, its Terms of Reference and reporting date.
- 7 July 2023: The Report of the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme was presented by the Commissioner and tabled in Parliament.
- 10 July 2023: The Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Australian Public Service Commissioner announced that a taskforce would be established and led by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Attorney-General's Department, and the Australian Public Service Commission to support Ministers in preparing the Government's response.
- 8 September 2023: The former CEO of Services Australia, Ms Rebecca Skinner PSM, apologised to all Services Australia staff for Robodebt and how it affected them.
- 13 November 2023: The Government released its response to the Royal Commission's recommendations, which was tabled in Parliament.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

The Income Compliance Programme (the Robodebt Scheme) was initiated in 2015 and was supported through budget measures between 2015–16 and 2018–19. The Scheme was ceased in November 2019.

On 7 July 2023, Commissioner Catherine Holmes AC SC, presented the Report of the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme, to the Governor-General, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd).

On 13 November 2023, the Australian Government released its response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme.

The Government accepted (49), or accepted in-principle (7), all 56 recommendations made by the Royal Commission. Of these, Services Australia is the lead agency for 26 recommendations.

Scams Prevention and Protection

Issue

How is Services Australia ensuring that customers are protected from scams impersonating trusted organisations and brands like myGov?

Headline Response

Services Australia takes the protection of customer information seriously. Scams present an evolving threat to all Australians, and Services Australia continues to observe a significant number of scams targeting customers by impersonating trusted organisations and brands, such as myGov.

Facts and Figures

- Services Australia (the Agency) observed, analysed, and responded to 13,945 unique Agency impersonation scams between July 2024 to May 2025.
- myGov is the most targeted Agency brand, with over 80 per cent of these scams in the 2023–24 financial year referencing myGov in some way.
- The Agency's Scams and Identity Theft Helpdesk supports customers affected by scams and identity security concerns by providing advice on how customers can protect their personal information, checking their record for suspicious activity, correcting unauthorised updates, offering additional security measures, and referring to support services as needed.
 - Between July 2024 to May 2025, the helpdesk responded to over 27,000 calls.
- The Agency continues to support customers to strengthen their accounts and sign in processes and is implementing measures to help protect customers from scams impersonating myGov.
- In July 2024, the Agency introduced a phishing resistant sign-in security method, known as a passkey, to provide myGov users greater protection from scams.
- A passkey will only work with the genuine website or app that the passkey is connected with and will not work with fake websites. This means users cannot accidentally sign-in to a fraudulent version of myGov using their passkey.
- The Agency recently released the first version of the myGov Security Review that prompts customers to take actions to make their accounts more secure.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Sharna Bartley
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Fraud Control and Investigations	PDR Number: QB25-000057
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Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

The Agency is committed to protecting customers from the harm of scams and supporting customers who are the victim of identity compromise.

The Agency's scam response involves helping customers avoid scams and to protect their personal information, detecting and taking action against scams that impersonate the agency, providing support to customers who are victim of identity compromise, and strengthening our systems and processes to improve our resilience to scam activity.

Raising scam awareness and educating staff and customers is one way the Agency actively responds to scams. The Agency helps customers recognise and avoid scams, through a range of communication and engagement activities, such as:

- Presenting to external government groups such as not-for-profits supporting vulnerable cohorts.
- Running the Services Australia Scams Awareness booth at relevant expos.
- Maintaining and enhancing messaging via the Agency's website and the myGov site on how to avoid scams and protect identity.
- Scam alerts on the Agency's websites and social media accounts.

The Agency is participating in the Australian Communications and Media Authority's pilot SMS Sender ID Register. This pilot builds on earlier initiatives (Telstra – Cleaner Pipes; Optus – Trusted Sources) and provides protections by blocking fraudulent text messages that target customers by impersonating Agency brands, such as myGov or Medicare.

Security Risk Management Review Implementation

Issue

What action is the Government taking to ensure the safety and security of staff working to provide vital services for the Australian community?

Headline Response

The Government has invested \$361 million in response to the Security Risk Management Review to continue to improve the safety of Services Australia's staff and customers.

Facts and Figures

- The safety of all staff is paramount, and Services Australia (the Agency) is committed to ensuring that all staff can serve the Australian public without fear of violence.
- Funding committed by the Government and internal Agency resources will enable the Agency to implement all 44 recommendations of the Security Risk Management Review (the Review) by July 2026.
- Of the 44 recommendations, 20 have been completed in full, and the remaining 24 recommendations are in progress at various stages based on size and complexity.
- Examples of the work already delivered that sees immediate improvements includes:
 - Upgrades to the Airport West Service Centre were completed in December 2023.
 - The Criminal Code Amendment (Protecting Commonwealth Frontline Workers) Bill 2024 was enacted on 9 July 2024 to strengthen offences for acts of violence and aggression against Commonwealth frontline staff.
 - The customer online appointment booking system was rolled out nationally on 24 June 2024. Customers can now book and cancel their own 15-minute phone appointment or a 30-minute face-to-face appointment online, without the requirement to call or attend in-person. This has streamlined interactions and reduced customer frustration.

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Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Community Engagement and Servicing Redesign	PDR Number: QB25-000040
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 9:35:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 9:35:00 AM

Security Review

- Advanced Customer Aggression training has been delivered to 3,548 frontline staff skilling them with the confidence to respond and de-escalate customer aggression incidents. The roll out of this training is continuing to all face-to-face frontline service delivery staff uplifting the capability of the Agency to effectively respond to customer aggression.
- 57 service centres at risk of high levels of customer aggression have received enhanced security treatments, including 24 site remediations, with the ongoing program of work continuing this financial year.
- Customer Self Check-in Kiosks are operational in 83 service centres to minimise frustrations caused by queues, and to provide real time information about presenting customers and any known risks.
- The Government will also soon reintroduce a Commonwealth Workplace Protection Order Bill which will set out a Commonwealth Workplace Protection Orders scheme to provide legal protections for Commonwealth workplaces and workers and deter acts of violence and other harmful behaviours by members of the public.
- A new Protective Security Operations Centre will be operational in June 2026 to enable the agency to respond in real time as security incidents occur.

Policy Commitments

- The Government has invested \$361 million to enable the Agency to implement the recommendations of the Review in full to continue to improve the safety of the Agency's staff and customers.

Background

On 24 May 2023, the Review was initiated immediately following an incident at the Airport West Service Centre in Melbourne, where a staff member was seriously injured by a customer on 23 May 2023.

The Review was informed by significant staff consultation and outlines the extensive range of measures the Agency already had in place to protect staff and in addition offers recommendations to improve these measures.

The Key Findings and 44 Recommendations cover security capabilities, service centre design, managed service plans and the adequacy of legislation to prevent and respond to customer aggression.

Services Australia Current Staffing Levels

Issue

What are the current staff levels at Services Australia and will there be a reduction in the 2025-26 financial year?

Headline Response

A key focus for Services Australia last year was building on the injection of new staff to reduce the time it takes to process claims or to answer the phone. Services Australia has made improvements compared to this time last year and continues to head in the right direction.

Facts and Figures

- As of 30 June 2025, Services Australia (the Agency) had a workforce of approximately 37,500 staff. This includes approximately:
 - 35,200 (94 per cent) Australian Public Service (APS) staff
 - 2,300 (6 per cent) non-APS staff (labour hire and contractors), and
 - 17 (< 1 per cent) other Commonwealth employees seconded to the Agency.
- The Agency's APS employee headcount increased by over 1,600 between 30 June 2024 and 30 June 2025 (from approximately 33,600 to 35,200).
- This workforce is supplemented by 2 Service Delivery Partners (SDPs) that allows the Agency to scale up and down quickly, comprising a headcount of 668 staff, as of 30 June 2025.
- The Agency's 2024–25 Average Staffing Level (ASL) was 31,442, which is 1,224 ASL above the 2024–25 Budget ASL portfolio allocation of 30,218. This increase in the Agency's ASL reflects further investment in APS staffing to reduce reliance on contractor services.
- The Agency's 2025–26 Approved ASL is 29,612 which is 606 below the 30,218 approved ASL for the Agency during the 2024–25 financial year.
- Between 1 December 2020 and 30 June 2025, approximately 4,500 non-APS employees, including labour hire, contractor and SDP staff, have transitioned to APS employment in the Agency.
- In the last 12 months (1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025), approximately 158 APS employees (non-ongoing and Intermittent/Irregular) have transitioned to APS ongoing employment.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Randall Brugeaud
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Workforce Capability	PDR Number: QB25-000048
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Policy Commitments

- Between 1 May 2022 and 30 June 2025, the Agency has employed (commenced) approximately 350 additional staff in Far North Queensland¹, and is continuing to recruit to work towards the Government's election commitment.
- As part of the 2024–25 Budget, the Agency received \$1.8 billion over 3 financial years to the 2025–26 financial year to:
 - Maintain a customer service workforce to deliver timely services and payments to Australians experiencing vulnerability in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis.
 - Sustain emergency response capability.
 - Support other aspects of the Agency's operations.
- This has improved claim processing times, and resulted in shorter call wait times for customers.

¹ Far North Queensland includes Atherton, Cairns, Innisfail, Mareeba and Yarrabah locations.

Background

APS staff, whether ongoing, non-ongoing, or casual, remain the core of the Agency's workforce. They are the current and future leaders, who hold the institutional knowledge and expertise central to the culture of the Agency.

The Agency's non-APS workforce (comprising of labour hire personnel and contractors) and its outsourced Service Delivery Partner providers, give the Agency additional flexibility to engage short-term specialist or surge services, to support day-to-day operations and workload requirements.

The Agency's workforce size and composition will fluctuate based on forecasted and actual customer volumes and is heavily impacted by events such as natural disasters, pandemic events, and changes to government policy.

Ombudsman Investigation into the Targeted Compliance Framework

Issue

What is the Government doing to address issues raised in the Commonwealth Ombudsman's report into the Targeted Compliance Framework?

Headline Response

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and Services Australia are supporting the Commonwealth Ombudsman's current investigation into the Targeted Compliance Framework. Services Australia will carefully consider and respond to the Ombudsman's recommendations, in collaboration with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

Facts and Figures

- In July 2024, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations paused cancellations of people's income support for 'persistent mutual obligation failures' after they became concerned that the decisions may not be valid due to the absence of discretion in the decision-making process.
- On 4 December 2024, the Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations advised the Commonwealth Ombudsman that, contrary to legislative changes in 2022 that required consideration of a job seeker's circumstances before deciding to cancel income support, decisions to cancel income support had occurred automatically.
- On 4 February 2025, the Ombudsman announced the commencement of an investigation into the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and Services Australia's (the Agency) cancellation of income support payments under the Targeted Compliance Framework.

If pressed

Why did Services Australia not change its processes in 2022?

- The Agency did not change its processes when the amendment was introduced in April 2022 as the Agency was instructed that the intent of the amendment was to support existing practices, for example, temporary pauses of compliance processes during emergencies such as a pandemic or natural disaster.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Tina Anderson
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Families and Participation Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000043
Date Updated: 11/07/2025 12:06:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 11/07/2025 12:06:00 PM

On automated decision making

- In part, the Targeted Compliance Framework did include human decision-making. Decisions about whether a job seeker had a reasonable excuse for not meeting their requirements were made by a staff member. In the absence of a reasonable excuse from the job seeker, cancellation was then applied without further discretion.

On remediation

- The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and the Agency have finalised remediation for cancellations for 'persistent mutual obligation failures' that occurred between 8 April 2022 and 4 July 2024.

On customer deaths

- It is not a routine practice for the Agency to record a cause of death on an individual's record.
- During the remediation process, no representation was made to the Agency by family members or next of kin in relation to deceased customers.
- The Agency is not aware of any connection between the cancellation of payments and the persons' deaths.

Policy Commitments

- The Government is committed to returning the Targeted Compliance Framework to lawful operation, with additional steps to ensure the protection of the most vulnerable people in our community.

Background

The Targeted Compliance Framework is the framework used by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, employment service providers and the Agency to manage compliance with mutual obligation requirements for individuals receiving income support.

Recent Media

- 4 June 2025 – The Canberra Times
[Ombudsman expands scope of investigation into JobSeeker cancellations](#)

Trust Exchange Proof of Concept

Headline Response

Services Australia is collaborating with the Department of Finance and the Australian Taxation Office on an extension to the Australian Government Digital ID System to support Verifiable Credentials and digital wallets.

As part of this work, Services Australia completed the Trust Exchange proof of concept, testing how Verifiable Credentials and the myGov app wallet can be used by real people in real-life use cases.

Services Australia is ready to support the Department of Finance, who is responsible for the Digital ID Program, on future next steps.

Facts and Figures

- The Trust Exchange Proof of Concept builds on the Government's investment in the Digital ID System, to issue Verifiable Credentials on behalf of government entities.
- The Trust Exchange Proof of Concept includes the ability for customers to share selected, verified details from their credentials within their digital wallet, to access the services they need.
- Four Trust Exchange Proof of Concepts were completed between November 2024 and January 2025:
 - Using Medicare cards, Centrelink Concession cards and Department of Veterans' Affairs Veterans' cards as Verifiable Credentials to register as a new patient at a medical practice.
 - Allowing a user to add identity information from an Australian Passport as a verified ID to their myGov App wallet.
 - Using a Verifiable Credential (derived from the date of birth on the user's ImmiCard) to prove that the holder is over 18 years old, to enter a licenced premises.
 - Using a Verifiable Credential of the Medicare Card to support the identity checking processes when registering as a new customer at a bank.
- In May 2025, an independent review found that the proof of concept achieved its outcomes. The findings from the proof of concept are now informing the design of a second phase.

Contact: Lisa Jansen	Cleared by: Jonathon Thorpe
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Customer and Staff Digital Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000055
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 1:44:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 1:44:00 PM

- The Proof of Concept aims to give individuals control over the information they share. This will limit the need for third parties to store government-issued credentials, including ID documents, cards and certificates - reducing the potential privacy impact of data breaches.
- The Proof of Concept tested a decentralised solution, where the individual's credentials remain at the originating source, and are only made available on the individual's personal device. This means there is no central store of ID documents, entitlement cards or credentials.

Policy Commitments

- In the 2024-25 Budget, the Government invested \$23.4 million for the Department of Finance, the Australian Taxation Office and Services Australia to pilot the use of government digital wallets and Verifiable Credentials. Services Australia was allocated \$11.4 million in the 2024–25 financial year to develop a Proof of Concept to extend the Digital ID Exchange to support Verifiable Credentials.

Vaccine Claims

COVID-19 Vaccine Claims Scheme

Issue

How many COVID-19 vaccine claims are still being worked on at Services Australia?

Headline Response

The COVID-19 Vaccine Claims Scheme demonstrates the Government's commitment to supporting individuals throughout the approved vaccine program. Claim processing times vary due to complexity of evidence provided and where medical or legal expertise is deemed necessary.

Talking Points

CLAIMS		
Claims in Progress	In progress	570
	Need further information	247
	Total claims in progress	817
Claims Finalised	Withdrawn	1,048
	Not payable	2,602
	Paid	495
	Total claims finalised	4,145
Total Claims Received		4,962

- The COVID-19 Vaccine Claims Scheme (the Scheme) provides compensation in cases of moderate to severe adverse reactions for Therapeutic Goods Administration approved COVID-19 vaccines.
- AstraZeneca, Pfizer, Moderna and Novavax COVID-19 vaccines are covered under the Scheme.
- Services Australia (the Agency) administers the Scheme on behalf of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, which maintains policy responsibility.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Cathy Toze
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Capability and Partnered Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000044
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 3:27:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 3:27:00 PM

Vaccine Claims

- Ten clinical conditions and administration-related injuries are covered under the Scheme. Compensation is payable where all eligibility criteria are met, including the hospitalisation requirement and minimum losses.
- On 24 September 2024, the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing updated the Scheme policy to broaden the review of decision rights for customers.
- On 30 September 2024, the Scheme closed to new claims.
- As at 30 June 2025, 495 claims have been paid to the value of \$45.8 million.
- The Agency will continue to assess all claims received on or before 30 September 2024.
- If individuals have queries on the progress of their claim, the Agency can be contacted on 1800 813 167 or by email at:
COVID19.vaccine.claims.scheme@servicesaustralia.gov.au.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

The Government established the COVID-19 Vaccine Claims Scheme to provide further assurance and confidence to patients and health professionals in the COVID-19 vaccine rollout.

The Scheme responded to calls from peak bodies – including the Australian Medical Association and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, and medical indemnity insurers – for extended medical indemnity coverage for health professionals and their patients given the unique nature of the pandemic and response.

The Scheme is intended to provide a similar level of compensation to what individuals would receive through a court-based personal injury claim, without the need to pursue costly and time-consuming litigation. However, individuals can seek compensation through the courts either as an alternative to compensation under the Scheme or simultaneously with the Agency.

There has been parliamentary interest on Scheme payout amounts, calculations and timeframes for claim determinations. The Agency releases data around the Scheme periodically, ensuring the privacy of individuals is not compromised.

The Scheme does not have an overall cap on compensation paid to eligible claimants. The Commonwealth pays all payable claims under the Scheme.

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Comcare charge against Services Australia for Airport West matter

Issue

Why has Services Australia been charged by the Health and Safety Regulator over the stabbing of a staff member?

Headline Response

Services Australia has cooperated with Comcare during its 2-year investigation. The matter is now before the Magistrates Court and it is not appropriate for the Government to comment on the matter at this stage.

Facts and Figures

- On 23 May 2023, Elijah Chase entered the Airport West Service Centre and stabbed a staff member, Joanne Cassar.
- On the same day, Services Australia (the Agency) notified Comcare of a serious incident. Comcare investigators attended the site to commence a monitoring compliance activity. Following the site visit, Comcare commenced an investigation.
- On 24 May 2023, the former Minister for Government Services, the Hon Bill Shorten announced the engagement of the former Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police, Mr Graham Ashton AM APM, to conduct a review of the Agency's security risk management practices.
- In July 2023, Mr Ashton concluded his Security Risk Management Review and made 44 recommendations.
- On 13 October 2023, the former Minister announced that the Government would act on all 44 recommendations. The Agency commenced a Security Risk Management Review Program to implement the recommendations.

Policy Commitments

- The Government has committed \$361 million, \$46.9 million through the 2023–24 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook and \$314.1 million over the 2024–25 and 2025–26 financial years through the 2024–25 Budget to the Agency to respond to the Security Risk Management Review.

Contact: s22 and s22	Cleared by: Randall Brugeaud
Contact No: s22 and s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Wellbeing and HR Support, and Legal Services Divisions	PDR Number: QB25-000058
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 4:25:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 4:25:00 PM

Background

Between 25 May 2023 and October 2024, Comcare issued the Agency with statutory notices requiring the Agency to produce documents and answer questions. The Agency responded to all notices and produced over 1,000 documents.

The Agency has knowledge of Comcare having conducted interviews with 30 Agency workers.

On 7 March 2024, Comcare advised the Agency that it had received a request for Comcare to prosecute an alleged work health and safety breach regarding the incident. Comcare are not obliged to and did not advise who requested for the Agency to be prosecuted. Comcare advised that its investigation was ongoing.

On 20 November 2024, the Comcare inspector advised the Agency that he had reached the view there were reasonable grounds to believe the Agency may have committed criminal offences under the Act. The Agency declined Comcare's invitation to participate in a voluntary interview.

On 22 May 2025, Comcare filed and served on the Agency a charge and summons alleging that the Commonwealth (through the Agency) failed to comply with its health and safety duty and that failure exposed one or more individuals to the risk of death or serious injury.

The charge alleges the Agency failed to take five measures to protect workers, relating to security guard staffing, managed entry into the Service Centre and sharing of images of aggressive customers.

The first mention scheduled for 1 July 2025 was adjourned. The next mention is on 24 September 2025 at the Broadmeadows Magistrates Court.

Maddocks and Garry Livermore KC are engaged to advise and represent the Agency in the proceedings.

Public comment about the charge, or the safety and security enhancements made by the Agency since the incident in direct response to a question about the charge, could be criticised as interfering with the proceedings.



Government agency charged after worker assault

26 May 2025

Services Australia has been charged with breaching federal work health and safety laws after a worker was violently attacked at a Melbourne Centrelink office.

Following a Comcare investigation, the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions has filed a single charge alleging Services Australia failed to comply with its duties under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act).

The incident happened at the Airport West Centrelink office on 23 May 2023. A Centrelink worker suffered serious injuries when they were stabbed by an individual at the workplace.

Comcare's investigation found that Services Australia failed to comply with its primary health and safety duty to ensure, so far as was reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers (section 19(1) of the WHS Act).

The charge alleges Services Australia failed to undertake a range of measures to eliminate or minimise the risk of physical violence to workers, including:

- Providing at least two uniformed security guards at the workplace at all times, including one guard inside the public entrance
- Managing entry to the workplace
- Giving the service centre manager the authority to decide whether managed entry to the workplace should be implemented and remain in place.

The charge is a Category 2 criminal offence under the WHS Act, carrying a maximum penalty of \$1.5 million.

The matter is listed for mention in the Broadmeadows Magistrates' Court on 1 July 2025.

Media contact

E: media@comcare.gov.au

Services Australia 2025-26 Budget Measures

Headline Response

The goal of Services Australia is to make government services simple, so people can get on with their lives.

As part of the 2025-26 Portfolio Budget Statements, the Government has provided Services Australia with additional funding for Budget measures of \$53.2 million in 2025-26 and a total of \$173.7 million from 2025-26 to 2028-29.

BUDGET MEASURES LED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, DISABILITY AND AGEING

Strengthening Medicare

- This measure will expand eligibility for all GP bulk billing incentives to all Australians, supporting GPs to bulk bill an additional 15 million people. The measure is expected to increase the GP bulk billing rate from 77.4 per cent to 87.6 per cent.
- This measure will also implement the Stronger Medicare Bulk Billing Clinics Program, which provides an additional payment valued at 12.5 per cent of Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) benefits for GP non-referred attendance services if practices commit to bulk bill all of these services.
- This measure will provide MRI licences to 3 hospitals from 1 July 2025:
 - Lakeview Private, Norwest NSW,
 - Barwon Health North, Geelong VIC, and
 - Sandringham Hospital, Sandringham VIC.
- This measure will also list new and amended services on the MBS.
- Services Australia (the Agency) has received \$214.5 million from 2025-26 to 2028-29 to implement this measure.

Strengthening Medicare – Women's Health

- This measure increases access to long-acting reversible contraception MBS items, including:
 - Increase the MBS fee for 4 existing MBS items.
 - Create 3 new MBS items for nurse practitioners to use for long-acting reversible contraception items.

Contact: Angela Diamond	Cleared by: Randall Brugeaud
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: CFO Division	PDR Number: QB25-000046
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 1:11:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 1:11:00 PM

- Create 2 new MBS items that provide a percentage additional fee loading (at 40 per cent) to encompass the existing 4 long-acting reversible contraception items.
- Services Australia has received \$2.9 million in 2025-26 and \$3.8 million from 2025-26 to 2028-29 to administer this measure.

Strengthening Medicare – Expanding Medicare Urgent Care Clinics

- This measure will boost the Medicare Urgent Care Clinics program with a further 50 Medicare Urgent Care Clinics (bringing the total to 137 nationally).
- This measure will also extend MBS billing for 10 state-funded urgent care sites in Victoria and extend the Batemans Bay Medicare Urgent Care Clinic's opening hours.
- Services Australia has received \$2.4 million from 2025-26 to 2027-28 to cover MBS flow-on costs associated with the additional clinics.

Strengthening Medicare – Health Workforce

- This measure will help attract more doctors to vocational GP training by allowing more leave types for GP registrars.
- This includes:
 - 5 days of paid leave per year to prepare for exams and assessments
 - 20 weeks of paid parental leave for eligible GP registrars
 - a \$30,000 incentive payment to first-year GP registrars on Commonwealth-funded pathways, paid in monthly instalments, and
 - indexation of existing non-cash payments (NCP), consistent with Wage Cost Index.
- Services Australia has received \$1.3 million from 2025-26 through to 2028-29 to support the implementation of this measure.

Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme – New and Amended Listings

- The Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme provides subsidised access to medicines to Australian residents and overseas visitors from countries under Reciprocal Health Care Agreements.
- The Agency has received \$0.5 million from the 2025–26 financial year through to the 2028–29 financial year to list new medicines on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and expands access to others. It will provide better treatment and improved health for Australians.
- The Agency also received \$0.4 million in 2024-25 for this measure.

Improving Access to Medicines and Pharmacy Programs

- This measure will strengthen pharmaceutical services within Australia through:
 - changing the wholesale mark-up tiers of pharmaceutical benefits, and
 - continuing the mandate to use an electronic prescribing system for all dangerous and high-cost drugs.
- The wholesale mark-up is paid directly to community pharmacies, who then pass on to their relevant wholesaler.
- The mandate for electronic prescribing was introduced in the 2023-24 Budget to increase patient safety and reduce inappropriate access to dangerous drugs. This measure continues this mandate to 30 June 2026.
- This measure builds on the 2024-25 Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements measure *New Government Offer for a Pharmaceutical Wholesaler Agreement*.
- Services Australia has received \$0.8 million in 2025-26 to implement this measure.

CROSS PORTFOLIO BUDGET MEASURES**Savings from External Labour – Further Extension**

- This measure extends the 2024-25 Budget measure Savings from External Labour – extension to 2028-29.
- This measure will harvest \$54.4 million from the Services Australia Budget in 2028-29 as a result of savings from external labour utilised by the Agency.

BUDGET MEASURES LED BY THE NATIONAL INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS AGENCY**Closing the Gap – Further Investments**

- This measure will re-profile funding for the Community Development Program.
- The re-profile of funding reduced the Agency's budget by \$2.8 million in 2024-25 and by \$7.1 million in 2025-26, before an \$11.8 million increase in the Agency's budget in 2026-27.

BUDGET MEASURES LED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**Building Australia's Future – Improving Outcomes in Australian Schools**

- This measure is for Services Australia to update websites and systems for the new 3-day guarantee of the childcare subsidy. Families will get 3 days of Child Care Subsidy per week without needing to complete an activity test.
- Services Australia will be partially funded via a Section 74 arrangement with the Department of Education for this measure.

PRE-ELECTION ECONOMIC AND FISCAL OUTLOOK MEASURES**Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme**

- This measure provides a 25 per cent increase in rates of assistance over two years to the Tasmanian Freight Equalisations Scheme.
- The Agency has been provided \$3.5 million in 2025-26 and \$0.5 million in 2026-27 to provide updates to information and communications technology systems, new communications products and to process additional claims under the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme.

Services Australia Call Wait Times & Processing Wait Times

Issue

What action is the Government taking to address wait times for payments and services?

Headline Response

To ensure Services Australia was able to sustainably deliver services to Australians, government funding was increased to support an additional 3,000 frontline staff in the latter part of 2023 and into January 2024. This has brought service delivery performance back into expected timeframes. Services Australia continues to make improvements to its services to support Australians in need.

Facts and Figures

- Following the injection of an extra 3,000 staff approximately 18 months ago, Services Australia (the Agency) has made significant improvements in the delivery of services.
- These extra staff helped reduce call wait times, significantly reduced congestion messaging and vastly improved processing times across nearly every work type.
- Since these new staff commenced, the Agency has reduced Centrelink claims from over 238,100 (or 66 per cent) to just over 123,200. Medicare activities have dropped by over 622,000 activities (or 73 per cent) to just under 234,000. Since 30 November 2023, Child Support work on hand has reduced by 59,234 activities (or 31.8 per cent).
- The Agency is now answering Centrelink calls approximately 5 minutes faster and Medicare customer calls 14 minutes faster than in January 2024. Child Support calls are 6 minutes slower than in January 2024. Congestion messaging has reduced by 85 per cent.
- These reductions have enabled further improvements, like offering callbacks on some phone lines, so customers don't have to stay on the phone while waiting to get to the front of the queue.
- Additionally, most customers (67.5 per cent) are being served within 15 minutes at 318 service centres across Australia.

Contact: Mark Cousins	Cleared by: Bo Robertson
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Operations Management Division	PDR Number: QB25-000035
Date Updated: 28/07/2025 10:13:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 28/07/2025 10:13:00 AM

Calls & Processing

If pressed on current delivery times

- The Agency hosts approximately 8.9 million Centrelink, Medicare and Child Support customer contacts each week across face-to-face, digital and telephony channels.
 - Of these, approximately 88 per cent arrive by digital channels and 12 per cent by face-to-face service centres or over the phone.
- In the last 7 days ending 27 July 2025, 1.4 million customer outcomes were completed by staff:
 - 202,000 people were served in person at one of 318 face-to-face service centres.
 - 243,000 Centrelink calls were answered, 65,200 claims and 281,000 non-claim work items were finalised.
 - 131,000 Health calls were answered, 288,000 claims and 31,400 non-claim work items were finalised.
 - 28,800 Child Support calls were answered, and 84,600 work items were finalised.
 - 290,000 calls received were self-managed by customers through phone self-service.
- In the last 7 days ending 27 July 2025, the average speed of answer for:
 - Centrelink was approximately 18 minutes.
 - Medicare Customer was approximately 15 minutes.
 - Medicare Provider was 6 minutes.
 - Child Support was 16 minutes.
- During the 2024-25 financial year, the Agency processed more than 484.1 million Centrelink claims and Medicare services, and 3.8 million Child Support activities, supporting families to help with the costs of raising children.

If pressed on Social Security Processing Improvements

- The Agency has made significant inroads to reduce processing times. Across Social Security, the average days to process activities are as follows:

Social Security claim type	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
ABSTUDY - Non-Schooling A	28	25
ABSTUDY - Pensioner Education Supplement	11	7
ABSTUDY - Schooling A	22	15
Additional Child Care Subsidy Child Wellbeing Application	11	4
Additional Child Care Subsidy Child Wellbeing Certificate –	12	4

Calls & Processing

Social Security claim type	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Exceptional Circumstances		
Additional Child Care Subsidy Child Wellbeing Determination Exceptional Circumstances	12	4
Additional Child Care Subsidy Grandparent	47	23
Additional Child Care Subsidy Temporary Financial Hardship	51	21
Additional Child Care Subsidy Transition to Work	68	26
Age Pension	76	37
Assistance for Isolated Children	0	0
Austudy	56	32
Carer Allowance	42	12
Carer Payment	54	15
Child Care Subsidy	24	8
Crisis Payment	3	1
Dad and Partner Pay	63	4
Disability Support Pension	93	52
Double Orphan Pension	8	5
Essential Medical Equipment	42	19
Ex-Carer Allowance (Child) Health Care Card	8	5
Family Tax Benefit Lump Sum	13	3
Family Tax Benefit New Claim	47	8
Fares Allowance	0	0
Farm Household Allowance	48	35
Foster Child Health Care Card	22	14
Home Equity Access Scheme	65	60
JobSeeker Payment	22	9
Low Income Card	53	20
Mobility Allowance	29	24
Paid Parental Leave	25	3
Parenting Payment Partnered	52	22
Parenting Payment Single	28	18
Pensioner Education Supplement	20	21
Seniors Health Card	42	20
Special Benefit	20	14
Status Resolution Support Services	11	12
Stillborn Baby Payment	8	5
Tertiary Access Payment	42	16
Youth Allowance Apprentice	62	37
Youth Allowance Jobseekers	26	11
Youth Allowance Students	54	29

Calls & Processing

If pressed on Disability Support Pension Processing Improvements

- The Agency is committed to improving service delivery for people with disability.
- Disability Support Pension claims are very complex and take longer to assess as they are lifelong payments, and, as such, more information is often required than for other income support payments.
- As at 30 June 2025, when compared to the end of the 2023-24 financial year, Disability Support Pension claims on hand have reduced by 14,900 (55 per cent) and over standard claims by 10,100 (94 per cent).
 - Of the 12,000 claims on hand 3,700 (31 per cent) are actionable and 8,300 (69 per cent) are on hold awaiting further information or assessment.
- Around 68 per cent of customers receive another payment (e.g. Jobseeker payments) while waiting on a Disability Support Pension outcome.
- Agency decisions on Disability Support Pension claims are informed by comprehensive assessments by its qualified health professionals. Assessments are based on each person's circumstances and consider all available medical evidence from treating doctors and health professionals, including specialists.
- The Agency prioritises and fast-tracks Disability Support Pension claims for people experiencing financial hardship or for those who are likely to be manifestly eligible, including due to a terminal illness.
- Some Disability Support Pension claims can take longer than others for varying reasons, including the need for comprehensive medical assessments, complex circumstances, or time required to get more details to help finalise claims.

Disability Support Pension Claims on Hold	
Awaiting the return of an external medical assessment	1,400
Awaiting an internal Medical Assessment	1,000
Referred for a Job Capacity Assessment	4,200
Awaiting customer to supply information	600
Other	1,100

If pressed on Age Pension Processing Improvements

- The Agency is committed to improving service delivery for older Australians.
- Age Pension claims are very complex and take longer to assess as they are lifelong payments, and as such, more information is often required than for other income support payments.
- As at 30 June 2025, when compared to the end of the 2023-24 financial year, Age Pension claims on hand have reduced by 10,800 (37 per cent) and over standard claims by 8,800 (53 per cent).

Calls & Processing

- Of the 18,500 claims on hand 6,700 (36 per cent) are actionable and 11,800 (64 per cent) are on hold.
- Claims may be placed on hold due to additional information required from the customer. Many customers have complicated financial affairs (e.g. family or business trusts, investments, superannuation, real estate assets, foreign pensions and inheritances) requiring assessment against the income and assets test.
- These assessments can take an extended period to conduct and complete the corresponding report/s.
- Delays can often occur if customers fail to provide all the required documentation in a timely manner.
- The Agency continues to train more staff in this complex work and expects to see the average processing time fall even further as their proficiency grows.
- The Agency urges anyone waiting on these claim types to go online and check there are no tasks that need to be completed.
- Those nearing Age Pension age can apply up to 13 weeks earlier so their claim can be assessed before they turn Age Pension age.

Age Pension Claims on Hold	
Awaiting customer to supply information	5,700
Awaiting complex assessments of income and assets for specialised staff	5,200
Awaiting Centrelink International Services Assessment	100
Other	800

If pressed on Health (Medicare) Processing Improvements

- As at 30 June 2025, the Agency has made significant inroads to reduce processing times. Across Health, the average days to process activities are as follows:

Health Services - Claims	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Aged Care - Customer	52	72
Aged Care - Customer - Home Care	42	44
Aged Care - Customer - Residential Care	46	45
Aged Care - Provider	10	6
Aged Care - Provider - Home Care	33	1
Aged Care - Provider - Residential Care	0	1
Australian Immunisation Register	6	4
Australian Organ Donor Register	10	3
Bulk Bill	3	1
Complex Drugs	6	1
Continence Aids Payment Scheme	49	16
Disaster Health Care Assistance Scheme	14	12

Calls & Processing

Health Services - Claims	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
eBusiness	19	12
External Breast Prosthesis	6	3
Healthcare Identifiers	8	6
Incentives	0	0
Medicare Eligibility & Enrolment	49	10
Medicare Entitlement Statement	82	27
Medicare Safety Net	15	17
Organisation Register	12	14
Patient Claims	9	2
Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme Patient Refunds	119	24
Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme Safety Net	98	12
Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme	6	3
Provider Registration	17	8
Simplified Billing	4	2
Veterans Affairs Processing	5	3

Health Services – Non-Claims	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Aged Care - Customer	18	21
Aged Care - Customer - Residential Care	148	163
Aged Care - Provider	96	15
Aged Care - Provider - Home Care	70	17
Aged Care Provider - Residential Care	0	1
Australian Immunisation Register	10	2
Australian Organ Donor Register	20	2
Boutique	36	3
Bulk Bill	154	144
Complex Drugs	4	1
Continence Aids Payment Scheme	60	18
eBusiness	89	51
eServices	75	16
Healthcare Identifiers	16	25
Home Vacation Review	151	182
Incentives	11	3
Medicare Eligibility & Enrolment	28	13
Medicare Entitlement Statement	69	19
Medicare Payments - Customer	54	14
Medicare Payments - Provider	172	182
Medicare Safety Net	194	202
My Medicare		11
Organisation Register	66	4
Patient Claims	63	78
Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme	7	3

Calls & Processing

Health Services – Non-Claims	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Provider Registration	8	21
Simplified Billing	247	233
Veterans Affairs Processing	30	35

If pressed on Medicare pressure points

- The Medicare Entitlement Statement peak period commenced in July and will extend through September/October. An additional 70 staff are being upskilled in Medicare Entitlement Statement to help manage the expected increase in workload, increasing the overall workforce to just over 200.
 - There were 2,500 Medicare Entitlement Statement claims processed per day of the fourth week in the 2025-26 financial year, compared to 2,500 per day for the comparative week in the 2024-25 financial year.
- Veterans Affairs Processing continues to be a focus for the Agency, with upskilling of existing staff occurring to boost capacity. The learning pathway for Veterans Affairs is complex and requires staff to learn a number of separate processes to become fully proficient.
 - There have been significant improvements to the Veterans' Affairs work on hand during the 2024-25 financial year. As at 30 June 2025, there was 5,725 items on hand, compared to 15,053 items on hand at 30 June 2024.
 - There has been a significant increase in the number of Veterans' Affairs claims made through the online channel. This channel is more efficient for both claimants and processing staff. There has been an increase of 10.6 per cent of Veterans' Affairs claims received via the online channel for the 2024-25 financial year with 1.76 million lodged through the online channel, as opposed to 1.57 million in the 2023-24 financial year.

If pressed on Aged Care

- The Agency is committed to improving service delivery for Aged Care customers in preparation for the Aged Care Reform from 1 November this year.
- As at 30 June 2025, when compared to the end of the 2023-24 financial year, there are 5,900 (46 per cent) more Aged Care work claims on hand.
- The Agency has been focussed on completing the older and more complex work for our customers. This has meant the average days to process increased by 21 days for Aged Care Customers and by 2 days for Home Care.
- Some Aged Care claims can take longer than others for varying reasons including complex financial circumstances, or additional time required to gather further details to help finalise claims.

Calls & Processing

- The Agency has expanded its workforce to support the upcoming Aged Care Reform, increasing from 285 in July 2024 to 540 staff in July 2025 (an increase of 90 per cent or 255).

If pressed on Formal Reviews

- The Agency is committed to improving service delivery for people who lodge a formal review.
- Formal reviews are very complex and are carried out by specialised Authorised Review Officers.
- As at 30 June 2025, there were 72,772 formal reviews on hand. When compared to the end of the 2023-24 financial year, there are 18,410 (25 per cent) more formal reviews on hand.
- The Agency is boosting its Authorised Review Officer workforce to target additional effort on more complex and sensitive reviews with recruitment efforts commencing from 30 June 2025.

If pressed on Child Support

- The Agency is committed to improving service delivery for people who access Child Support.
- The Agency continues to reduce the Child Support backlog, and work on hand is around 129,836, which is 9.7 per cent (14,030) lower compared to 28 June 2024. Of this, 51,031 are work items relating to objections, changes of assessment and care changes.
- The Agency received further funding in the 2024-25 Budget which has helped to lift performance. The Agency has boosted its Child Support workforce by around 500 (or 37 per cent) during the 2024-25 financial year, enabling the upskilling of more experienced staff to help recover backlogs and service standard for the more complex priorities.
- Child Support is a complex program and staff take time to build capability and confidence in this work. As staff embed their skills, work on hand will continue to reduce.
- Child Support matters often take longer to assess as they are complex and sensitive scenarios, often involving disagreements between separated parties.
- Across Child Support, the average days to process activities are as follows.

Child Support Activities	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
New Registrations	31	35
Change of Assessment applications	83	76

Calls & Processing

Child Support Activities	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Objections (Domestic)	97	194
Objections (International)	122	125
Workload (intrays)	17	17

If pressed on 2021-22 and 2023-24 Performance and Data Comparisons

- The data referenced by some media outlets does not reflect current service delivery performance. Also, it does not include important context necessary for interpreting trends in wait times accurately over time— such as the impact of additional temporary staff during COVID-19.
- Additionally, some of the data used by media outlets reflects the full 2023-24 financial year. This includes 6 months before the progressive recruitment and onboarding of the additional staff when the Agency acknowledges that performance was not at expected levels.
- Since this injection of staff, both claim processing times and call wait times have progressively improved.
- For example, overall Centrelink call wait times have fallen from an average of more than 30 minutes in 2023-24 to just over 21 minutes in 2024-25. For Health customers, its nearly halved, from almost 23 minutes to just over 13 minutes over the same period. Almost half of all Centrelink calls were answered within 15 minutes.
- Congestion messaging has reduced significantly from around 15 million in the 2023-24 financial year to 2 million in 2024-25, allowing more customers to access services when they need it.
- The initial extra funding the Agency received for additional staff was specifically for Social Security and Health, so that's where the improvements have been delivered so far.
- Although Child Support call wait times have increased, the Agency received further funding in the 2024-25 Budget, which will help lift performance across Child Support.
- The Agency will continue to onboard new staff in Child Support to address backlogs and expect to see improvements as these staff are fully trained.
- The Agency has seen significant improvements in the 2024-25 financial year. This data is available on data.gov.au.

Calls & Processing

CLAIM	AVERAGE PROCESSING TIME			% change (from 2018- 19 FY)
	Days to process (2018-19 FY)	Days to process (2023-24 FY)	Days to process (2024-25 FY)	
Age Pension	75 days	76 days	37 days	-50% ▼
ABSTUDY Schooling	15 days	22 days	15 days	0%
Carer Allowance	59 days	42 days	12 days	-80% ▼
Carer Payment	64 days	54 days	15 days	-77% ▼
Crisis Payment	1 day	3 day	1 day	0
Commonwealth Seniors Health Card	73 days	42 days	20 days	-73% ▼
Disability Support Pension	88 days	93 days	53 days	-40% ▼
Family Tax Benefit New Claim	36 days	47 days	8 days	-78% ▼
Family Tax Benefit Lump Sum	22 days	13 days	3 days	-86% ▼
JobSeeker Payment	24 days (Newstart)	22 days	9 days	-63% ▼
Low Income Card	31 days	53 days	20 days	-35% ▼
Paid Parental Leave	21 days	25 days	3 days	-86% ▼
Parenting Payment Single	48 days	28 days	18 days	-63% ▼
Parenting Payment Partnered	58 days	52 days	22 days	-62% ▼
Youth Allowance Jobseekers	27 days	26 days	11 days	-59% ▼

CALLS	2018-19 FY	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Congestion messaging	1,331,654*	14,975,078	2,173,375
Average Speed of Answer (Agency wide)	10:31	19:37	15:22
Average Speed of Answer (Social Security and Welfare)	15:32	30:37	21:48
Average Speed of Answer (Health Customer)	6:59	22:49	13:12
Average Speed of Answer (Child Support)	12:45	10:50	15:24
Calls Answered within 15 minutes (Social Security and Welfare)	8,713,535 (53.7%)	4,168,418 (43.7%)	5,112,733 (46.9%)
Total Handled Calls (Agency wide)	50,115,614*	53,923,043	44,269,308

*During 2018-2019 financial year, the Agency used call blocking. This provided a busy signal to customers and is not included in congestion messages or handled calls numbers.

Centrepay Reforms and Regulatory Actions

Issue

What action is the Government taking to ensure customers who use Centrepay are protected from financial exploitation?

Headline Response

In December 2024, the Government announced its support of Services Australia's proposed reforms to Centrepay, which focus on ensuring Centrepay helps Australians and reduces financial risk. These proposed reforms are expected to be announced in the coming weeks and implemented progressively from September 2025.

Facts and Figures

- In the 2024–25 financial year, 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025:
 - On average, 609,450 customers used the Centrepay service per month.
 - There was a total of 23 million Centrepay deductions worth \$3 billion.
 - 81.9 per cent of the value of deductions through Centrepay were for accommodation and utilities.
 - As at 30 June 2025, there were 10,969 approved Centrepay businesses.
 - 1.88 per cent of the value of all Centrepay deductions made were for consumer leases (down from 7.9 per cent in the 2020-2021 financial year).
- The proposed reforms aim to enhance customer protections and minimise the risk of financial exploitation by:
 - Removing high-risk or underutilised service reasons.
 - Strengthening policy and contracts to impose mandatory conditions on businesses.
 - Strengthening business application and onboarding processes.
 - Implementing strict compliance and complaints processes to ensure accountability.
- Remaining Centrepay products and services will continue with improved safeguards to reduce financial harm.

Contact: John Dunne	Cleared by: Cathy Toze
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Communities	PDR Number: QB25-000036
Date Updated: 18/07/2025 11:52:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 18/07/2025 11:52:00 AM

- Once a decision is made on the proposed reforms, Services Australia (the Agency) will communicate directly with Centrepay registered businesses and Centrepay customers to outline changes to Centrepay and provide details of the phased implementation.
- The Agency has made significant improvements to Centrepay to prevent exploitation including setting target amounts for certain goods, providing better support for overpayment reimbursements, and introducing a dedicated Centrepay complaints process.
- To maintain the integrity of the Centrepay program, the Agency conducts regular assurance and compliance checks. It acts decisively against businesses found non-compliant with their Centrepay obligations, ensuring customers are safeguarded against financial harm.
- The Agency works closely with regulators, including the Australian Securities and Investments Commission and the Australian Energy Regulator, regarding Centrepay businesses that may breach regulatory requirements.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

Centrepay was first established in 1998 as a voluntary free bill paying service offered by the Agency for Centrelink customers. Centrepay helps reduce vulnerability by ensuring payments occur on time, protects against late fees, and allows customers to access goods and services they may otherwise not get without the guarantee of payment by the Centrepay service. Customers who get an eligible income support payment can use Centrepay to pay for approved goods and services with Centrepay registered businesses.

The Agency supports the Australian Securities and Investments Commission messaging around Stop Orders to prevent certain businesses from establishing new Centrepay deductions. This includes Indy-C Fashion and Accessories Pty Ltd, a household goods business, for non-compliance with the design and distribution obligations, and Coral Coast Distributors (Cairns) Pty Ltd, a household goods business, for similar issues.

The Australian Securities and Investments Commission pursued legal action against Darranda Pty Ltd, a consumer leasing business, for breaching the *National Consumer Credit Protection Act 2009* (Cth) (Credit Act) by operating a business model designed to circumvent consumer protections.

On 19 December 2024, following proceedings by the Australian Energy Regulator, the Federal Court of Australia imposed penalties totalling \$25 million on AGL Retail Energy Limited for failing to comply with Centrepay payment obligations.

Following proactive outbound engagement by the Agency in November 2024, Synergy, an energy and gas retailer in Western Australia, advised the Agency in March 2025 that they had identified customers who had account credits accrued through Centrepay deductions on utility accounts that were now closed.

Since the issue was identified, the Agency has been working collaboratively with Synergy to assist with the return of funds back to customers.

Synergy self-reported this issue to the Western Australia Economic Regulation Authority. Following the Economic Regulation Authority's investigation into this matter, they issued Synergy with a compliance enforcement (rectification) notice for breaching its Electricity Retail Licence.

Services Australia Claims & Payments Figures

Headline Response

As the Government’s primary service delivery agency, Services Australia supports millions of Australians each year by efficiently delivering high quality, accessible services and payments on behalf of government.

Facts and Figures

- Significant figures for the 2024-25 financial year:

CLAIMS	
Centrelink	3.5 million
Medicare (services)	480.6 million
Child support registrations	59,400

PAYMENTS	
Total payments	\$263.0 billion
Centrelink	\$163.8 billion
Medicare	\$97.2 billion
Child support facilitated	\$2.0 billion

CONTACTS	
Online transactions	1.1 billion
Call handled	44.3 million
Face-to-face contacts	10.7 million

- As at 3 July 2025:

AGENCY REACH			
State	Face-to-face Sites	Access Points	Agents
ACT	4	0	0
NSW	102	42	69
NT	16	8	58
QLD	70	32	81
SA	24	21	27
TAS	10	5	15
VIC	59	30	43
WA	33	51	74
Total	318	189	367

Contact: Michelle Saunders	Cleared by: Tenille Collins
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Data and Analytics	PDR Number: QB25-000034
Date Updated: 28/07/2025 10:21:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 28/07/2025 10:21:00 AM

Claims & Payments

- As at 27 July 2025:

MYGOV SIGN-INS	
Peak this financial year (FY) to date	2.8 million in one day (15 July 2025)
Peak in last Fortnight	2.8 million in one day (15 July 2025)
Average in 2025–26 FY to date (26 July 2025)	1.9 million per day
Average in 2024–25 FY	979,000 per day

MYGOV APP REGISTRATIONS	
Total registrations to date (26 July 2025)	8.2 million
Registrations for the week ending (27 July 2025)	110,000

DISASTER PAYMENTS ACTIVATED IN THE 2024-25 FY AS AT 27 JULY 2025	
NSW East Coast Severe Weather and Flooding – May 2025	
• Claims Granted	180,000
• Paid	\$212.4 million
• Individuals supported	245,000
• Portion of online claims	96%
• Calls answered	47,500
Western Queensland Heavy Rain & Flooding – March 2025	
• Claims Granted	2,000
• Paid	\$2.7 million
• Individuals supported	2,600
• Portion of online claims	96%
• Calls answered	1,200
New South Wales Ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred – March 2025	
• Claims Granted	43,700
• Paid	\$66.6 million
• Individuals supported	58,100
• Proportion of online claims	96%
Queensland Ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred – March 2025	
• Claims Granted	287,000
• Paid	\$447.7 million
• Individuals supported	388,000
• Proportion of online claims	97%

Claims & Payments

North Queensland Floods – January-February 2025	
• Claims Granted	55,200
• Paid	\$70.7 million
• Individuals supported	77,700
• Proportion of online claims	95%
Ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred – March 2025 / North Queensland Floods – January-February 2025	
• Calls answered	142,000
Bushfires in Western Victoria – December 2024	
• Claims Granted	200
• Paid	\$699,000
• Individuals supported	200
• Portion of online claims	97%
• Calls answered	300
Far West NSW Storms and Power Outages – October 2024	
• Claims Granted	100
• Paid	\$437,000
• Individuals supported	100
• Proportion of online claims	99 %
• Calls answered	500

*NSW and QLD ex TC share the same telephony queue. *From 11th March 2025 NSW and QLD ex TC DRA share the same telephony queue as Nth QLD Floods DRA – figures cannot be separated.

Social Security Claims Completed – 2024–25 Financial Year

Service Reason	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	UNK	VIC	WA
Families and Child Care	22,701	421,982	13,098	308,194	91,584	25,593	155	379,735	142,017
ACCS CWB Application	959	20,205	339	21,742	5,161	1,111	11	32,713	8,198
ACCS Grandparent	26	659	16	660	228	52	-	680	270
ACCS Temporary Financial Hardship	44	926	18	855	193	45	-	997	359
ACCS Transition to Work	29	756	39	892	260	69	-	736	402
ACCS CWB Certificate - Exc Circ - SA	276	4,931	133	4,152	796	173	<5	4,287	1,524
ACCS CWB Determination - Exc Circ - SA	150	4,329	135	4,192	1,148	353	-	3,359	1,605
Child Care Subsidy	7,496	131,101	3,639	92,905	26,492	6,515	49	110,533	42,516

Claims & Payments

Service Reason	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	UNK	VIC	WA
Dad and Partner Pay	-	23	<5	<5	<5	-	-	16	<5
Double Orphan Pension	-	33	<5	40	13	<5	-	46	17
Family Tax Benefit Lump Sum	329	10,664	301	7,679	2,506	888	7	9,009	3,938
Family Tax Benefit New Claim	5,387	116,682	5,170	88,457	26,593	8,405	58	101,032	41,038
Foster Child Health Care Card	20	342	8	306	119	26	-	340	141
Paid Parental Leave	7,964	130,879	3,245	85,910	27,943	7,921	27	115,652	41,828
Stillborn Baby Payment	21	452	51	402	130	32	-	335	180
Older Australians, Disabilities and Carers	8,159	229,179	5,318	146,483	55,868	18,050	1,914	175,231	66,824
Age Pension	2,525	75,659	1,299	50,288	18,643	6,338	1,759	57,660	24,828
Carer Allowance	1,266	44,203	1,059	27,646	10,863	3,476	10	35,176	11,185
Carer Payment	773	33,768	878	19,549	7,092	2,365	12	24,283	7,599
Disability Support Pension	1,624	42,396	1,687	30,483	10,417	3,707	111	33,685	11,563
Ex-Carer Allowance (Child) Health Care Card	131	1,408	14	1,223	458	138	-	1,766	596
Mobility Allowance	93	2,220	50	1,847	1,085	196	<5	1,909	710
Pensions Loan Scheme									
Home Equity Access Scheme	81	1,734	23	1,358	549	211	<5	1,531	665
Seniors Health Card	1,666	27,791	308	14,089	6,761	1,619	20	19,221	9,678
Youth, Education and Employment	12,264	310,992	15,101	230,860	70,327	22,389	255	279,181	107,232
Assistance for Isolated Children	50	1,726	288	2,611	481	202	<5	966	1,429
Austudy	577	12,898	231	9,515	3,183	929	14	14,692	4,811
Fares Allowance	44	548	82	785	207	241	<5	422	250

Claims & Payments

Service Reason	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	UNK	VIC	WA
JobSeeker Payment	6,298	159,217	8,315	120,098	36,854	11,287	95	143,623	55,629
Parenting Payment Partnered	508	13,825	746	9,657	3,091	928	<5	13,381	4,265
Parenting Payment Single	917	26,090	1,676	23,023	5,615	1,983	18	19,831	10,772
Pensioner Education Supplement	286	9,722	147	6,153	2,030	750	6	6,107	2,634
Special Benefit	154	4,859	72	2,686	744	171	14	3,808	1,251
Tertiary Access Payment	37	2,775	135	1,921	493	379	<5	2,288	568
Youth Allowance Apprentice	112	3,058	36	1,739	515	182	<5	3,105	803
Youth Allowance Jobseekers	1,011	27,333	2,854	25,460	6,771	2,442	61	20,990	10,646
Youth Allowance Students	2,270	48,941	519	27,212	10,343	2,895	36	49,968	14,174
Remote and ABSTUDY	171	8,779	3,100	7,982	2,248	487	13	2,430	3,234
ABSTUDY - Non-Schooling A	137	5,742	2,693	5,269	997	303	11	1,478	2,312
ABSTUDY - Schooling A	27	1,861	337	1,945	353	81	<5	193	696
ABSTUDY - PES	6	480	62	324	46	16	-	83	113
Farm Household Allowance	<5	696	8	444	852	87	<5	676	113
Cross Programme	3,205	73,301	5,481	67,769	22,422	8,288	104	85,658	33,194
Crisis Payment	1,500	45,768	5,032	43,184	11,965	3,896	62	26,517	20,121
Essential Medical Equipment	86	2,359	38	2,738	1,400	401	<5	1,955	762
Low Income Card	1,613	24,909	411	21,742	9,037	3,991	41	56,931	12,284
Status Resolution Support Services	6	265	-	105	20	-	-	255	27

- UNK refers to claims which location is unknown at the time of claim lodgement.
- To protect individuals' privacy, cell sizes of less than 5 are represented as "<5". Caution should be taken in re-calculating values from suppressed figures as it may provide incorrect results.

Claims & Payments

Strategic Performance Measures

- The Agency measures its performance against 7 Strategic Performance Measures, which outline the Agency's results across its 3 major programs: Social Security, Health, and Child Support.
- As at 31 March 2025, of the 7 Strategic Performance Measures:
 - 4 are On Track
 - 2 are Substantially On Track, and
 - 1 is Partially On Track.

Strategic Performance Measures (SPMs) results and targets				
SPM	Target 2023–24	Result 2023–24	Target 2024–25	FYTD Result to 31 March 2024–25
SPM 1: Customer satisfaction	≥85 out of 100	79.1 out of 100	≥85 out of 100	77.6 out of 100
SPM 2: Customer trust	≥72 out of 100	75.8 out of 100	≥74 out of 100	76.9 out of 100
SPM 3: Administrative correctness of payments – Existing methodology	≥98%	97.8%	≥98%	98.1%
SPM 4: Customers served within 15 minutes	≥70%	55.2%	≥70%	58.9%
SPM 5: Work processed within timeliness standards	≥90%	71.8%	≥90%	89.3%
SPM 6: Availability of digital channels	≥99%	99.9%	≥99%	99.7%
SPM 7: Tasks managed by customers in digital channels	≥82%	91.9%	≥83%	95.1%

On Track	Substantially On Track	Partially On Track
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- SPM 4 Result for the 2023-24 financial year represents 17.5 million customers served within 15 minutes.
- SPM 4 Result for the 2024-25 financial year to date represents 13.4 million customers served within 15 minutes.

Ombudsman Own Motion Investigation and Report into Child Support

Issue

What is the Government doing to address family and domestic violence, in particular, financial abuse in Child Support?

Headline

The Government is committed to supporting customers and staff experiencing family and domestic violence, including financial abuse.

Facts and Figures

- Services Australia (the Agency) has agreed to all 8 of the recommendations made by the Commonwealth Ombudsman's report *Weaponising Child Support: when the system fails* families published on 3 June 2025.
- The Agency will implement many of the recommendations by December 2025, with targeted operational-level changes to take effect within the next 3 months.
- To combat financial abuse over the next 3 months the Agency is:
 - Developing new Child Support staff guidance and a response framework to assist staff to identify, escalate and manage the risk of financial abuse through Child Support.
 - Strengthening the capacity and capability of Child Support debt management and collection so that it can proactively focus on customers who can pay but aren't.
 - Improving the accuracy of income estimates by requesting supporting evidence more often. This will reduce flow-on Child Support overpayments and debts, as well as Family Tax Benefit debts.
 - Improving customer and staff understanding of the Maintenance Action Test and exemption options for Family Tax Benefit payments, through better communication and operational materials that assist customers to receive the financial support they are entitled to.
- The Agency will also be prioritising Child Support service delivery resourcing and performance.
- Policy departments are also considering possible legislative and policy reform across government to address financial abuse risks in Child Support and to improve customer outcomes. Any legislative or policy reforms are a decision for Government.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Cathy Toze
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Families and Participation	PDR Number: QB25-000037
Date Updated: 16/07/2025 12:16:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 16/07/2025 12:16:00 PM

Policy Commitments

- The Government is conducting an audit of key Commonwealth systems to identify areas where they are being weaponised by perpetrators of family and domestic violence and stamp out opportunities for abuse.

Background

The Commonwealth Ombudsman commenced an own motion investigation into financial abuse through Child Support in February 2025. Following the report, Financial abuse: an insidious form of domestic violence, from the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services, and in tandem with an investigation of the Inspector-General of Taxation culminating in the report, Identification and management of financial abuse within the tax system. These reports suggest that financial abuse is pervasive and that perpetrators are weaponising the system to harm the other parent in their Child Support case and, in some instances, their children.

The Agency provided substantial and comprehensive information to support the investigation and was invited to review and comment on the findings and recommendations in April 2025.

The Ombudsman made eight broad ranging recommendations, including developing a publicly available strategy to address financial abuse through Child Support, a comprehensive review of the Change of Assessment process, strengthening Child Support compliance and enforcement programs, improving staff knowledge of financial abuse and pursuing options for legislative reform.

The Agency accepted all 8 recommendations and will consider and progress these in the context of the broader audit of Australian Government systems currently under way and coordinated by the Office for Women, which is focussed on strengthening systems to stamp out opportunities for systems abuse.

Some of the recommendations are not able to be implemented solely by the Agency and are dependent on the Department of Social Services, the Australian Taxation Office and future Government decisions. The Agency worked closely with the Department of Social Services and the Australian Taxation Office in developing the response and is currently collaborating with them to respond to the report, and progress broader legislative and policy changes.

To effectively tackle financial abuse, the Agency will review and uplift existing processes, business and system capabilities, as well as compliance and enforcement strategies. It is important that parallel policy and legislative reforms are also made to more effectively and systemically counter financial abuse and weaponisation and better protect vulnerable customers.

Support for Customers Impacted by Third Party Data Breaches

Issue

How does Services Australia support customers whose information has been impacted by third party data breaches?

Headline Response

Services Australia takes the protection of customer information seriously. Services Australia is committed to protecting customers from identity theft and supporting customers if their personal information has been lost, stolen, or exposed by a third party. Services Australia has procedures for how it responds to third party data breaches or compromised events.

Facts and Figures

- Third party organisations and individuals continue to experience data loss, often as the result of cyber-incidents. These incidents and scams, can result in the exposure of personally identifiable information, including identity credentials. This can expose individuals to the risk of identity theft.
- In some cases, these data breaches can involve Services Australia (the Agency) credentials, such as Medicare cards, or information that could be relevant to accessing a Services Australia record.
- The Agency is committed to protecting customers from identity theft and supporting customers if their personal information has been lost, stolen, or exposed by a third party.
- The Agency has procedures for how it responds to third party data breaches or compromised events. These outline how the Agency works with the third-party entity to enable the Agency to strengthen its controls around customer records.
- Many data breaches are high profile, receive significant media commentary, and/or result in large-scale impacts to mutual customers and organisations.
- The Agency collaborates with the National Office of Cyber Security and other Australian Government agencies and industry experts, such as IDCARE, to respond to data breaches and support impacted customers.
- The Agency provides information to customers about steps they can take to safeguard their personal information, which is publicly available on the Agency's website or by calling the Agency's Scams and Identity Theft Helpdesk.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Sharna Bartley
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Fraud Control and Investigation Division	PDR Number: QB25-000050
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 12:59:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 12:59:00 PM

Data Breaches

- Where appropriate, the Agency applies additional security measures to affected customer records to increase security and reduce the risk of future misuse.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Data Breaches

Background

Under the Notifiable Data Breaches Scheme, any organisation or agency covered by the *Privacy Act 1988*, must notify affected individuals and the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner when a data breach is likely to result in serious harm to an individual whose personal information is involved.

Third parties are responsible for managing their own data breaches. The Agency is not responsible for the handling of the incidents, including customer contact.

The Agency works with the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner to prepare any required program protocols for data breach events, which allows the Agency to match data provided with customer records in a way that complies with the Australian Privacy Principles and the *Privacy Act 1988* and remains consistent with good privacy practice.

The data matching process enables the Agency to identify customer records at increased risk of identity compromise and allows the Agency to apply additional security measures to these records where appropriate.

Timeline of significant Data Breaches and Agency consultation

Date	Event
August 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bloom Hearing Specialists – a national hearing specialist. • Meli – a not-for-profit community centre that provides services such as support for family violence, youth, and housing.
September 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texas Family Medical Centre – Family and general medical practice.
October 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Nursing Home Foundation – provides accommodation and community care services for elderly people from Chinese and Southeast Asian backgrounds.
November 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jewish Care – provides a range of aged care, in-home services, social services, disability support and Holocaust survivor support programs.
December 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muswellbrook Shire Council – a local government area in NSW. • Waverley Christian College – a co-educational independent Christian school.
January 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spectrum Medical Imaging – an independent radiology practice.
February 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genea – IVF clinic providing fertility treatments.
March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southern Regional Medical Group – Family and general medical practice.

Data Breaches

Date	Event
April 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hurwitz Geller – a chartered accountancy practice.• Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland – represents the needs and goals of multicultural communities, and provides aged care, health and employment programs.
May 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr Paul B Sparks – Cardiologist & Electrophysiologist at The Royal Melbourne Hospital and Director of Electrophysiology at Epworth Hospital.

Debt Management and Recovery**Issue**

What action is Services Australia taking to recover overpayments and support customers who have been overpaid?

Headline Response

Services Australia provides support to customers to assist them in being paid the correct amount. Customers with a debt can self-manage debt repayments online using the myGov app, Services Australia's 'Money you owe' service, or by contacting Services Australia by phone or face to face in one of its Service Centres.

Facts and Figures

- When customers have been overpaid, Services Australia (the Agency) provides several options to help people manage and repay their debt, taking into account the person's individual circumstances. These include:
 - Withholding a percentage of payments for people in receipt of social security payments or allowances.
 - Providing the ability for people who are no longer receiving payments to use a number of repayment arrangement options.
- Flexible repayment options are also available where the person is experiencing family or domestic violence, financial hardship, or where there are other indicators of vulnerability.
- Anyone who owes a debt and is experiencing difficulty with repayments is encouraged to contact the Agency to discuss their circumstances. They can do this on the dedicated debt phone line (1800 076 072).
- The Agency has made enhancements to online services to allow people the flexibility during a crisis or disaster event to change or pause their repayment arrangements.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Robert Higgins
Contact No: s22	Contact No: (s47F(1))
Division: Payment and Assurance Program and Appeals Division	PDR Number: QB25-000051
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 3:25:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 3:25:00 PM

Debt Management

- If people who are no longer receiving payments refuse to enter into a repayment arrangement with the Agency, further recovery action can occur. This can include:
 - garnisheeing money held on behalf of, or owed to, a customer, for example, from wages, income tax refunds or money held with a financial institution
 - issuing a Departure Prohibition Order, or
 - through civil legal action.

Total Value of Debts

- As at 30 June 2025:
 - The outstanding value of social security debts totalled \$4.74 billion, with 1.34 million debts owed by 780,404 customers.
 - 123,502 debts are currently temporarily written off to a total value of \$474.41 million.
- For the 2024–25 financial year, as at 30 June 2025:
 - 1.40 million debts have been raised with a total value of \$2.35 billion.
 - Of the raised debts, 513,985 with a value of \$43.75 million have been raised and waived.
- For the 2023–24 financial year there were:
 - 1.50 million debts raised to the total value \$2.50 billion.
 - 939,029 debts raised for recovery.
 - 603,348 debts raised and waived.
 - 110,993 debts temporarily written off to the total value of \$405.41 million.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

Australian National Audit Office Audit

On 31 May 2023, the Australian National Audit Office tabled its performance audit on 'Debt Management and Recovery in Services Australia'. The Audit examined whether the Agency has fit-for-purpose debt management and governance arrangements, effective strategies and processes, and assessed and reported on the effectiveness of activities undertaken. The Australian National Audit Office made 4 recommendations, aimed at:

- debt oversight arrangements,
- effectiveness and usability of policies and procedures,
- establishing a debt management strategy, and
- developing internal targets for performance.

The Agency acknowledges improvements can be made to the management and recovery of debts and is working with the relevant policy agencies to implement the recommendations.

Past use of External Collection Agents

As at 30 June 2023, the Agency ceased using External Collection Agents with all social security debt recovery now managed by Agency staff.

Customers are no longer repaying their debts through External Collection Agents. The Agency has been establishing repayment arrangements directly with customers. This change ensures customers deal with specialist Agency staff who understand their situation best, and who are experienced in supporting vulnerable people.

As at 30 June 2025, there were approximately 327 customers who were previously registered with External Collection Agents who are yet to establish a repayment arrangement with the Agency.

This has reduced from 592 customers since all debts were returned to the Agency in June 2023. The Agency will continue to seek to establish repayment arrangements with these customers.

Administration of Emergency Payments

Issue

What is the Australian Government doing to support Australians impacted by natural disasters?

Headline Response

The Australian Government is committed to supporting individuals impacted by natural disasters. Services Australia plays a key role in the delivery of support and services to those affected.

Facts and Figures

- For all disaster events activated in the 2024–25 financial year, as at midnight 27 July 2025, 568,000 claims have been granted and \$801.2 million paid:
 - 521,000 claims for Disaster Recovery Payment and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Payment have been granted, with \$596.3 million paid
 - 46,900 claims for Disaster Recovery Allowance and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Allowance claims have been granted, with \$204.9 million paid
 - 192,000 calls were answered on the Australian Government Emergency Information Line (180 22 66), and
 - 96.2 per cent of daily claims received by the Agency were made through a Centrelink online account through myGov.
- In preparation for the 2025–26 disaster season, Services Australia (the Agency) is working closely with the National Emergency Management Agency.
- In the case of an emergency event, the Minister for Emergency Management, Senator the Hon Kristy McBain, has the delegation to activate Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payments, the Disaster Recovery Allowance, and their equivalents for eligible New Zealand citizens.
- Once an emergency response has been activated, the Agency can provide the following disaster payments to eligible persons in declared areas as directed by the National Emergency Management Agency:
 - Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment provides \$1,000 per eligible adult and \$400 per eligible child directly into bank accounts.
 - Disaster Recovery Allowance provides assistance for claimants who have lost income for a period of up to 13 weeks, starting from the first day their income

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Division: Service Delivery Optimisation Division	PDR Number: QB25-000045
Date Updated: 28/07/2025 8:56:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 28/07/2025 8:56:00 AM

Emergency Response

was impacted, which can be from the event start date, as written in the signed Instrument.

- New Zealand Disaster Recovery Payment provides one-off financial assistance to eligible New Zealand citizens residing in Australia who hold a non-protected Special Category Visa (subclass 444).
- New Zealand Disaster Recovery Allowance provides short-term income support to eligible New Zealand citizens residing in Australia who hold a non-protected Special Category Visa (subclass 444).
- There are different ways for people to claim disaster support:
 - The fastest way to claim is online. People with internet access can claim online via myGov.
 - The Agency has staff on the ground, who can assist people face-to-face.
 - People can call to claim on 180 22 66, between 8am and 5pm local time Monday to Friday.
- The Agency can tailor a response that is targeted and provides accessible services for customers in remote or isolated communities. For example, the Agency can:
 - Establish temporary offices and provide access to mobile devices for customers to lodge their claims.
 - Provide on the ground support to assist customers with how to claim and provide any additional assistance where required.
 - Provide information in-language, or link people with interpreters for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customers.
 - Offer dedicated culturally sensitive remote servicing staff to help streamline the claiming process.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Emergency Response

Background

For the 2024-25 financial year, emergency payments were activated for the following events:

- 22 May 2025: New South Wales East Coast Severe Weather and Flooding, May 2025 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 30 March 2025: Western Queensland Heavy Rain and Flooding, March 2025 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 11 March 2025: New South Wales Ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred, March 2025 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 11 March 2025: Queensland Ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred, March 2025 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 5 February 2025: North Queensland Floods – January-February 2025 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 30 December 2024: Bushfires in Western Victoria, December 2024 (Disaster Recovery Allowance and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 29 October 2024: Far West New South Wales Storms and Power Outages, October 2024 (Disaster Recovery Allowance and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Allowance).

For the 2023–24 financial year, emergency payments were activated for the following events:

- 19 February 2024: Western Victoria Bushfires, February 2024 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment only).
- 12 February 2024: Heavy Rainfall and Flooding, City of Moreton Bay, January 2024 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment only).
- 4 January 2024: Southeast Queensland Severe Storms and Flooding, December 2023 to January 2024 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 18 December 2023: Tropical Cyclone Jasper, December 2023 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 27 October 2023: Western and Darling Downs Bushfires, October 2023 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).

Emergency Response

For disaster events activated in the 2023–24 financial year, as at midnight 27 July 2025, 58,700 claims have been granted and \$80.2 million paid:

- 55,100 claims for Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Payment have been granted, with \$64.1 million paid.
- 3,600 claims for Disaster Recovery Allowance and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Allowance claims have been granted, with \$16.1 million paid.
- 36,700 calls were answered on the Australian Government Emergency Information Line (180 22 66).
- 95.4 per cent of daily claims received by the Agency were made through a Centrelink online account through myGov.

Service Centre Network Facts and Figures

Issue

What is the Government doing to meet Australian's need for face-to-face services delivered by Services Australia?

Headline Response

Services Australia is committed to maintaining and modernising the service centre network. Services Australia regularly reviews its progress to ensure a sustainable, accessible, and fit-for-purpose network that meets community and customer needs.

Facts and Figures

- The Face-to-Face Transformation Program was launched in 2019 to modernise service delivery. As at 30 June 2025:
 - 182 service centres have been transformed.
 - 57 of the 102 sites at higher risk of customer aggression have received enhanced security treatments.
- Services Australia (the Agency) is committed to maintaining and modernising the service centre network. The Agency supports other channels such as telephony and digital services to deliver improved government services that are simple, helpful, respectful, and transparent.
- When considering the placement of service centres, the Agency undertakes detailed research and analysis, and considers:
 - Customer and community needs.
 - Accessibility and range of services offered.
 - Proximity to other service centres and government services.
 - Offering a mix of online and face-to-face services.
 - Partnership opportunities with community and government agencies.
 - Public transport availability.
- To meet Australians' needs, face-to-face services are available through:
 - 318 service centres.
 - 376 agent service locations.

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Division: Service Design and Face to Face Transformation	PDR Number: QB25-000047
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- 192 access points.
- 4 Mobile Service Centres.
- Agent service locations provide personnel trained to assist customers with digital services and provide referrals. They have direct phone support for complex inquiries. In addition to the services provided in access points.
- Access points offer self-help facilities, including internet-enabled computers, printers, document upload, self-service phones, and free Wi-Fi.
- Mobile Service Centres travel to rural, regional, and disaster-affected areas, providing Centrelink and Medicare services. They have disabled access and from time to time include representatives from other government agencies.

If pressed**Dungog Shire Community Centre (Dungog Agent)**

- The Dungog Shire Community Centre (DSCC) is contracted to provide agent services to the community at Dungog.
- The Agency has a contract in place with the Dungog Community Centre until 30 June 2026.
- Should DSCC relinquish the agent service, the Agency will initiate an approach to market to ensure services continue for the community of Dungog. Advertisements will be placed in local print media.
- Dungog residents will continue to have access to service centres located at Raymond Terrace (40 km) and Maitland (41 km), with agent services available at Bulahdelah (42 km), and Access Point services at Clarencetown (20 km).

Policy Commitments

- The Government made a commitment as part of the 2022 election to retain 318 service centres.

Background

Due to the Agency's efforts to improve the digital experience, more customers now use digital services like the myGov website and app.

Phone self-service allows customers to access and update their information quickly and conveniently.

Customers can book and manage appointments online at their preferred time, either by phone or at a service centre. Since the commencement on 22 June 2024, customers have booked over 500,000 appointments online.

Agency Support and Protection for People Experiencing Domestic Violence

Issue

How is Services Australia supporting people experiencing Family and Domestic Violence?

Headline Response

Services Australia's *Family and Domestic Violence Strategic Commitment* was launched in December 2024, which reaffirms the Agency's commitment to supporting people affected by family and domestic violence.

Facts and Figures

- Services Australia (the Agency) has a range of support tools, resources, and processes to:
 - Identify family and domestic violence circumstances early.
 - Tailor services to the person's circumstances.
 - Empower customers and staff with valuable information and resources.
- The Agency's workforce is enhanced through comprehensive training relating to family and domestic violence, including more specialised training packages for managers and leaders.
 - This equips our staff to connect customers with the right payments and services provided by the Agency and refer them to appropriate supports in community.
- To secure the personal information of customers leaving a relationship and those experiencing family and domestic violence, the Agency offers practical support, including:
 - Providing information on the Agency's website for customers and within internal documents for staff on how to keep their information safe when leaving a relationship or living with violence or abuse.
 - De-linking a customer's Centrelink record from their partner's when they inform Centrelink they have separated.
 - Transferring customers onto their own Medicare card when they inform Medicare they have separated.

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Division: Communities	PDR Number: QB25-000038
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 11:41:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 11:41:00 AM

- Reviewing nominee arrangements.
- Connecting customers with Agency social workers for short-term support and intervention.

Policy Commitments

- On 6 September 2024, National Cabinet announced a comprehensive \$4.7 billion package on practical next steps to accelerate action to end gender-based violence in a generation, deliver on the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032, and support legal assistance.
- This package brings together efforts and funding to:
 - Deliver much needed support for frontline specialist and legal services responding to gender based violence.
 - Provide innovative approaches to better identify and respond to high-risk perpetrators to stop violence escalating.
 - Address the role that systems and harmful industries play in exacerbating violence.
- As part of this package, the Government commenced an audit of key government systems to identify areas where they are being weaponised by perpetrators of family and domestic violence.
- The Agency continues to undertake work with the Department of Social Services and the Office for Women on identifying points of risk for abuse, manipulation and coercion within the social security system, and how we can better support victim-survivors.
- On 3 June 2025, the Commonwealth Ombudsman released the findings from an investigation into the weaponisation of the Child Support system. The investigation produced 8 recommendations aimed at strengthening the Child Support Scheme to better support children and separated parents.
- The Agency has accepted all 8 recommendations and is working with colleagues in the Australian Taxation Office to implement structural reform.

Background

The *Family and Domestic Violence Strategic Commitment* (the Commitment) outlines the Agency's approach to supporting customers and staff impacted by family and domestic violence by aligning to the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032* and *The First Action Plan*.

The Commitment reaffirms the Agency's vision to deliver simple, helpful, respectful, and transparent services and support to people affected by family and domestic violence. It drives the Agency's approach to continually refine and strengthen our systems, processes, and support, to minimise risk to those affected by family and domestic violence.

The Agency is currently operationalising our Commitment through the development of a Ways of Working - Action Plan to be released later in 2025. The Agency will engage internal and external stakeholders to drive tangible and practical initiatives to support people experiencing family and domestic violence and develop a framework to measure outcomes.

Income Apportionment

Agency Response to Income Apportionment

Issue

What action is the Government taking to address the issue of income apportionment?

Headline Response

Services Australia is working in consultation with the Department of Social Services to address and resolve the issue of income apportionment.

Facts and Figures

- On 15 July 2025, the Full Court of the Federal Court of Australia handed down its judgment in the matter of *Chaplin v Secretary, DSS* (before the Tribunal as *DSS v FTXB*).
- The majority has accepted the Secretary of the Department of Social Services' preferred meaning of the word "earned" and has confirmed that employment income may be taken into account when it was received.
- The Secretary has publicly stated that as there is certainty to the legal position, paused debt activities involving the assessment of employment income for social security recipients prior to 7 December 2020 will re-commence in line with the Court's decision.
- The Government will now evaluate the impact of the Court's decision and consider its response.
- Anyone who believes they have a debt which was affected by income apportionment can call the dedicated Services Australia (the Agency) helpline on 1800 560 870 or visit the Agency's website.
- The Agency and the Department of Social Services are working to resolve the complex policy and legal issues this matter presents, including addressing the Ombudsman's recommendations.
- To address and resolve income apportionment, the Department of Social Services and the Agency are preparing options for the Government to consider.
- Between July and September 2021, the Agency paused the raising of undetermined debts (potential debts not yet raised) and reviews relating to income apportionment.

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Division: Legal Compliance and Remediation Division	PDR Number: QB25-000052
Date Updated: 24/07/2025 11:25:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 24/07/2025 11:25:00 AM

Income Apportionment

- As at 30 June 2025, these pauses related to approximately 16,000 formal reviews, 6,000 explanations on how debts were calculated, and approximately 88,000 undetermined debts.
- The Agency also paused the recovery of 154,000 debts potentially impacted by income apportionment:
 - Approximately 112,000 debts were paused from 30 October 2023.
 - Approximately 42,000 additional debts were paused from 11 April 2024.
- In December 2024, the Agency wrote to all customers affected by the debt pauses advising them:
 - Recovery of their debts would remain paused due to potentially having been affected by income apportionment.
 - Their options to have their case reviewed or voluntarily repay their debt if they wish.
 - Information about the Federal Court appeal.
- As of 30 June 2025, 57 customers have made requests for their review to progress – these are currently being managed by the Agency.
- The Agency website has been updated to ensure people have access to the most up to date information about income apportionment.

If pressed

What does Income apportionment mean for people who have been prosecuted?

- Convictions and prosecutions are matters managed by the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions.
- Other implications for historical prosecutions are one of the aspects of income apportionment that the Government is considering.
- The Agency only makes a referral to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions for serious matters that are supported by a brief of evidence and are never referred for overpayments alone.
- The Agency is working closely with the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions in relation to historical matters which may be impacted by income apportionment.

Income Apportionment

How many customers have been affected by income apportionment?

- The Agency is still determining the total number of customers who may be affected by income apportionment.
- Estimates provided by the Department of Social Services indicate 5.3 million debts, held by 2.9 million Australians, may be impacted by income apportionment.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Income Apportionment

Background

Services Australia and the Department of Social Services (DSS) became aware of issues regarding the use of income apportionment in late 2020.

Since July 2021, the Agency has paused internal reviews, explanations of decision, and the raising and recovery of debts that may be affected by income apportionment, pending instructions from DSS.

In 2023, the Commonwealth Ombudsman (the Ombudsman) conducted two investigations in relation to income apportionment.

From 29 April 2024, the Agency recommenced activity on a small number of debts impacted by income apportionment, in line with instructions and General Guidance for Decision Makers (General Guidance) provided by DSS.

On 28 August 2024, the Administrative Review Tribunal handed down its decision in *Secretary DSS v FTXB*, setting aside a debt that was calculated using the General Guidance and rejecting the Secretary's submissions on how to lawfully recalculate income apportioned debts.

On 25 September 2024, the decision was appealed by the Respondent.

On 22 October 2024, DSS issued the Agency with updated advice to re-pause activity on debts potentially affected by income apportionment, except in certain circumstances.

On 6 March 2025, the appeal, *Chaplin v Secretary DSS*, was heard by the Full Federal Court.

On 15 July 2025, the appeal was dismissed, with an order for the Respondent to pay the Applicant's costs, as agreed.

Enhanced Income Management Program

Issue

How is Services Australia supporting customers transition from Income Management to enhanced Income Management?

Headline Response

Services Australia supports existing Income Management customers to choose to move to enhanced Income Management with a SmartCard or remain on Income Management with a BasicsCard. Newly eligible customers are placed directly on enhanced Income Management.

Facts and Figures

- As at 4 July 2025, there were 21,758 customers on enhanced Income Management, with 10,480 customers on Income Management across Australia.
- Of the customers currently on enhanced Income Management:
 - 7,136 have chosen to move to enhanced Income Management (from Income Management).
 - 14,622 have been placed on the enhanced Income Management program.
- Customers can choose to move to, or volunteer for, enhanced Income Management by calling the SmartCard enhanced Income Management hotline, or by visiting a Services Australia Service Centre or Remote Servicing Team.
- All customers are provided with a personalised SmartCard from their chosen card issuer and have access to temporary SmartCards.
- Enhanced Income Management customers are supported by experienced Agency staff through a dedicated SmartCard enhanced Income Management hotline and face-to-face services.
- For customers in the Northern Territory who choose to have their enhanced Income Management account and SmartCard managed by the Traditional Credit Union, card and account support is provided by Traditional Credit Union.
- The Agency holds comprehensive discussions with all Income Management customers who are considering moving to enhanced Income Management to ensure they understand how the change will apply to their circumstances.
- Customers are offered tailored support from the Agency, such as support using the SmartCard, available payment options (i.e. BPAY, direct debit and Centrepay),

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Division: Communities	PDR Number: QB25-000039
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Income Management

advice on how deductions can be paid, and referrals to internal financial support services, such as Financial Information Service Officers.

Policy Commitments

- The Agency works closely with the Department of Social Services, which has policy responsibility for the Income Management programs. This includes supporting activities to design the future of Income Management.

Income Management

Background

Enhanced Income Management

Enhanced Income Management is a tool that helps customers manage their payments and prioritise spending on essential goods and services such as food, housing, bills and education.

- Income Management program rules apply under the enhanced Income Management program. This means the quarantine rate is 50 per cent (except for Child Protection customers and Cape York and Doomadgee regions), and restrictions apply to the purchasing of tobacco products, pornography, alcohol, gambling products, and cash and cash-like products.

Under the enhanced Income Management program, the Family Responsibilities Commission is responsible for referring participants in the Cape York and Doomadgee region. Participants have a quarantine rate between 60 and 90 per cent, determined by the Family Responsibilities Commission.

A 2023–2024 ANAO Performance Audit found the transition to the enhanced Income Management program from the Cashless Debit Card program was largely effective, and that the Agency's limited tender procurement was largely compliant with Commonwealth Procurement Rules.

Income Management

Income Management is a tool to help customers manage their money to meet essential household needs and expenses.

Customers supported by Income Management have a percentage (varies between 50 per cent or 70 per cent) of their income support payment set aside in an Income Management account.

Customers on Income Management can make payments from their income managed account for priority needs such as rent, bills or food by:

- Using their BasicsCard.
- Asking the Agency to set up regular or one-off payments to approved organisations.

ANAO Financial Statements Audit 2023-24 Finding

Issue

How is Services Australia addressing the Australian National Audit Office's Category A finding (Finding 26) in relation to Medicare Compensation Recovery Program Governance?

Headline Response

Services Australia is progressing an audit Implementation Action Plan to address the audit findings. Services Australia continues to make improvements to its compensation recovery system and its operations to support more timely action and has increased its completion rates to 79.1 per cent of claims completed within legislated timeframes for the 2024–25 financial year. Services Australia continues to work with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing on policy matters in respect to this finding.

Facts and Figures

- Services Australia (the Agency) is addressing the Category A finding. This includes continuing to work with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing as the relevant policy agency on potential legislative and system changes, including:
 - Seeking clarification on the interpretation of the *Health and Other Services (Compensation) Act 1995* (the HOSC Act).
 - Considering legislative reform to the HOSC Act to align to the policy intent of the Medicare Compensation Recovery Program and clarify the law.
- Since June 2023, the Agency has:
 - Implemented over 200 system fixes to improve the efficiency of its Medicare Compensation Recovery System.
 - Reduced work on hand to 3,083 as at 30 June 2025, compared to a 20,939 as at 30 June 2024.
 - Increasing its claim timeliness to 79.1 per cent of claims completed within legislated timeframes for the 2024–25 financial year.
- For the months of May and June 2025, the Agency has achieved approximately 98 per cent of claims completed within timeliness.

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Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Payment Assurance Program and Appeals	PDR Number: QB25-000054
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 3:26:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 3:26:00 PM

Medicare Compensation

Australian National Audit Office Audit Findings

- During the 2023–24 audit, the Australian National Audit Office identified that over 50 per cent of cases were not assessed by the Agency within the statutory timeframes, contrary to specific requirements in the HOSC Act to process claims within timeframes or to make decisions to not pursue recovery.
- The Act requires that the Agency must issue notices prior to statutory time periods expiring and has no discretion to not pursue recovery. The Australian National Audit Office identified that the Agency did not take sufficient steps during 2023–24 to address these known issues.
- The Agency's non-compliance with the HOSC Act resulted in:
 - Non-collection of revenue from 'non-advance payments' that would have otherwise been owed to the Commonwealth.
 - The identification of an error in the Agency's prior period financial statements, relating to the recognition and treatment of revenue and receivables associated with the Medicare Compensation Recovery System program.
- The Agency has not pursued recovery for non-advance cases closed outside of timeliness since commencement of the program in 1996.

The Agency's performance on claims processing

- In the 2023–24 financial year, the program completed processing of 41,490 claims. Of these, 22,258 (53.65 per cent) were completed outside legislated timeframes.
- In the 2024–25 financial year, the program completed processing of 49,610 claims. Of these, 10,369 (20.90 per cent) were completed outside of legislative timeframes.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Medicare Compensation

Background

When an injured person receives more than \$5,000 in compensation for an injury or illness, the Agency is responsible for recovering Medicare benefits and aged care costs related to that injury under the HOSC Act.

The Agency engages with claimants/injured persons, insurers, legal providers, and third-party representatives to administer the program on behalf of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

There are two pathways within the Medicare Compensation Recovery Program, advance payments and non-advance payments.

Advance payments

Advance payments relate to claims where the compensation payer or insurer has elected to provide the Agency with 10% of the settlement amount to cover any potential Medicare services and care costs that relate to the compensated injury and paying the remaining 90% to the injured person.

When the Agency closes an Advance payment claim outside of legislative timeframes, a full refund of any payments received is made to the compensation recipient, regardless of if a debt is identified during the assessment of the claim in accordance with the HOSC Act.

Non-advance payments

Non-advance payments relate to claims where the insurer has elected to withhold the compensation payment amount until the Agency identifies the amount to be recovered. The insurer then pays the Agency the amount owed for Medicare services and care costs before paying the remaining amount to the injured person.

When the Agency closes a non-advance payment claim outside legislative timeframes, a \$0.00 debt amount is sent to the compensation recipient, regardless of whether a debt is identified during the assessment of the claim.

The Australian National Audit Office findings identified that the Agency should be pursuing the debt from the customer in these instances. This is contrary to the policy intent from the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and is not how the Agency has operated since 1996.

Disruption to Mobile Service Centre – Golden Wattle

Issue

Why does Services Australia currently have only 3 of its 4 Mobile Service Centres supporting regional and remote communities?

Headline Response

One of Services Australia's fleet of 4 Mobile Services Centres, Golden Wattle, is temporarily out of service due to a mechanical failure.

Facts and Figures

- The Government remains committed to providing Mobile Service Centres, that travel throughout rural and regional Australia and disaster-affected communities, bringing government services to people where and when they need it most.
- Mobile Service Centre, Golden Wattle, will remain out of service from 1 July 2025 for approximately 9 weeks until a maintenance issue is resolved.
- Golden Wattle was scheduled to visit north-eastern and north-western New South Wales flood affected towns within the Taree, Coffs Harbour, Kempsey and Port Macquarie regions during this period. Once Golden Wattle is operational again, it will re-commence servicing in these areas.
- Services Australia (the Agency) has contacted local councils and key organisations within these communities to apologise for the change in schedule and provide them with information about the servicing arrangements available via on-line services, over the phone or at one of the closest service centres, agents or access points.
- The Agency Community Engagement Officers will continue to provide assistance to these communities by contacting key organisations and identifying any needs for further support. Agency staff will also continue to provide assistance at open Recovery Centres and attend community events.
- From 2006 to 30 June 2025, Mobile Service Centres have:
 - Travelled 1,210,138 km.
 - Visited 7,497 communities.
 - Helped 222,939 people.
 - Attended 38 emergency events, spending 652 days in 423 disaster affected communities helping 36,960 people.

Contact: Simon Noble	Cleared by: Bo Robertson
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Face to Face Services	PDR Number: QB25-000059
Date Updated: 11/07/2025 4:27:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 11/07/2025 4:27:00 PM

Mobile Servicing

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Mobile Servicing

Background

Mobile Service Centres provide a convenient and personalised service to rural and regional communities. Their mobile capabilities mean during emergencies they can also be quickly diverted to provide rapid response for communities in need.

The disruption to mobile servicing in north-eastern and north-western New South Wales during July to September 2025 is due to a mechanical failure to Mobile Service Centre, Golden Wattle.

The hydraulic leg on Golden Wattle malfunctioned, and the vehicle has undergone assessments by specialist mechanics and engineers at a maintenance centre in Newcastle. The fault has been identified as a custom-built sensor issue.

The sensor and hydraulic leg require replacement. The maintenance provider has engaged a third-party supplier, and sourcing and installation of the parts will take a minimum of 9 weeks.

Itineraries for Mobile Service Centres Desert Rose (Queensland), Kangaroo Paw II (South Australia), and Blue Gum (Victoria), will be maintained.

myGov Funding and Operations including Future Improvements

Issue

How is the Government ensuring that myGov remains a reliable and secure part of Australia's digital infrastructure?

Headline Response

Every day, myGov helps more than 979,000 Australians access critical government services easily, quickly and securely. The Government has made a significant investment in the future of myGov, which will help Australians do more, whilst keeping myGov secure and reliable as critical national infrastructure.

Facts and Figures

- myGov makes it easy for Australians to use one account to access 18 services across the Commonwealth and state and territory governments, including the Australian Taxation Office, Centrelink and Medicare.
- In the 2024–25 Budget, Services Australia (the Agency) received \$630.3 million over four years from the 2024–25 financial year (and \$144.8 million per year ongoing) to sustain and enhance the myGov platform, and ensure the continued development of its capability, including continuing an independent advisory board to provide guidance and advice to Government on potential myGov enhancements until the 2027–28 financial year.
- Since the myGov User Audit, the Agency has delivered significant improvements for customers.
 - The myGov app makes it easier to access services and messages from mobile devices, including 6 cards now available in the digital wallet. Nearly 8 million people are now using the myGov app.
 - A new security dashboard is helping people better secure their myGov accounts, providing extra protection against scams. 1.2 million users have now set up a passkey, which helps protect against phishing scams.
 - Commonwealth Statutory Declarations can now be completed in myGov with Digital ID, saving people time by not having to find an in-person witness.

Contact: Jordan Hatch	Cleared by: Jonathon Thorpe
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Customer and Staff Digital Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000049
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- Further improvements in myGov are underway in 2025, including:
 - Providing the option for people to be notified about and complete the 2026 Census through myGov.
 - Migrating the Express Plus apps functionality into myGov, starting with Medicare, so people can get more things done inside the myGov app.
- The Agency is exploring the potential for new whole-of-government capabilities through the myGov Pipeline. This includes making it easy to track appointments and making it simpler for more government services to join myGov.

If pressed on Inadvertent Closure of myGov Accounts

- Since early 2024, myGov has successfully closed over 2.4 million unused myGov accounts. The process of closing inactive accounts is a common security practice to reduce the risk of fraud and unauthorised access through compromised sign in credentials.
- On 27 June 2025, myGov inadvertently closed 1393 active myGov accounts. A post implementation review identified human error as the cause.
- All impacted users were sent an email apologising for the error and inconvenience, with the offer of support from the myGov Helpdesk to open a new myGov account.
- Since the closure, 28 affected customers have sought assistance and advice from the myGov helpdesk.

Policy Commitments

- \$580.3 million over four years from the 2024–25 financial year (and \$139.6 million per year ongoing) to sustain the myGov platform and ensure the continued development of its capability, including continuing an independent advisory board to provide guidance and advice to Government on potential myGov enhancements until the 2027–28 financial year.
- \$50.0 million over four years from the 2024–25 financial year (and \$5.2 million per year ongoing) for enhancements to the myGov platform to continue to respond to the findings of the Critical National Infrastructure myGov User Audit and advice from the independent advisory board, including enhancements to the myGov support tool, strengthening myGov fraud detection capabilities, improving the myGov inbox and other communication tools and supporting users to better secure their myGov accounts.
- This measure builds on the 2023–24 Budget measure, Sustain myGov and the 2023–24 MYEFO measures, Services Australia – additional resourcing, modernising myGov, and Services Australia’s improved safety for staff and customers.

Background

Interim Independent Advisory Board

The establishment of an independently chaired advisory board was a key action from the myGov User Audit (Recommendation 7) to put in place citizen centred governance to drive inclusion and performance.

In the 2024–25 Budget, the Government invested in the Advisory Board, until June 2028, to provide the independent expertise and insights to progress towards making public services more accessible, ethical and effective.

The Advisory Board will continue to provide the Minister for Government Services with advice and assurance on designing, prioritising, and investing in people-centred services and improvements.

Ombudsman's report on Keeping myGov secure

Issue

What action is the Government taking to ensure that myGov remains a safe and secure platform for government service delivery?

Headline Response

On 6 August 2024, the Commonwealth Ombudsman, Mr Iain Anderson, published the *Keeping myGov Secure* report following an own motion investigation into fraud arising from unauthorised linking to myGov accounts.

Services Australia has completed 3 of the 4 recommendations in the report and has made significant progress on the final recommendation. Services Australia will provide a formal response to the Commonwealth Ombudsman in August 2025.

Facts and Figures

- Maintaining the security of myGov and the protection of people's personal information remains a top priority for Services Australia (the Agency), and it remains committed to ongoing improvement.
- The Commonwealth Ombudsman's report made 4 recommendations and 2 suggestions in relation to:
 - myGov's security controls for unauthorised linking and high-risk transactions.
 - The management of shared risks across the myGov ecosystem.
 - Supporting people whose member service accounts have been impacted by myGov fraud.
- In response to the recommendations, the Agency has implemented additional security measures to support customers, including:
 - Disrupting fraudulent payment redirection through additional controls on updating payment details online.
 - Introducing the myGov Security Dashboard to help customers switch to stronger sign in methods, such as Digital ID and Passkeys.

Contact: Aaron Wilkins	Cleared by: Jonathon Thorpe
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Division: Customer and Staff Digital Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000053
Date Updated: 25/07/2025 9:34:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 25/07/2025 9:34:00 AM

PDR Number: QB25-000053

- obfuscating bank details in online accounts across Centrelink, Medicare, Child Support and myGov.
- The Agency will introduce multifactor authentication steps when updating account settings in myGov in August.
- The Agency continues work to strengthen customer authentication processes, including when linking myGov accounts to Centrelink, Medicare and Child Support. These updates are due to be delivered in September 2025.
- In recognition of myGov's whole-of-government role, the Agency has also strengthened processes across member services to identify and manage shared risks, share operational updates, and respond to suspected fraudulent activity.
- The Agency identifies and responds to around 300 scams per week that impersonate myGov. In a challenging global security environment, myGov is continually evolving to meet the challenges of increasingly sophisticated and numerous scams, identity theft and other cyber security threats.
- The Agency has observed, analysed, and responded to 15,149 unique agency impersonation scams for July 2024 to June 2025. This does not include additional malicious websites identified and actioned directly by other organisations.
- myGov is the most targeted brand, with over 77 per cent of these scams in the 2024–25 financial year referencing myGov in some way.
- Since the introduction of the myGov Security Dashboard, approximately 1.8 million users have now updated to a stronger sign in method, such as Passkeys or Digital ID. In addition, over 780,000 users have switched off their password.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Contact: Aaron Wilkins	Cleared by: Jonathon Thorpe
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Customer and Staff Digital Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000053
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Background

The full list of recommendations and suggestions from the Commonwealth Ombudsman Final Report are:

- **Recommendation 1.** Consistent with its responsibilities for driving improvement in fraud control practices, we recommend Services Australia:
 - a) Assess existing Proof of Record Ownership processes across the myGov ecosystem to identify and document, shared risks, and work with member services to agree and implement appropriate controls.
 - b) Consider establishing baseline Proof of Record Ownership requirements, which must be met by all member services.
- **Recommendation 2a.** We recommend Services Australia implement additional security controls such as two factor authentication across its three member services for all high-risk transactions, including linking a member service account to myGov and updating contact and bank account details.
- **Recommendation 2b.** Services Australia should ensure that a high standard of security settings for high-risk transactions applies consistently across all available service delivery channels for its member services.
- **Recommendation 3.** We recommend Services Australia establish formal processes for managing all shared risks across the myGov ecosystem, including identifying, assessing and documenting shared risks, periodically assessing the effectiveness of agreed controls and responding to indications that risk assessments should be updated.
- **Recommendation 4.** We recommend Services Australia seek external legal advice about options to facilitate a greater level of information sharing across linked member services and support member services to act proactively to reduce fraud risk or other unlawful activity while meeting their other legislative obligations.
- **Suggestion 1.** We suggest Services Australia share learnings and information about its authentication and Proof of Record Ownership processes with other myGov member services to support them to build their capability.
- **Suggestion 2.** We suggest Services Australia regularly reviews and updates its communications regarding potential myGov and member service account breaches, including security notifications, staff guidance and online content, to ensure people are supported to take real time action to mitigate breaches to their myGov and or linked member service accounts.

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Division: Customer and Staff Digital Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000053
Date Updated: 25/07/2025 9:34:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 25/07/2025 9:34:00 AM

PDR Number: QB25-000053

Services Australia's Response to People Released from Immigration Detention

Issue

How is Services Australia supporting individuals released from immigration detention?

Headline Response

Services Australia continues to work with the Department of Home Affairs regarding people who have been released from held detention or residence determination arrangements because of the High Court ruling in *NZYQ v Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs*.

This includes processing applications from people who, upon release, apply for the Special Benefit payment.

Facts and Figures

- Services Australia (the Agency) supports individuals released from immigration detention when they engage with the Agency.
- The High Court ruling resulted in the Agency engaging with people who:
 - were in residence determination arrangements and may already have been in receipt of the Status Resolution Support Services payment from the Agency, or
 - persons who had been released directly from held detention and at the time of release were not receiving a payment from the Agency.
- As at 1 July 2025, there are approximately 225 customers receiving payments from the Agency on a visa sub-class 070.
- The Agency assesses and processes all claims in line with current arrangements for vulnerable customers with complex needs, including applying servicing arrangements where staff safety concerns are identified.
- The Agency continues to work closely with the Department of Social Services and the Department of Home Affairs to provide information to support impacted people.
- Any questions regarding the total number of people released from immigration detention, including those in receipt of the Status Resolution Support Services

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Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Fraud Control Investigations Division	PDR Number: QB25-000041
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payment, should be referred to the Department of Home Affairs as the Agency does not have visibility of this information.

Special Benefit

- Persons released from immigration detention may also test their eligibility for Special Benefit, which is a payment for persons who are not able to receive any other social security payment.
 - The Special Benefit payment has been available to eligible customers since 1945.
 - The Agency administers the Special Benefit payment on behalf of the Department of Social Services.
 - Special Benefit is a discretionary payment designed to assist individuals in financial hardship who:
 - are not eligible for other income support payments, and
 - are unable to earn a sufficient livelihood for themselves and their dependants.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

On 8 November 2023, the High Court handed down the decision, *NZYQ v Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs [2023] HCA 37*, requiring immediate release from immigration detention of an individual on the basis that their detention was unlawful as there was no real prospect of removal from Australia.

The Department of Home Affairs contracted Service Providers to work closely with people impacted by this decision and to support them in lodging their claim for Special Benefit with the Agency. Impacted customers can also claim online.

Customers already in receipt of Status Resolution Support Services payments from the Agency were eligible to receive that payment until their claim for Special Benefit was granted or the Department of Home Affairs cancelled their Status Resolution Support Services payment.

The Agency has put in place processes to assist in the identification of people in this cohort who lodge Special Benefit claims.

Information to support impacted people includes:

- the process Service Providers need to follow to assist a person to initiate a Special Benefit claim
- Proof of Identity requirements
- the application of a 13-week activity test exemption by the Agency for people in this cohort to ensure no impacts to payment, and
- other payments and support people may be eligible for outside of Special Benefit, including Health Care Card, Family Tax Benefit, Parental Leave Pay, Child Care Subsidy, and Medicare.

Status Resolution Support Services Payment

On 1 April 2014, the Agency commenced the administration of the Status Resolution Support Services payment on behalf of the Department of Home Affairs.

The Status Resolution Support Services payment provides financial support to asylum seekers, as part of the broader Status Resolution Support Services program administered by the Department of Home Affairs. The Status Resolution Support Services program provides temporary, needs-based support to asylum seekers who are unable to support themselves while resolving their immigration status.

The Department of Home Affairs determines a person's eligibility for Status Resolution Support Services, and the Agency determines a customer's payability for Status Resolution Support Services payment. The Status Resolution Support Services payment is not a social security payment and customers receiving the payment do not have access to other Agency payments or services.

Discrepancies in Centrelink Payment Summaries

Issue

What is the Government doing to address the system issues that are causing incorrect reportable income amounts (taxable and non-taxable) to display within Centrelink payment summaries?

Headline

Services Australia has informed a cohort of impacted customers of a delay in the availability of their 2024–25 Centrelink payment summary and dedicated over 100 staff to remediation work so that accurate payment summaries can be provided to the customers early in the 2025–26 financial year.

Facts and Figures

Key Dates	
20 May 2025	The Agency engaged with the Australian Taxation Office on the identified payment summary issues.
13 June 2025	The Agency commenced manual remediation of impacted records.
27 June 2025	The Agency started notifying impacted customers of the payment summary issues. Letters issued to customers via mail and myGov.
1 July 2025	Payment summary data transferred to the Australian Taxation Office for s47E(d) customers and withheld for s47E(d) impacted customers.
3 July 2025	Mailout to all impacted customers completed.

- On 1 July 2025, Services Australia (the Agency) shared 2024-25 Centrelink payment summary data with the Australian Taxation Office via the standard process for s47E(d) customers. The Australian Taxation Office has confirmed the records have pre-filled into individual tax returns through myTax.
- The Agency has identified a cohort of s47E(d) customers with potential inaccuracies in their 2024-25 Centrelink payment summaries which were withheld from the Australian Tax Office.
- For these customers, system issues are causing incorrect reportable income amounts (taxable and non-taxable) to display within their Centrelink payment summaries where:
 - s47E(d)

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Cathy Toze
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Division: Families and Participation	PDR Number: QB25-000042
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Payment Summaries

○ s47E(d)

○

- From 27 June 2025 to 3 July 2025, the Agency issued letters to all s47E(d) customers notifying them of the issue and a delay to the availability of their 2024-25 Centrelink payment summary.
- Customers may not be able to lodge their individual tax return until their record has been remediated. This delay may financially impact customers who are expecting to receive a tax refund.
- The Agency has dedicated over 100 staff to remediate the inaccurate payment summaries and on 23 July 2025, s47E(d) payment summaries had been remediated.
- The Agency is working with the Australian Taxation Office to share remediated payment summaries daily to improve customer experience and reduce customer contact.
- The Agency is aiming to remediate approximately s47E(d) payment summaries (for customers who are likely to lodge tax returns) by the end of August 2025, and the remaining impacted payment summaries by late September 2025, ahead of the 31 October 2025 individual tax return lodgement date.
- Where customers contact the Agency and raise concerns about the delay in the availability of their payment summary, the Agency has a process to escalate their payment summary for remediation.
- The Agency has been working closely with the Australian Taxation Office to align website, Interactive Voice Response and staff communications about the payment summary issues.
- The Agency is analysing Information and Communication Technology solutions to prevent the identified issues from occurring in future financial years.
- The Agency is undertaking historical analysis to identify previous financial year payment summaries that were affected and will develop a remediation strategy with the Australian Taxation Office to address prior year inaccuracies.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Payment Summaries

Background

From 1 July each year, Centrelink payment summary information is made available to customers and shared with the Australian Taxation Office to assist customers with completing their individual tax returns. The Agency produces over 6 million payment summaries each year. Data is transferred to the Australian Taxation Office to be used as pre-fill data for tax returns.

Many Centrelink customers will not be taxable. For example, customers in receipt of an Income Support Payment for at least one day have a tax-free threshold of \$22,575, and customers in receipt of an Income Support Payment for every day of the financial year, who are also a liable parent or a recipient parent under a child support assessment, have a tax-free threshold of \$29,842.

Customers in receipt of Family Tax Benefit and Child Care Subsidy are required to complete a tax return or advise the Agency of non-lodgement to balance their payments at end of the financial year.

Robodebt Royal Commission - Government Response

Issue

What has the Government done in response to the Robodebt Royal Commission?

Headline Response

Many of the Royal Commission’s findings align with the priorities and reforms the Australian Government has maintained focus on – rebuilding trust in government, investing in a capable public sector, delivering strong institutions and ensuring people are at the centre of service delivery.

Facts and Figures

- As at 30 June 2025, Services Australia (the Agency) has fully implemented 21 recommendations, partially implemented 2 recommendations (recommendations 16.2 & 20.1), and is well progressed on implementing its remaining 3 recommendations.
- Recommendation 16.2 – Review and strengthen governance of data-matching programs:
 - The Agency continues to work across government, including with the Australian Government Solicitor and the Australian Taxation Office to fully implement this recommendation.
- Recommendation 20.1 – Administrative Appeals Tribunal cases with significant legal and policy issues:
 - The Agency continues to assess the new systems for screening cases flowing from the new Administrative Review Tribunal to fully implement this recommendation.
- Key changes implemented by the Agency to address recommendations include:
 - The Advocates’ Channel with Economic Justice Australia has provided opportunities to enhance how advocates can engage with the Agency. The Agency will continue to build on the existing advocacy channel with findings from the pilot to inform a possible scalable solution.
 - Recruited over 160 ongoing social workers in 2024 with 665 social workers in 214 locations.
 - Embedding human-centred design and customer research into core practices, incorporating insights from customers, staff and peak advocacy organisations.

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Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Legal Compliance and Remediation	PDR Number: QB25-000056
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- Proactive and inclusive staff feedback mechanisms, such as surveys, round table meetings, operational feedback, systematic issues register, and a dedicated staff feedback tool.
- Improvements to debt policy including no longer using external collection agencies to recover debts and enabling customers to self-pause their debts when impacted by disaster or crisis.

Timeline of Significant Events

- 11 June 2021: The Federal Court of Australia approved the Class Action Settlement agreement, including the Settlement Distribution Scheme.
- 25 August 2022: Announcement confirming the establishment of the Robodebt Royal Commission, its Terms of Reference and reporting date.
- 7 July 2023: The Report of the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme was presented by the Commissioner and tabled in Parliament.
- 10 July 2023: The Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Australian Public Service Commissioner announced that a taskforce would be established and led by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Attorney-General's Department, and the Australian Public Service Commission to support Ministers in preparing the Government's response.
- 8 September 2023: The former CEO of Services Australia, Ms Rebecca Skinner PSM, apologised to all Services Australia staff for Robodebt and how it affected them.
- 13 November 2023: The Government released its response to the Royal Commission's recommendations, which was tabled in Parliament.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

The Income Compliance Programme (the Robodebt Scheme) was initiated in 2015 and was supported through budget measures between 2015–16 and 2018–19. The Scheme was ceased in November 2019.

On 7 July 2023, Commissioner Catherine Holmes AC SC, presented the Report of the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme, to the Governor-General, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd).

On 13 November 2023, the Australian Government released its response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme.

The Government accepted (49), or accepted in-principle (7), all 56 recommendations made by the Royal Commission. Of these, Services Australia is the lead agency for 26 recommendations.

Scams Prevention and Protection

Issue

How is Services Australia ensuring that customers are protected from scams impersonating trusted organisations and brands like myGov?

Headline Response

Services Australia takes the protection of customer information seriously. Scams present an evolving threat to all Australians, and Services Australia continues to observe a significant number of scams targeting customers by impersonating trusted organisations and brands, such as myGov.

Facts and Figures

- Services Australia (the Agency) observed, analysed, and responded to 15,149 unique Agency impersonation scams between July 2024 to June 2025.
- myGov is the most targeted Agency brand, with over 77 per cent of these scams in the 2024–25 financial year referencing myGov in some way.
- The Agency's Scams and Identity Theft Helpdesk supports customers affected by scams and identity security concerns by providing advice on how customers can protect their personal information, checking their record for suspicious activity, correcting unauthorised updates, offering additional security measures, and referring to support services as needed.
 - Between July 2024 to June 2025, the helpdesk responded to over 30,000 calls.
- The Agency continues to support customers to strengthen their accounts and sign in processes and is implementing measures to help protect customers from scams impersonating myGov.
- In July 2024, the Agency introduced a phishing resistant sign-in security method, known as a passkey, to provide myGov users greater protection from scams.
- A passkey will only work with the genuine website or app that the passkey is connected with and will not work with fake websites. This means users cannot accidentally sign-in to a fraudulent version of myGov using their passkey.
- The Agency recently released the first version of the myGov Security Review that prompts customers to take actions to make their accounts more secure.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Sharna Bartley
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Fraud Control and Investigations	PDR Number: QB25-000057
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Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

The Agency is committed to protecting customers from the harm of scams and supporting customers who are the victim of identity compromise.

The Agency's scam response involves helping customers avoid scams and to protect their personal information, detecting and taking action against scams that impersonate the agency, providing support to customers who are victim of identity compromise, and strengthening our systems and processes to improve our resilience to scam activity.

Raising scam awareness and educating staff and customers is one way the Agency actively responds to scams. The Agency helps customers recognise and avoid scams, through a range of communication and engagement activities, such as:

- Presenting to external government groups such as not-for-profits supporting vulnerable cohorts.
- Running the Services Australia Scams Awareness booth at relevant expos.
- Maintaining and enhancing messaging via the Agency's website and the myGov site on how to avoid scams and protect identity.
- Scam alerts on the Agency's websites and social media accounts.

The Agency is participating in the Australian Communications and Media Authority's pilot SMS Sender ID Register. This pilot builds on earlier initiatives (Telstra – Cleaner Pipes; Optus – Trusted Sources) and provides protections by blocking fraudulent text messages that target customers by impersonating Agency brands, such as myGov or Medicare.

Security Risk Management Review Implementation

Issue

What action is the Government taking to ensure the safety and security of staff working to provide vital services for the Australian community?

Headline Response

The Government has invested \$361 million in response to the Security Risk Management Review to continue to improve the safety of Services Australia's staff and customers.

Facts and Figures

- The safety of all staff is paramount, and Services Australia (the Agency) is committed to ensuring that all staff can serve the Australian public without fear of violence.
- Funding committed by the Government and internal Agency resources will enable the Agency to implement all 44 recommendations of the Security Risk Management Review (the Review) by July 2026.
- Of the 44 recommendations, 20 have been completed in full, and the remaining 24 recommendations are in progress at various stages based on size and complexity.
- Examples of the work already delivered that sees immediate improvements includes:
 - Upgrades to the Airport West Service Centre were completed in December 2023.
 - The Criminal Code Amendment (Protecting Commonwealth Frontline Workers) Bill 2024 was enacted on 9 July 2024 to strengthen offences for acts of violence and aggression against Commonwealth frontline staff.
 - The customer online appointment booking system was rolled out nationally on 24 June 2024. Customers can now book and cancel their own 15-minute phone appointment or a 30-minute face-to-face appointment online, without the requirement to call or attend in-person. This has streamlined interactions and reduced customer frustration.

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Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Community Engagement and Servicing Redesign	PDR Number: QB25-000040
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Security Review

- Advanced Customer Aggression training has been delivered to 3,548 frontline staff skilling them with the confidence to respond and de-escalate customer aggression incidents. The roll out of this training is continuing to all face-to-face frontline service delivery staff uplifting the capability of the Agency to effectively respond to customer aggression.
- 57 service centres at risk of high levels of customer aggression have received enhanced security treatments, including 24 site remediations, with the ongoing program of work continuing this financial year.
- Customer Self Check-in Kiosks are operational in 83 service centres to minimise frustrations caused by queues, and to provide real time information about presenting customers and any known risks.
- The Government will also soon reintroduce a Commonwealth Workplace Protection Order Bill which will set out a Commonwealth Workplace Protection Orders scheme to provide legal protections for Commonwealth workplaces and workers and deter acts of violence and other harmful behaviours by members of the public.
- A new Protective Security Operations Centre will be operational in June 2026 to enable the agency to respond in real time as security incidents occur.

Policy Commitments

- The Government has invested \$361 million to enable the Agency to implement the recommendations of the Review in full to continue to improve the safety of the Agency's staff and customers.

Security Review

Background

On 24 May 2023, the Review was initiated immediately following an incident at the Airport West Service Centre in Melbourne, where a staff member was seriously injured by a customer on 23 May 2023.

The Review was informed by significant staff consultation and outlines the extensive range of measures the Agency already had in place to protect staff and in addition offers recommendations to improve these measures.

The Key Findings and 44 Recommendations cover security capabilities, service centre design, managed service plans and the adequacy of legislation to prevent and respond to customer aggression.

Services Australia Current Staffing Levels

Issue

What are the current staff levels at Services Australia and will there be a reduction in the 2025-26 financial year?

Headline Response

A key focus for Services Australia last year was building on the injection of new staff to reduce the time it takes to process claims or to answer the phone. Services Australia has made improvements compared to this time last year and continues to head in the right direction.

Facts and Figures

- As of 30 June 2025, Services Australia (the Agency) had a workforce of approximately 37,500 staff. This includes approximately:
 - 35,200 (94 per cent) Australian Public Service (APS) staff
 - 2,300 (6 per cent) non-APS staff (labour hire and contractors), and
 - 17 (< 1 per cent) other Commonwealth employees seconded to the Agency.
- The Agency's APS employee headcount increased by over 1,600 between 30 June 2024 and 30 June 2025 (from approximately 33,600 to 35,200).
- This workforce is supplemented by 2 Service Delivery Partners (SDPs) that allows the Agency to scale up and down quickly, comprising a headcount of 668 staff, as of 30 June 2025.
- The Agency's 2024–25 Average Staffing Level (ASL) was 31,442, which is 1,224 ASL above the 2024–25 Budget ASL portfolio allocation of 30,218. This increase in the Agency's ASL reflects further investment in APS staffing to reduce reliance on contractor services.
- The Agency's 2025–26 Approved ASL is 29,612 which is 606 below the 30,218 approved ASL for the Agency during the 2024–25 financial year.
- Between 1 December 2020 and 30 June 2025, approximately 4,500 non-APS employees, including labour hire, contractor and SDP staff, have transitioned to APS employment in the Agency.
- In the last 12 months (1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025), approximately 158 APS employees (non-ongoing and Intermittent/Irregular) have transitioned to APS ongoing employment.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Randall Brugeaud
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Workforce Capability	PDR Number: QB25-000048
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Policy Commitments

- Between 1 May 2022 and 30 June 2025, the Agency has employed (commenced) approximately 350 additional staff in Far North Queensland¹, and is continuing to recruit to work towards the Government's election commitment.
- As part of the 2024–25 Budget, the Agency received \$1.8 billion over 3 financial years to the 2025–26 financial year to:
 - Maintain a customer service workforce to deliver timely services and payments to Australians experiencing vulnerability in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis.
 - Sustain emergency response capability.
 - Support other aspects of the Agency's operations.
- This has improved claim processing times, and resulted in shorter call wait times for customers.

¹ Far North Queensland includes Atherton, Cairns, Innisfail, Mareeba and Yarrabah locations.

Background

APS staff, whether ongoing, non-ongoing, or casual, remain the core of the Agency's workforce. They are the current and future leaders, who hold the institutional knowledge and expertise central to the culture of the Agency.

The Agency's non-APS workforce (comprising of labour hire personnel and contractors) and its outsourced Service Delivery Partner providers, give the Agency additional flexibility to engage short-term specialist or surge services, to support day-to-day operations and workload requirements.

The Agency's workforce size and composition will fluctuate based on forecasted and actual customer volumes and is heavily impacted by events such as natural disasters, pandemic events, and changes to government policy.

Ombudsman Investigation into the Targeted Compliance Framework

Issue

What is the Government doing to address issues raised in the Commonwealth Ombudsman's report into the Targeted Compliance Framework?

Headline Response

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and Services Australia are supporting the Commonwealth Ombudsman's current investigation into the Targeted Compliance Framework. Services Australia will carefully consider and respond to the Ombudsman's recommendations, in collaboration with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

Facts and Figures

- In July 2024, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations paused cancellations of people's income support for 'persistent mutual obligation failures' after they became concerned that the decisions may not be valid due to the absence of discretion in the decision-making process.
- On 4 December 2024, the Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations advised the Commonwealth Ombudsman that, contrary to legislative changes in 2022 that required consideration of a job seeker's circumstances before deciding to cancel income support, decisions to cancel income support had occurred automatically.
- On 4 February 2025, the Ombudsman announced the commencement of an investigation into the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and Services Australia's (the Agency) cancellation of income support payments under the Targeted Compliance Framework.

If pressed

Why did Services Australia not change its processes in 2022?

- The Agency did not change its processes when the amendment was introduced in April 2022 as the Agency was instructed that the intent of the amendment was to support existing practices, for example, temporary pauses of compliance processes during emergencies such as a pandemic or natural disaster.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Tina Anderson
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Families and Participation Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000043
Date Updated: 11/07/2025 12:06:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 11/07/2025 12:06:00 PM

On automated decision making

- In part, the Targeted Compliance Framework did include human decision-making. Decisions about whether a job seeker had a reasonable excuse for not meeting their requirements were made by a staff member. In the absence of a reasonable excuse from the job seeker, cancellation was then applied without further discretion.

On remediation

- The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and the Agency have finalised remediation for cancellations for 'persistent mutual obligation failures' that occurred between 8 April 2022 and 4 July 2024.

On customer deaths

- It is not a routine practice for the Agency to record a cause of death on an individual's record.
- During the remediation process, no representation was made to the Agency by family members or next of kin in relation to deceased customers.
- The Agency is not aware of any connection between the cancellation of payments and the persons' deaths.

Policy Commitments

- The Government is committed to returning the Targeted Compliance Framework to lawful operation, with additional steps to ensure the protection of the most vulnerable people in our community.

Background

The Targeted Compliance Framework is the framework used by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, employment service providers and the Agency to manage compliance with mutual obligation requirements for individuals receiving income support.

Recent Media

- 4 June 2025 – The Canberra Times
[Ombudsman expands scope of investigation into JobSeeker cancellations](#)

Trust Exchange Proof of Concept

Headline Response

Services Australia is collaborating with the Department of Finance and the Australian Taxation Office on an extension to the Australian Government Digital ID System to support Verifiable Credentials and digital wallets.

As part of this work, Services Australia completed the Trust Exchange proof of concept, testing how Verifiable Credentials and the myGov app wallet can be used by real people in real-life use cases.

Services Australia is ready to support the Department of Finance, who is responsible for the Digital ID Program, on future next steps.

Facts and Figures

- The Trust Exchange Proof of Concept builds on the Government's investment in the Digital ID System, to issue Verifiable Credentials on behalf of government entities.
- The Trust Exchange Proof of Concept includes the ability for customers to share selected, verified details from their credentials within their digital wallet, to access the services they need.
- Four Trust Exchange Proof of Concepts were completed between November 2024 and January 2025:
 - Using Medicare cards, Centrelink Concession cards and Department of Veterans' Affairs Veterans' cards as Verifiable Credentials to register as a new patient at a medical practice.
 - Allowing a user to add identity information from an Australian Passport as a verified ID to their myGov App wallet.
 - Using a Verifiable Credential (derived from the date of birth on the user's ImmiCard) to prove that the holder is over 18 years old, to enter a licenced premises.
 - Using a Verifiable Credential of the Medicare Card to support the identity checking processes when registering as a new customer at a bank.
- In May 2025, an independent review found that the proof of concept achieved its outcomes. The findings from the proof of concept are now informing the design of a second phase.

Contact: Lisa Jansen	Cleared by: Jonathon Thorpe
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Customer and Staff Digital Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000055
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 1:44:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 1:44:00 PM

- The Proof of Concept aims to give individuals control over the information they share. This will limit the need for third parties to store government-issued credentials, including ID documents, cards and certificates - reducing the potential privacy impact of data breaches.
- The Proof of Concept tested a decentralised solution, where the individual's credentials remain at the originating source, and are only made available on the individual's personal device. This means there is no central store of ID documents, entitlement cards or credentials.

Policy Commitments

- In the 2024-25 Budget, the Government invested \$23.4 million for the Department of Finance, the Australian Taxation Office and Services Australia to pilot the use of government digital wallets and Verifiable Credentials. Services Australia was allocated \$11.4 million in the 2024–25 financial year to develop a Proof of Concept to extend the Digital ID Exchange to support Verifiable Credentials.

Vaccine Claims

COVID-19 Vaccine Claims Scheme

Issue

How many COVID-19 vaccine claims are still being worked on at Services Australia?

Headline Response

The COVID-19 Vaccine Claims Scheme demonstrates the Government's commitment to supporting individuals throughout the approved vaccine program. Claim processing times vary due to complexity of evidence provided and where medical or legal expertise is deemed necessary.

Talking Points

CLAIMS		
Claims in Progress	In progress	570
	Need further information	247
	Total claims in progress	817
Claims Finalised	Withdrawn	1,048
	Not payable	2,602
	Paid	495
	Total claims finalised	4,145
Total Claims Received		4,962

- The COVID-19 Vaccine Claims Scheme (the Scheme) provides compensation in cases of moderate to severe adverse reactions for Therapeutic Goods Administration approved COVID-19 vaccines.
- AstraZeneca, Pfizer, Moderna and Novavax COVID-19 vaccines are covered under the Scheme.
- Services Australia (the Agency) administers the Scheme on behalf of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, which maintains policy responsibility.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Cathy Toze
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Capability and Partnered Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000044
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 3:27:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 3:27:00 PM

Vaccine Claims

- Ten clinical conditions and administration-related injuries are covered under the Scheme. Compensation is payable where all eligibility criteria are met, including the hospitalisation requirement and minimum losses.
- On 24 September 2024, the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing updated the Scheme policy to broaden the review of decision rights for customers.
- On 30 September 2024, the Scheme closed to new claims.
- As at 30 June 2025, 495 claims have been paid to the value of \$45.8 million.
- The Agency will continue to assess all claims received on or before 30 September 2024.
- If individuals have queries on the progress of their claim, the Agency can be contacted on 1800 813 167 or by email at:
COVID19.vaccine.claims.scheme@servicesaustralia.gov.au.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

The Government established the COVID-19 Vaccine Claims Scheme to provide further assurance and confidence to patients and health professionals in the COVID-19 vaccine rollout.

The Scheme responded to calls from peak bodies – including the Australian Medical Association and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, and medical indemnity insurers – for extended medical indemnity coverage for health professionals and their patients given the unique nature of the pandemic and response.

The Scheme is intended to provide a similar level of compensation to what individuals would receive through a court-based personal injury claim, without the need to pursue costly and time-consuming litigation. However, individuals can seek compensation through the courts either as an alternative to compensation under the Scheme or simultaneously with the Agency.

There has been parliamentary interest on Scheme payout amounts, calculations and timeframes for claim determinations. The Agency releases data around the Scheme periodically, ensuring the privacy of individuals is not compromised.

The Scheme does not have an overall cap on compensation paid to eligible claimants. The Commonwealth pays all payable claims under the Scheme.

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Comcare charge against Services Australia for Airport West matter

Issue

Why has Services Australia been charged by the Health and Safety Regulator over the stabbing of a staff member?

Headline Response

Services Australia has cooperated with Comcare during its 2-year investigation. The matter is now before the Magistrates Court and it is not appropriate for the Government to comment on the matter at this stage.

Facts and Figures

- On 23 May 2023, Elijah Chase entered the Airport West Service Centre and stabbed a staff member, Joanne Cassar.
- On the same day, Services Australia (the Agency) notified Comcare of a serious incident. Comcare investigators attended the site to commence a monitoring compliance activity. Following the site visit, Comcare commenced an investigation.
- On 24 May 2023, the former Minister for Government Services, the Hon Bill Shorten announced the engagement of the former Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police, Mr Graham Ashton AM APM, to conduct a review of the Agency's security risk management practices.
- In July 2023, Mr Ashton concluded his Security Risk Management Review and made 44 recommendations.
- On 13 October 2023, the former Minister announced that the Government would act on all 44 recommendations. The Agency commenced a Security Risk Management Review Program to implement the recommendations.

Policy Commitments

- The Government has committed \$361 million, \$46.9 million through the 2023–24 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook and \$314.1 million over the 2024–25 and 2025–26 financial years through the 2024–25 Budget to the Agency to respond to the Security Risk Management Review.

Contact: s22 and s22	Cleared by: Randall Brugeaud
Contact No: s22 and s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Wellbeing and HR Support, and Legal Services Divisions	PDR Number: QB25-000058
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 4:25:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 4:25:00 PM

Background

Between 25 May 2023 and October 2024, Comcare issued the Agency with statutory notices requiring the Agency to produce documents and answer questions. The Agency responded to all notices and produced over 1,000 documents.

The Agency has knowledge of Comcare having conducted interviews with 30 Agency workers.

On 7 March 2024, Comcare advised the Agency that it had received a request for Comcare to prosecute an alleged work health and safety breach regarding the incident. Comcare are not obliged to and did not advise who requested for the Agency to be prosecuted. Comcare advised that its investigation was ongoing.

On 20 November 2024, the Comcare inspector advised the Agency that he had reached the view there were reasonable grounds to believe the Agency may have committed criminal offences under the Act. The Agency declined Comcare's invitation to participate in a voluntary interview.

On 22 May 2025, Comcare filed and served on the Agency a charge and summons alleging that the Commonwealth (through the Agency) failed to comply with its health and safety duty and that failure exposed one or more individuals to the risk of death or serious injury.

The charge alleges the Agency failed to take five measures to protect workers, relating to security guard staffing, managed entry into the Service Centre and sharing of images of aggressive customers.

The first mention scheduled for 1 July 2025 was adjourned. The next mention is on 24 September 2025 at the Broadmeadows Magistrates Court.

Maddocks and Garry Livermore KC are engaged to advise and represent the Agency in the proceedings.

Public comment about the charge, or the safety and security enhancements made by the Agency since the incident in direct response to a question about the charge, could be criticised as interfering with the proceedings.



Government agency charged after worker assault

26 May 2025

Services Australia has been charged with breaching federal work health and safety laws after a worker was violently attacked at a Melbourne Centrelink office.

Following a Comcare investigation, the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions has filed a single charge alleging Services Australia failed to comply with its duties under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act).

The incident happened at the Airport West Centrelink office on 23 May 2023. A Centrelink worker suffered serious injuries when they were stabbed by an individual at the workplace.

Comcare's investigation found that Services Australia failed to comply with its primary health and safety duty to ensure, so far as was reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers (section 19(1) of the WHS Act).

The charge alleges Services Australia failed to undertake a range of measures to eliminate or minimise the risk of physical violence to workers, including:

- Providing at least two uniformed security guards at the workplace at all times, including one guard inside the public entrance
- Managing entry to the workplace
- Giving the service centre manager the authority to decide whether managed entry to the workplace should be implemented and remain in place.

The charge is a Category 2 criminal offence under the WHS Act, carrying a maximum penalty of \$1.5 million.

The matter is listed for mention in the Broadmeadows Magistrates' Court on 1 July 2025.

Media contact

E: media@comcare.gov.au

Services Australia 2025-26 Budget Measures

Headline Response

The goal of Services Australia is to make government services simple, so people can get on with their lives.

As part of the 2025-26 Portfolio Budget Statements, the Government has provided Services Australia with additional funding for Budget measures of \$53.2 million in 2025-26 and a total of \$173.7 million from 2025-26 to 2028-29.

BUDGET MEASURES LED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, DISABILITY AND AGEING

Strengthening Medicare

- This measure will expand eligibility for all GP bulk billing incentives to all Australians, supporting GPs to bulk bill an additional 15 million people. The measure is expected to increase the GP bulk billing rate from 77.4 per cent to 87.6 per cent.
- This measure will also implement the Stronger Medicare Bulk Billing Clinics Program, which provides an additional payment valued at 12.5 per cent of Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) benefits for GP non-referred attendance services if practices commit to bulk bill all of these services.
- This measure will provide MRI licences to 3 hospitals from 1 July 2025:
 - Lakeview Private, Norwest NSW,
 - Barwon Health North, Geelong VIC, and
 - Sandringham Hospital, Sandringham VIC.
- This measure will also list new and amended services on the MBS.
- Services Australia (the Agency) has received \$214.5 million from 2025-26 to 2028-29 to implement this measure.

Strengthening Medicare – Women's Health

- This measure increases access to long-acting reversible contraception MBS items, including:
 - Increase the MBS fee for 4 existing MBS items.
 - Create 3 new MBS items for nurse practitioners to use for long-acting reversible contraception items.

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Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: CFO Division	PDR Number: QB25-000046
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 1:11:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 1:11:00 PM

- Create 2 new MBS items that provide a percentage additional fee loading (at 40 per cent) to encompass the existing 4 long-acting reversible contraception items.
- Services Australia has received \$2.9 million in 2025-26 and \$3.8 million from 2025-26 to 2028-29 to administer this measure.

Strengthening Medicare – Expanding Medicare Urgent Care Clinics

- This measure will boost the Medicare Urgent Care Clinics program with a further 50 Medicare Urgent Care Clinics (bringing the total to 137 nationally).
- This measure will also extend MBS billing for 10 state-funded urgent care sites in Victoria and extend the Batemans Bay Medicare Urgent Care Clinic's opening hours.
- Services Australia has received \$2.4 million from 2025-26 to 2027-28 to cover MBS flow-on costs associated with the additional clinics.

Strengthening Medicare – Health Workforce

- This measure will help attract more doctors to vocational GP training by allowing more leave types for GP registrars.
- This includes:
 - 5 days of paid leave per year to prepare for exams and assessments
 - 20 weeks of paid parental leave for eligible GP registrars
 - a \$30,000 incentive payment to first-year GP registrars on Commonwealth-funded pathways, paid in monthly instalments, and
 - indexation of existing non-cash payments (NCP), consistent with Wage Cost Index.
- Services Australia has received \$1.3 million from 2025-26 through to 2028-29 to support the implementation of this measure.

Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme – New and Amended Listings

- The Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme provides subsidised access to medicines to Australian residents and overseas visitors from countries under Reciprocal Health Care Agreements.
- The Agency has received \$0.5 million from the 2025–26 financial year through to the 2028–29 financial year to list new medicines on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and expands access to others. It will provide better treatment and improved health for Australians.
- The Agency also received \$0.4 million in 2024-25 for this measure.

Improving Access to Medicines and Pharmacy Programs

- This measure will strengthen pharmaceutical services within Australia through:
 - changing the wholesale mark-up tiers of pharmaceutical benefits, and
 - continuing the mandate to use an electronic prescribing system for all dangerous and high-cost drugs.
- The wholesale mark-up is paid directly to community pharmacies, who then pass on to their relevant wholesaler.
- The mandate for electronic prescribing was introduced in the 2023-24 Budget to increase patient safety and reduce inappropriate access to dangerous drugs. This measure continues this mandate to 30 June 2026.
- This measure builds on the 2024-25 Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements measure *New Government Offer for a Pharmaceutical Wholesaler Agreement*.
- Services Australia has received \$0.8 million in 2025-26 to implement this measure.

CROSS PORTFOLIO BUDGET MEASURES**Savings from External Labour – Further Extension**

- This measure extends the 2024-25 Budget measure Savings from External Labour – extension to 2028-29.
- This measure will harvest \$54.4 million from the Services Australia Budget in 2028-29 as a result of savings from external labour utilised by the Agency.

BUDGET MEASURES LED BY THE NATIONAL INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS AGENCY**Closing the Gap – Further Investments**

- This measure will re-profile funding for the Community Development Program.
- The re-profile of funding reduced the Agency's budget by \$2.8 million in 2024-25 and by \$7.1 million in 2025-26, before an \$11.8 million increase in the Agency's budget in 2026-27.

BUDGET MEASURES LED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**Building Australia's Future – Improving Outcomes in Australian Schools**

- This measure is for Services Australia to update websites and systems for the new 3-day guarantee of the childcare subsidy. Families will get 3 days of Child Care Subsidy per week without needing to complete an activity test.
- Services Australia will be partially funded via a Section 74 arrangement with the Department of Education for this measure.

PRE-ELECTION ECONOMIC AND FISCAL OUTLOOK MEASURES**Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme**

- This measure provides a 25 per cent increase in rates of assistance over two years to the Tasmanian Freight Equalisations Scheme.
- The Agency has been provided \$3.5 million in 2025-26 and \$0.5 million in 2026-27 to provide updates to information and communications technology systems, new communications products and to process additional claims under the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme.

Services Australia Call Wait Times & Processing Wait Times

Issue

What action is the Government taking to address wait times for payments and services?

Headline Response

To ensure Services Australia was able to sustainably deliver services to Australians, government funding was increased to support an additional 3,000 frontline staff in the latter part of 2023 and into January 2024. This has brought service delivery performance back into expected timeframes. Services Australia continues to make improvements to its services to support Australians in need.

Facts and Figures

- Following the injection of an extra 3,000 staff approximately 18 months ago, Services Australia (the Agency) has made significant improvements in the delivery of services.
- These extra staff helped reduce call wait times, significantly reduced congestion messaging and vastly improved processing times across nearly every work type.
- Since these new staff commenced, the Agency has reduced Centrelink claims from over 238,100 (or 66 per cent) to just over 123,200. Medicare activities have dropped by over 622,000 activities (or 73 per cent) to just under 234,000. Since 30 November 2023, Child Support work on hand has reduced by 59,234 activities (or 31.8 per cent).
- The Agency is now answering Centrelink calls approximately 5 minutes faster and Medicare customer calls 14 minutes faster than in January 2024. Child Support calls are 6 minutes slower than in January 2024. Congestion messaging has reduced by 85 per cent.
- These reductions have enabled further improvements, like offering callbacks on some phone lines, so customers don't have to stay on the phone while waiting to get to the front of the queue.
- Additionally, most customers (67.5 per cent) are being served within 15 minutes at 318 service centres across Australia.

Contact: Mark Cousins	Cleared by: Bo Robertson
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Operations Management Division	PDR Number: QB25-000035
Date Updated: 28/07/2025 10:13:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 28/07/2025 10:13:00 AM

Calls & Processing

If pressed on current delivery times

- The Agency hosts approximately 8.9 million Centrelink, Medicare and Child Support customer contacts each week across face-to-face, digital and telephony channels.
 - Of these, approximately 88 per cent arrive by digital channels and 12 per cent by face-to-face service centres or over the phone.
- In the last 7 days ending 27 July 2025, 1.4 million customer outcomes were completed by staff:
 - 202,000 people were served in person at one of 318 face-to-face service centres.
 - 243,000 Centrelink calls were answered, 65,200 claims and 281,000 non-claim work items were finalised.
 - 131,000 Health calls were answered, 288,000 claims and 31,400 non-claim work items were finalised.
 - 28,800 Child Support calls were answered, and 84,600 work items were finalised.
 - 290,000 calls received were self-managed by customers through phone self-service.
- In the last 7 days ending 27 July 2025, the average speed of answer for:
 - Centrelink was approximately 18 minutes.
 - Medicare Customer was approximately 15 minutes.
 - Medicare Provider was 6 minutes.
 - Child Support was 16 minutes.
- During the 2024-25 financial year, the Agency processed more than 484.1 million Centrelink claims and Medicare services, and 3.8 million Child Support activities, supporting families to help with the costs of raising children.

If pressed on Social Security Processing Improvements

- The Agency has made significant inroads to reduce processing times. Across Social Security, the average days to process activities are as follows:

Social Security claim type	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
ABSTUDY - Non-Schooling A	28	25
ABSTUDY - Pensioner Education Supplement	11	7
ABSTUDY - Schooling A	22	15
Additional Child Care Subsidy Child Wellbeing Application	11	4
Additional Child Care Subsidy Child Wellbeing Certificate –	12	4

Calls & Processing

Social Security claim type	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Exceptional Circumstances		
Additional Child Care Subsidy Child Wellbeing Determination Exceptional Circumstances	12	4
Additional Child Care Subsidy Grandparent	47	23
Additional Child Care Subsidy Temporary Financial Hardship	51	21
Additional Child Care Subsidy Transition to Work	68	26
Age Pension	76	37
Assistance for Isolated Children	0	0
Austudy	56	32
Carer Allowance	42	12
Carer Payment	54	15
Child Care Subsidy	24	8
Crisis Payment	3	1
Dad and Partner Pay	63	4
Disability Support Pension	93	52
Double Orphan Pension	8	5
Essential Medical Equipment	42	19
Ex-Carer Allowance (Child) Health Care Card	8	5
Family Tax Benefit Lump Sum	13	3
Family Tax Benefit New Claim	47	8
Fares Allowance	0	0
Farm Household Allowance	48	35
Foster Child Health Care Card	22	14
Home Equity Access Scheme	65	60
JobSeeker Payment	22	9
Low Income Card	53	20
Mobility Allowance	29	24
Paid Parental Leave	25	3
Parenting Payment Partnered	52	22
Parenting Payment Single	28	18
Pensioner Education Supplement	20	21
Seniors Health Card	42	20
Special Benefit	20	14
Status Resolution Support Services	11	12
Stillborn Baby Payment	8	5
Tertiary Access Payment	42	16
Youth Allowance Apprentice	62	37
Youth Allowance Jobseekers	26	11
Youth Allowance Students	54	29

Calls & Processing

If pressed on Disability Support Pension Processing Improvements

- The Agency is committed to improving service delivery for people with disability.
- Disability Support Pension claims are very complex and take longer to assess as they are lifelong payments, and, as such, more information is often required than for other income support payments.
- As at 30 June 2025, when compared to the end of the 2023-24 financial year, Disability Support Pension claims on hand have reduced by 14,900 (55 per cent) and over standard claims by 10,100 (94 per cent).
 - Of the 12,000 claims on hand 3,700 (31 per cent) are actionable and 8,300 (69 per cent) are on hold awaiting further information or assessment.
- Around 68 per cent of customers receive another payment (e.g. Jobseeker payments) while waiting on a Disability Support Pension outcome.
- Agency decisions on Disability Support Pension claims are informed by comprehensive assessments by its qualified health professionals. Assessments are based on each person's circumstances and consider all available medical evidence from treating doctors and health professionals, including specialists.
- The Agency prioritises and fast-tracks Disability Support Pension claims for people experiencing financial hardship or for those who are likely to be manifestly eligible, including due to a terminal illness.
- Some Disability Support Pension claims can take longer than others for varying reasons, including the need for comprehensive medical assessments, complex circumstances, or time required to get more details to help finalise claims.

Disability Support Pension Claims on Hold	
Awaiting the return of an external medical assessment	1,400
Awaiting an internal Medical Assessment	1,000
Referred for a Job Capacity Assessment	4,200
Awaiting customer to supply information	600
Other	1,100

If pressed on Age Pension Processing Improvements

- The Agency is committed to improving service delivery for older Australians.
- Age Pension claims are very complex and take longer to assess as they are lifelong payments, and as such, more information is often required than for other income support payments.
- As at 30 June 2025, when compared to the end of the 2023-24 financial year, Age Pension claims on hand have reduced by 10,800 (37 per cent) and over standard claims by 8,800 (53 per cent).

Calls & Processing

- Of the 18,500 claims on hand 6,700 (36 per cent) are actionable and 11,800 (64 per cent) are on hold.
- Claims may be placed on hold due to additional information required from the customer. Many customers have complicated financial affairs (e.g. family or business trusts, investments, superannuation, real estate assets, foreign pensions and inheritances) requiring assessment against the income and assets test.
- These assessments can take an extended period to conduct and complete the corresponding report/s.
- Delays can often occur if customers fail to provide all the required documentation in a timely manner.
- The Agency continues to train more staff in this complex work and expects to see the average processing time fall even further as their proficiency grows.
- The Agency urges anyone waiting on these claim types to go online and check there are no tasks that need to be completed.
- Those nearing Age Pension age can apply up to 13 weeks earlier so their claim can be assessed before they turn Age Pension age.

Age Pension Claims on Hold	
Awaiting customer to supply information	5,700
Awaiting complex assessments of income and assets for specialised staff	5,200
Awaiting Centrelink International Services Assessment	100
Other	800

If pressed on Health (Medicare) Processing Improvements

- As at 30 June 2025, the Agency has made significant inroads to reduce processing times. Across Health, the average days to process activities are as follows:

Health Services - Claims	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Aged Care - Customer	52	72
Aged Care - Customer - Home Care	42	44
Aged Care - Customer - Residential Care	46	45
Aged Care - Provider	10	6
Aged Care - Provider - Home Care	33	1
Aged Care - Provider - Residential Care	0	1
Australian Immunisation Register	6	4
Australian Organ Donor Register	10	3
Bulk Bill	3	1
Complex Drugs	6	1
Continence Aids Payment Scheme	49	16
Disaster Health Care Assistance Scheme	14	12

Calls & Processing

Health Services - Claims	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
eBusiness	19	12
External Breast Prosthesis	6	3
Healthcare Identifiers	8	6
Incentives	0	0
Medicare Eligibility & Enrolment	49	10
Medicare Entitlement Statement	82	27
Medicare Safety Net	15	17
Organisation Register	12	14
Patient Claims	9	2
Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme Patient Refunds	119	24
Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme Safety Net	98	12
Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme	6	3
Provider Registration	17	8
Simplified Billing	4	2
Veterans Affairs Processing	5	3

Health Services – Non-Claims	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Aged Care - Customer	18	21
Aged Care - Customer - Residential Care	148	163
Aged Care - Provider	96	15
Aged Care - Provider - Home Care	70	17
Aged Care Provider - Residential Care	0	1
Australian Immunisation Register	10	2
Australian Organ Donor Register	20	2
Boutique	36	3
Bulk Bill	154	144
Complex Drugs	4	1
Continence Aids Payment Scheme	60	18
eBusiness	89	51
eServices	75	16
Healthcare Identifiers	16	25
Home Vacation Review	151	182
Incentives	11	3
Medicare Eligibility & Enrolment	28	13
Medicare Entitlement Statement	69	19
Medicare Payments - Customer	54	14
Medicare Payments - Provider	172	182
Medicare Safety Net	194	202
My Medicare		11
Organisation Register	66	4
Patient Claims	63	78
Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme	7	3

Calls & Processing

Health Services – Non-Claims	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Provider Registration	8	21
Simplified Billing	247	233
Veterans Affairs Processing	30	35

If pressed on Medicare pressure points

- The Medicare Entitlement Statement peak period commenced in July and will extend through September/October. An additional 70 staff are being upskilled in Medicare Entitlement Statement to help manage the expected increase in workload, increasing the overall workforce to just over 200.
 - There were 2,500 Medicare Entitlement Statement claims processed per day of the fourth week in the 2025-26 financial year, compared to 2,500 per day for the comparative week in the 2024-25 financial year.
- Veterans Affairs Processing continues to be a focus for the Agency, with upskilling of existing staff occurring to boost capacity. The learning pathway for Veterans Affairs is complex and requires staff to learn a number of separate processes to become fully proficient.
 - There have been significant improvements to the Veterans' Affairs work on hand during the 2024-25 financial year. As at 30 June 2025, there was 5,725 items on hand, compared to 15,053 items on hand at 30 June 2024.
 - There has been a significant increase in the number of Veterans' Affairs claims made through the online channel. This channel is more efficient for both claimants and processing staff. There has been an increase of 10.6 per cent of Veterans' Affairs claims received via the online channel for the 2024-25 financial year with 1.76 million lodged through the online channel, as opposed to 1.57 million in the 2023-24 financial year.

If pressed on Aged Care

- The Agency is committed to improving service delivery for Aged Care customers in preparation for the Aged Care Reform from 1 November this year.
- As at 30 June 2025, when compared to the end of the 2023-24 financial year, there are 5,900 (46 per cent) more Aged Care work claims on hand.
- The Agency has been focussed on completing the older and more complex work for our customers. This has meant the average days to process increased by 21 days for Aged Care Customers and by 2 days for Home Care.
- Some Aged Care claims can take longer than others for varying reasons including complex financial circumstances, or additional time required to gather further details to help finalise claims.

Calls & Processing

- The Agency has expanded its workforce to support the upcoming Aged Care Reform, increasing from 285 in July 2024 to 540 staff in July 2025 (an increase of 90 per cent or 255).

If pressed on Formal Reviews

- The Agency is committed to improving service delivery for people who lodge a formal review.
- Formal reviews are very complex and are carried out by specialised Authorised Review Officers.
- As at 30 June 2025, there were 72,772 formal reviews on hand. When compared to the end of the 2023-24 financial year, there are 18,410 (25 per cent) more formal reviews on hand.
- The Agency is boosting its Authorised Review Officer workforce to target additional effort on more complex and sensitive reviews with recruitment efforts commencing from 30 June 2025.

If pressed on Child Support

- The Agency is committed to improving service delivery for people who access Child Support.
- The Agency continues to reduce the Child Support backlog, and work on hand is around 129,836, which is 9.7 per cent (14,030) lower compared to 28 June 2024. Of this, 51,031 are work items relating to objections, changes of assessment and care changes.
- The Agency received further funding in the 2024-25 Budget which has helped to lift performance. The Agency has boosted its Child Support workforce by around 500 (or 37 per cent) during the 2024-25 financial year, enabling the upskilling of more experienced staff to help recover backlogs and service standard for the more complex priorities.
- Child Support is a complex program and staff take time to build capability and confidence in this work. As staff embed their skills, work on hand will continue to reduce.
- Child Support matters often take longer to assess as they are complex and sensitive scenarios, often involving disagreements between separated parties.
- Across Child Support, the average days to process activities are as follows.

Child Support Activities	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
New Registrations	31	35
Change of Assessment applications	83	76

Calls & Processing

Child Support Activities	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Objections (Domestic)	97	194
Objections (International)	122	125
Workload (intrays)	17	17

If pressed on 2021-22 and 2023-24 Performance and Data Comparisons

- The data referenced by some media outlets does not reflect current service delivery performance. Also, it does not include important context necessary for interpreting trends in wait times accurately over time– such as the impact of additional temporary staff during COVID-19.
- Additionally, some of the data used by media outlets reflects the full 2023-24 financial year. This includes 6 months before the progressive recruitment and onboarding of the additional staff when the Agency acknowledges that performance was not at expected levels.
- Since this injection of staff, both claim processing times and call wait times have progressively improved.
- For example, overall Centrelink call wait times have fallen from an average of more than 30 minutes in 2023-24 to just over 21 minutes in 2024-25. For Health customers, its nearly halved, from almost 23 minutes to just over 13 minutes over the same period. Almost half of all Centrelink calls were answered within 15 minutes.
- Congestion messaging has reduced significantly from around 15 million in the 2023-24 financial year to 2 million in 2024-25, allowing more customers to access services when they need it.
- The initial extra funding the Agency received for additional staff was specifically for Social Security and Health, so that's where the improvements have been delivered so far.
- Although Child Support call wait times have increased, the Agency received further funding in the 2024-25 Budget, which will help lift performance across Child Support.
- The Agency will continue to onboard new staff in Child Support to address backlogs and expect to see improvements as these staff are fully trained.
- The Agency has seen significant improvements in the 2024-25 financial year. This data is available on data.gov.au.

Calls & Processing

CLAIM	AVERAGE PROCESSING TIME			% change (from 2018- 19 FY)
	Days to process (2018-19 FY)	Days to process (2023-24 FY)	Days to process (2024-25 FY)	
Age Pension	75 days	76 days	37 days	-50% ▼
ABSTUDY Schooling	15 days	22 days	15 days	0%
Carer Allowance	59 days	42 days	12 days	-80% ▼
Carer Payment	64 days	54 days	15 days	-77% ▼
Crisis Payment	1 day	3 day	1 day	0
Commonwealth Seniors Health Card	73 days	42 days	20 days	-73% ▼
Disability Support Pension	88 days	93 days	53 days	-40% ▼
Family Tax Benefit New Claim	36 days	47 days	8 days	-78% ▼
Family Tax Benefit Lump Sum	22 days	13 days	3 days	-86% ▼
JobSeeker Payment	24 days (Newstart)	22 days	9 days	-63% ▼
Low Income Card	31 days	53 days	20 days	-35% ▼
Paid Parental Leave	21 days	25 days	3 days	-86% ▼
Parenting Payment Single	48 days	28 days	18 days	-63% ▼
Parenting Payment Partnered	58 days	52 days	22 days	-62% ▼
Youth Allowance Jobseekers	27 days	26 days	11 days	-59% ▼

CALLS	2018-19 FY	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Congestion messaging	1,331,654*	14,975,078	2,173,375
Average Speed of Answer (Agency wide)	10:31	19:37	15:22
Average Speed of Answer (Social Security and Welfare)	15:32	30:37	21:48
Average Speed of Answer (Health Customer)	6:59	22:49	13:12
Average Speed of Answer (Child Support)	12:45	10:50	15:24
Calls Answered within 15 minutes (Social Security and Welfare)	8,713,535 (53.7%)	4,168,418 (43.7%)	5,112,733 (46.9%)
Total Handled Calls (Agency wide)	50,115,614*	53,923,043	44,269,308

*During 2018-2019 financial year, the Agency used call blocking. This provided a busy signal to customers and is not included in congestion messages or handled calls numbers.

Centrepay Reforms and Regulatory Actions

Issue

What action is the Government taking to ensure customers who use Centrepay are protected from financial exploitation?

Headline Response

In December 2024, the Government announced its support of Services Australia's proposed reforms to Centrepay, which focus on ensuring Centrepay helps Australians and reduces financial risk. These proposed reforms are expected to be announced in the coming weeks and implemented progressively from November 2025.

Facts and Figures

- In the 2024–25 financial year, 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025:
 - On average, 609,450 customers used the Centrepay service per month.
 - There was a total of 23 million Centrepay deductions worth \$3 billion.
 - 81.9 per cent of the value of deductions through Centrepay were for accommodation and utilities.
 - As at 30 June 2025, there were 10,969 approved Centrepay businesses.
 - 1.88 per cent of the value of all Centrepay deductions made were for consumer leases (down from 7.9 per cent in the 2020-2021 financial year).
- The proposed reforms aim to enhance customer protections and minimise the risk of financial exploitation by:
 - Removing high-risk or underutilised service reasons.
 - Strengthening policy and contracts to impose mandatory conditions on businesses.
 - Strengthening business application and onboarding processes.
 - Implementing strict compliance and complaints processes to ensure accountability.
- Remaining Centrepay products and services will continue with improved safeguards to reduce financial harm.

Contact: John Dunne	Cleared by: Cathy Toze
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Communities	PDR Number: QB25-000036
Date Updated: 30/07/2025 11:32:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 30/07/2025 11:32:00 AM

- Once a decision is made on the proposed reforms, Services Australia (the Agency) will communicate directly with Centrepay registered businesses and Centrepay customers to outline changes to Centrepay and provide details of the phased implementation.
- The Agency has made significant improvements to Centrepay to prevent exploitation including setting target amounts for certain goods, providing better support for overpayment reimbursements, and introducing a dedicated Centrepay complaints process.
- To maintain the integrity of the Centrepay program, the Agency conducts regular assurance and compliance checks. It acts decisively against businesses found non-compliant with their Centrepay obligations, ensuring customers are safeguarded against financial harm.
- The Agency works closely with regulators, including the Australian Securities and Investments Commission and the Australian Energy Regulator, regarding Centrepay businesses that may breach regulatory requirements.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

Centrepay was first established in 1998 as a voluntary free bill paying service offered by the Agency for Centrelink customers. Centrepay helps reduce vulnerability by ensuring payments occur on time, protects against late fees, and allows customers to access goods and services they may otherwise not get without the guarantee of payment by the Centrepay service. Customers who get an eligible income support payment can use Centrepay to pay for approved goods and services with Centrepay registered businesses.

The Agency supports the Australian Securities and Investments Commission messaging around Stop Orders to prevent certain businesses from establishing new Centrepay deductions. This includes Indy-C Fashion and Accessories Pty Ltd, a household goods business, for non-compliance with the design and distribution obligations, and Coral Coast Distributors (Cairns) Pty Ltd, a household goods business, for similar issues.

The Australian Securities and Investments Commission pursued legal action against Darranda Pty Ltd, a consumer leasing business, for breaching the *National Consumer Credit Protection Act 2009* (Cth) (Credit Act) by operating a business model designed to circumvent consumer protections.

On 19 December 2024, following proceedings by the Australian Energy Regulator, the Federal Court of Australia imposed penalties totalling \$25 million on AGL Retail Energy Limited for failing to comply with Centrepay payment obligations.

Following proactive outbound engagement by the Agency in November 2024, Synergy, an energy and gas retailer in Western Australia, advised the Agency in March 2025 that they had identified customers who had account credits accrued through Centrepay deductions on utility accounts that were now closed.

Since the issue was identified, the Agency has been working collaboratively with Synergy to assist with the return of funds back to customers.

Synergy self-reported this issue to the Western Australia Economic Regulation Authority. Following the Economic Regulation Authority's investigation into this matter, they issued Synergy with a compliance enforcement (rectification) notice for breaching its Electricity Retail Licence.

Services Australia Claims & Payments Figures

Headline Response

As the Government’s primary service delivery agency, Services Australia supports millions of Australians each year by efficiently delivering high quality, accessible services and payments on behalf of government.

Facts and Figures

- Significant figures for the 2024-25 financial year:

CLAIMS	
Centrelink	3.5 million
Medicare (services)	480.6 million
Child support registrations	59,400

PAYMENTS	
Total payments	\$263.0 billion
Centrelink	\$163.8 billion
Medicare	\$97.2 billion
Child support facilitated	\$2.0 billion

CONTACTS	
Online transactions	1.1 billion
Call handled	44.3 million
Face-to-face contacts	10.7 million

- As at 3 July 2025:

AGENCY REACH			
State	Face-to-face Sites	Access Points	Agents
ACT	4	0	0
NSW	102	42	69
NT	16	8	58
QLD	70	32	81
SA	24	21	27
TAS	10	5	15
VIC	59	30	43
WA	33	51	74
Total	318	189	367

Contact: Michelle Saunders	Cleared by: Tenille Collins
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Data and Analytics	PDR Number: QB25-000034
Date Updated: 28/07/2025 10:21:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 28/07/2025 10:21:00 AM

Claims & Payments

- As at 27 July 2025:

MYGOV SIGN-INS	
Peak this financial year (FY) to date	2.8 million in one day (15 July 2025)
Peak in last Fortnight	2.8 million in one day (15 July 2025)
Average in 2025–26 FY to date (26 July 2025)	1.9 million per day
Average in 2024–25 FY	979,000 per day

MYGOV APP REGISTRATIONS	
Total registrations to date (26 July 2025)	8.2 million
Registrations for the week ending (27 July 2025)	110,000

DISASTER PAYMENTS ACTIVATED IN THE 2024-25 FY AS AT 27 JULY 2025	
NSW East Coast Severe Weather and Flooding – May 2025	
• Claims Granted	180,000
• Paid	\$212.4 million
• Individuals supported	245,000
• Portion of online claims	96%
• Calls answered	47,500
Western Queensland Heavy Rain & Flooding – March 2025	
• Claims Granted	2,000
• Paid	\$2.7 million
• Individuals supported	2,600
• Portion of online claims	96%
• Calls answered	1,200
New South Wales Ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred – March 2025	
• Claims Granted	43,700
• Paid	\$66.6 million
• Individuals supported	58,100
• Proportion of online claims	96%
Queensland Ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred – March 2025	
• Claims Granted	287,000
• Paid	\$447.7 million
• Individuals supported	388,000
• Proportion of online claims	97%

Claims & Payments

North Queensland Floods – January-February 2025	
• Claims Granted	55,200
• Paid	\$70.7 million
• Individuals supported	77,700
• Proportion of online claims	95%
Ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred – March 2025 / North Queensland Floods – January-February 2025	
• Calls answered	142,000
Bushfires in Western Victoria – December 2024	
• Claims Granted	200
• Paid	\$699,000
• Individuals supported	200
• Portion of online claims	97%
• Calls answered	300
Far West NSW Storms and Power Outages – October 2024	
• Claims Granted	100
• Paid	\$437,000
• Individuals supported	100
• Proportion of online claims	99 %
• Calls answered	500

*NSW and QLD ex TC share the same telephony queue. *From 11th March 2025 NSW and QLD ex TC DRA share the same telephony queue as Nth QLD Floods DRA – figures cannot be separated.

Social Security Claims Completed – 2024–25 Financial Year

Service Reason	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	UNK	VIC	WA
Families and Child Care	22,701	421,982	13,098	308,194	91,584	25,593	155	379,735	142,017
ACCS CWB Application	959	20,205	339	21,742	5,161	1,111	11	32,713	8,198
ACCS Grandparent	26	659	16	660	228	52	-	680	270
ACCS Temporary Financial Hardship	44	926	18	855	193	45	-	997	359
ACCS Transition to Work	29	756	39	892	260	69	-	736	402
ACCS CWB Certificate - Exc Circ - SA	276	4,931	133	4,152	796	173	<5	4,287	1,524
ACCS CWB Determination - Exc Circ - SA	150	4,329	135	4,192	1,148	353	-	3,359	1,605
Child Care Subsidy	7,496	131,101	3,639	92,905	26,492	6,515	49	110,533	42,516

Claims & Payments

Service Reason	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	UNK	VIC	WA
Dad and Partner Pay	-	23	<5	<5	<5	-	-	16	<5
Double Orphan Pension	-	33	<5	40	13	<5	-	46	17
Family Tax Benefit Lump Sum	329	10,664	301	7,679	2,506	888	7	9,009	3,938
Family Tax Benefit New Claim	5,387	116,682	5,170	88,457	26,593	8,405	58	101,032	41,038
Foster Child Health Care Card	20	342	8	306	119	26	-	340	141
Paid Parental Leave	7,964	130,879	3,245	85,910	27,943	7,921	27	115,652	41,828
Stillborn Baby Payment	21	452	51	402	130	32	-	335	180
Older Australians, Disabilities and Carers	8,159	229,179	5,318	146,483	55,868	18,050	1,914	175,231	66,824
Age Pension	2,525	75,659	1,299	50,288	18,643	6,338	1,759	57,660	24,828
Carer Allowance	1,266	44,203	1,059	27,646	10,863	3,476	10	35,176	11,185
Carer Payment	773	33,768	878	19,549	7,092	2,365	12	24,283	7,599
Disability Support Pension	1,624	42,396	1,687	30,483	10,417	3,707	111	33,685	11,563
Ex-Carer Allowance (Child) Health Care Card	131	1,408	14	1,223	458	138	-	1,766	596
Mobility Allowance	93	2,220	50	1,847	1,085	196	<5	1,909	710
Pensions Loan Scheme									
Home Equity Access Scheme	81	1,734	23	1,358	549	211	<5	1,531	665
Seniors Health Card	1,666	27,791	308	14,089	6,761	1,619	20	19,221	9,678
Youth, Education and Employment	12,264	310,992	15,101	230,860	70,327	22,389	255	279,181	107,232
Assistance for Isolated Children	50	1,726	288	2,611	481	202	<5	966	1,429
Austudy	577	12,898	231	9,515	3,183	929	14	14,692	4,811
Fares Allowance	44	548	82	785	207	241	<5	422	250

Claims & Payments

Service Reason	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	UNK	VIC	WA
JobSeeker Payment	6,298	159,217	8,315	120,098	36,854	11,287	95	143,623	55,629
Parenting Payment Partnered	508	13,825	746	9,657	3,091	928	<5	13,381	4,265
Parenting Payment Single	917	26,090	1,676	23,023	5,615	1,983	18	19,831	10,772
Pensioner Education Supplement	286	9,722	147	6,153	2,030	750	6	6,107	2,634
Special Benefit	154	4,859	72	2,686	744	171	14	3,808	1,251
Tertiary Access Payment	37	2,775	135	1,921	493	379	<5	2,288	568
Youth Allowance Apprentice	112	3,058	36	1,739	515	182	<5	3,105	803
Youth Allowance Jobseekers	1,011	27,333	2,854	25,460	6,771	2,442	61	20,990	10,646
Youth Allowance Students	2,270	48,941	519	27,212	10,343	2,895	36	49,968	14,174
Remote and ABSTUDY	171	8,779	3,100	7,982	2,248	487	13	2,430	3,234
ABSTUDY - Non-Schooling A	137	5,742	2,693	5,269	997	303	11	1,478	2,312
ABSTUDY - Schooling A	27	1,861	337	1,945	353	81	<5	193	696
ABSTUDY - PES	6	480	62	324	46	16	-	83	113
Farm Household Allowance	<5	696	8	444	852	87	<5	676	113
Cross Programme	3,205	73,301	5,481	67,769	22,422	8,288	104	85,658	33,194
Crisis Payment	1,500	45,768	5,032	43,184	11,965	3,896	62	26,517	20,121
Essential Medical Equipment	86	2,359	38	2,738	1,400	401	<5	1,955	762
Low Income Card	1,613	24,909	411	21,742	9,037	3,991	41	56,931	12,284
Status Resolution Support Services	6	265	-	105	20	-	-	255	27

- UNK refers to claims which location is unknown at the time of claim lodgement.
- To protect individuals' privacy, cell sizes of less than 5 are represented as "<5". Caution should be taken in re-calculating values from suppressed figures as it may provide incorrect results.

Claims & Payments

Strategic Performance Measures

- The Agency measures its performance against 7 Strategic Performance Measures, which outline the Agency's results across its 3 major programs: Social Security, Health, and Child Support.
- As at 31 March 2025, of the 7 Strategic Performance Measures:
 - 4 are On Track
 - 2 are Substantially On Track, and
 - 1 is Partially On Track.

Strategic Performance Measures (SPMs) results and targets				
SPM	Target 2023–24	Result 2023–24	Target 2024–25	FYTD Result to 31 March 2024–25
SPM 1: Customer satisfaction	≥85 out of 100	79.1 out of 100	≥85 out of 100	77.6 out of 100
SPM 2: Customer trust	≥72 out of 100	75.8 out of 100	≥74 out of 100	76.9 out of 100
SPM 3: Administrative correctness of payments – Existing methodology	≥98%	97.8%	≥98%	98.1%
SPM 4: Customers served within 15 minutes	≥70%	55.2%	≥70%	58.9%
SPM 5: Work processed within timeliness standards	≥90%	71.8%	≥90%	89.3%
SPM 6: Availability of digital channels	≥99%	99.9%	≥99%	99.7%
SPM 7: Tasks managed by customers in digital channels	≥82%	91.9%	≥83%	95.1%

On Track	Substantially On Track	Partially On Track
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- SPM 4 Result for the 2023-24 financial year represents 17.5 million customers served within 15 minutes.
- SPM 4 Result for the 2024-25 financial year to date represents 13.4 million customers served within 15 minutes.

Ombudsman Own Motion Investigation and Report into Child Support

Issue

What is the Government doing to address family and domestic violence, in particular, financial abuse in Child Support?

Headline

The Government is committed to supporting customers and staff experiencing family and domestic violence, including financial abuse.

Facts and Figures

- Services Australia (the Agency) has agreed to all 8 of the recommendations made by the Commonwealth Ombudsman's report *Weaponising Child Support: when the system fails* families published on 3 June 2025.
- The Agency will implement many of the recommendations by December 2025, with targeted operational-level changes to take effect within the next 3 months.
- To combat financial abuse over the next 3 months the Agency is:
 - Developing new Child Support staff guidance and a response framework to assist staff to identify, escalate and manage the risk of financial abuse through Child Support.
 - Strengthening the capacity and capability of Child Support debt management and collection so that it can proactively focus on customers who can pay but aren't.
 - Improving the accuracy of income estimates by requesting supporting evidence more often. This will reduce flow-on Child Support overpayments and debts, as well as Family Tax Benefit debts.
 - Improving customer and staff understanding of the Maintenance Action Test and exemption options for Family Tax Benefit payments, through better communication and operational materials that assist customers to receive the financial support they are entitled to.
- The Agency will also be prioritising Child Support service delivery resourcing and performance.
- Policy departments are also considering possible legislative and policy reform across government to address financial abuse risks in Child Support and to improve customer outcomes. Any legislative or policy reforms are a decision for Government.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Cathy Toze
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Families and Participation	PDR Number: QB25-000037
Date Updated: 16/07/2025 12:16:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 16/07/2025 12:16:00 PM

Policy Commitments

- The Government is conducting an audit of key Commonwealth systems to identify areas where they are being weaponised by perpetrators of family and domestic violence and stamp out opportunities for abuse.

Background

The Commonwealth Ombudsman commenced an own motion investigation into financial abuse through Child Support in February 2025. Following the report, Financial abuse: an insidious form of domestic violence, from the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services, and in tandem with an investigation of the Inspector-General of Taxation culminating in the report, Identification and management of financial abuse within the tax system. These reports suggest that financial abuse is pervasive and that perpetrators are weaponising the system to harm the other parent in their Child Support case and, in some instances, their children.

The Agency provided substantial and comprehensive information to support the investigation and was invited to review and comment on the findings and recommendations in April 2025.

The Ombudsman made eight broad ranging recommendations, including developing a publicly available strategy to address financial abuse through Child Support, a comprehensive review of the Change of Assessment process, strengthening Child Support compliance and enforcement programs, improving staff knowledge of financial abuse and pursuing options for legislative reform.

The Agency accepted all 8 recommendations and will consider and progress these in the context of the broader audit of Australian Government systems currently under way and coordinated by the Office for Women, which is focussed on strengthening systems to stamp out opportunities for systems abuse.

Some of the recommendations are not able to be implemented solely by the Agency and are dependent on the Department of Social Services, the Australian Taxation Office and future Government decisions. The Agency worked closely with the Department of Social Services and the Australian Taxation Office in developing the response and is currently collaborating with them to respond to the report, and progress broader legislative and policy changes.

To effectively tackle financial abuse, the Agency will review and uplift existing processes, business and system capabilities, as well as compliance and enforcement strategies. It is important that parallel policy and legislative reforms are also made to more effectively and systemically counter financial abuse and weaponisation and better protect vulnerable customers.

Support for Customers Impacted by Third Party Data Breaches

Issue

How does Services Australia support customers whose information has been impacted by third party data breaches?

Headline Response

Services Australia takes the protection of customer information seriously. Services Australia is committed to protecting customers from identity theft and supporting customers if their personal information has been lost, stolen, or exposed by a third party. Services Australia has procedures for how it responds to third party data breaches or compromised events.

Facts and Figures

- Third party organisations and individuals continue to experience data loss, often as the result of cyber-incidents. These incidents and scams, can result in the exposure of personally identifiable information, including identity credentials. This can expose individuals to the risk of identity theft.
- In some cases, these data breaches can involve Services Australia (the Agency) credentials, such as Medicare cards, or information that could be relevant to accessing a Services Australia record.
- The Agency is committed to protecting customers from identity theft and supporting customers if their personal information has been lost, stolen, or exposed by a third party.
- The Agency has procedures for how it responds to third party data breaches or compromised events. These outline how the Agency works with the third-party entity to enable the Agency to strengthen its controls around customer records.
- Many data breaches are high profile, receive significant media commentary, and/or result in large-scale impacts to mutual customers and organisations.
- The Agency collaborates with the National Office of Cyber Security and other Australian Government agencies and industry experts, such as IDCARE, to respond to data breaches and support impacted customers.
- The Agency provides information to customers about steps they can take to safeguard their personal information, which is publicly available on the Agency's website or by calling the Agency's Scams and Identity Theft Helpdesk.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Sharna Bartley
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Fraud Control and Investigation Division	PDR Number: QB25-000050
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 12:59:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 12:59:00 PM

Data Breaches

- Where appropriate, the Agency applies additional security measures to affected customer records to increase security and reduce the risk of future misuse.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Data Breaches

Background

Under the Notifiable Data Breaches Scheme, any organisation or agency covered by the *Privacy Act 1988*, must notify affected individuals and the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner when a data breach is likely to result in serious harm to an individual whose personal information is involved.

Third parties are responsible for managing their own data breaches. The Agency is not responsible for the handling of the incidents, including customer contact.

The Agency works with the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner to prepare any required program protocols for data breach events, which allows the Agency to match data provided with customer records in a way that complies with the Australian Privacy Principles and the *Privacy Act 1988* and remains consistent with good privacy practice.

The data matching process enables the Agency to identify customer records at increased risk of identity compromise and allows the Agency to apply additional security measures to these records where appropriate.

Timeline of significant Data Breaches and Agency consultation

Date	Event
August 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bloom Hearing Specialists – a national hearing specialist. • Meli – a not-for-profit community centre that provides services such as support for family violence, youth, and housing.
September 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texas Family Medical Centre – Family and general medical practice.
October 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Nursing Home Foundation – provides accommodation and community care services for elderly people from Chinese and Southeast Asian backgrounds.
November 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jewish Care – provides a range of aged care, in-home services, social services, disability support and Holocaust survivor support programs.
December 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muswellbrook Shire Council – a local government area in NSW. • Waverley Christian College – a co-educational independent Christian school.
January 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spectrum Medical Imaging – an independent radiology practice.
February 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genea – IVF clinic providing fertility treatments.
March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southern Regional Medical Group – Family and general medical practice.

Data Breaches

Date	Event
April 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hurwitz Geller – a chartered accountancy practice.• Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland – represents the needs and goals of multicultural communities, and provides aged care, health and employment programs.
May 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr Paul B Sparks – Cardiologist & Electrophysiologist at The Royal Melbourne Hospital and Director of Electrophysiology at Epworth Hospital.

Debt Management and Recovery**Issue**

What action is Services Australia taking to recover overpayments and support customers who have been overpaid?

Headline Response

Services Australia provides support to customers to assist them in being paid the correct amount. Customers with a debt can self-manage debt repayments online using the myGov app, Services Australia's 'Money you owe' service, or by contacting Services Australia by phone or face to face in one of its Service Centres.

Facts and Figures

- When customers have been overpaid, Services Australia (the Agency) provides several options to help people manage and repay their debt, taking into account the person's individual circumstances. These include:
 - Withholding a percentage of payments for people in receipt of social security payments or allowances.
 - Providing the ability for people who are no longer receiving payments to use a number of repayment arrangement options.
- Flexible repayment options are also available where the person is experiencing family or domestic violence, financial hardship, or where there are other indicators of vulnerability.
- Anyone who owes a debt and is experiencing difficulty with repayments is encouraged to contact the Agency to discuss their circumstances. They can do this on the dedicated debt phone line (1800 076 072).
- The Agency has made enhancements to online services to allow people the flexibility during a crisis or disaster event to change or pause their repayment arrangements.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Robert Higgins
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Payment and Assurance Program and Appeals Division	PDR Number: QB25-000051
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 3:25:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 3:25:00 PM

Debt Management

- If people who are no longer receiving payments refuse to enter into a repayment arrangement with the Agency, further recovery action can occur. This can include:
 - garnisheeing money held on behalf of, or owed to, a customer, for example, from wages, income tax refunds or money held with a financial institution
 - issuing a Departure Prohibition Order, or
 - through civil legal action.

Total Value of Debts

- As at 30 June 2025:
 - The outstanding value of social security debts totalled \$4.74 billion, with 1.34 million debts owed by 780,404 customers.
 - 123,502 debts are currently temporarily written off to a total value of \$474.41 million.
- For the 2024–25 financial year, as at 30 June 2025:
 - 1.40 million debts have been raised with a total value of \$2.35 billion.
 - Of the raised debts, 513,985 with a value of \$43.75 million have been raised and waived.
- For the 2023–24 financial year there were:
 - 1.50 million debts raised to the total value \$2.50 billion.
 - 939,029 debts raised for recovery.
 - 603,348 debts raised and waived.
 - 110,993 debts temporarily written off to the total value of \$405.41 million.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

Australian National Audit Office Audit

On 31 May 2023, the Australian National Audit Office tabled its performance audit on 'Debt Management and Recovery in Services Australia'. The Audit examined whether the Agency has fit-for-purpose debt management and governance arrangements, effective strategies and processes, and assessed and reported on the effectiveness of activities undertaken. The Australian National Audit Office made 4 recommendations, aimed at:

- debt oversight arrangements,
- effectiveness and usability of policies and procedures,
- establishing a debt management strategy, and
- developing internal targets for performance.

The Agency acknowledges improvements can be made to the management and recovery of debts and is working with the relevant policy agencies to implement the recommendations.

Past use of External Collection Agents

As at 30 June 2023, the Agency ceased using External Collection Agents with all social security debt recovery now managed by Agency staff.

Customers are no longer repaying their debts through External Collection Agents. The Agency has been establishing repayment arrangements directly with customers. This change ensures customers deal with specialist Agency staff who understand their situation best, and who are experienced in supporting vulnerable people.

As at 30 June 2025, there were approximately 327 customers who were previously registered with External Collection Agents who are yet to establish a repayment arrangement with the Agency.

This has reduced from 592 customers since all debts were returned to the Agency in June 2023. The Agency will continue to seek to establish repayment arrangements with these customers.

Administration of Emergency Payments

Issue

What is the Australian Government doing to support Australians impacted by natural disasters?

Headline Response

The Australian Government is committed to supporting individuals impacted by natural disasters. Services Australia plays a key role in the delivery of support and services to those affected.

Facts and Figures

- For all disaster events activated in the 2024–25 financial year, as at midnight 27 July 2025, 568,000 claims have been granted and \$801.2 million paid:
 - 521,000 claims for Disaster Recovery Payment and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Payment have been granted, with \$596.3 million paid
 - 46,900 claims for Disaster Recovery Allowance and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Allowance claims have been granted, with \$204.9 million paid
 - 192,000 calls were answered on the Australian Government Emergency Information Line (180 22 66), and
 - 96.2 per cent of daily claims received by the Agency were made through a Centrelink online account through myGov.
- In preparation for the 2025–26 disaster season, Services Australia (the Agency) is working closely with the National Emergency Management Agency.
- In the case of an emergency event, the Minister for Emergency Management, Senator the Hon Kristy McBain, has the delegation to activate Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payments, the Disaster Recovery Allowance, and their equivalents for eligible New Zealand citizens.
- Once an emergency response has been activated, the Agency can provide the following disaster payments to eligible persons in declared areas as directed by the National Emergency Management Agency:
 - Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment provides \$1,000 per eligible adult and \$400 per eligible child directly into bank accounts.
 - Disaster Recovery Allowance provides assistance for claimants who have lost income for a period of up to 13 weeks, starting from the first day their income

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Division: Service Delivery Optimisation Division	PDR Number: QB25-000045
Date Updated: 28/07/2025 8:56:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 28/07/2025 8:56:00 AM

Emergency Response

was impacted, which can be from the event start date, as written in the signed Instrument.

- New Zealand Disaster Recovery Payment provides one-off financial assistance to eligible New Zealand citizens residing in Australia who hold a non-protected Special Category Visa (subclass 444).
- New Zealand Disaster Recovery Allowance provides short-term income support to eligible New Zealand citizens residing in Australia who hold a non-protected Special Category Visa (subclass 444).
- There are different ways for people to claim disaster support:
 - The fastest way to claim is online. People with internet access can claim online via myGov.
 - The Agency has staff on the ground, who can assist people face-to-face.
 - People can call to claim on 180 22 66, between 8am and 5pm local time Monday to Friday.
- The Agency can tailor a response that is targeted and provides accessible services for customers in remote or isolated communities. For example, the Agency can:
 - Establish temporary offices and provide access to mobile devices for customers to lodge their claims.
 - Provide on the ground support to assist customers with how to claim and provide any additional assistance where required.
 - Provide information in-language, or link people with interpreters for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customers.
 - Offer dedicated culturally sensitive remote servicing staff to help streamline the claiming process.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Emergency Response

Background

For the 2024-25 financial year, emergency payments were activated for the following events:

- 22 May 2025: New South Wales East Coast Severe Weather and Flooding, May 2025 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 30 March 2025: Western Queensland Heavy Rain and Flooding, March 2025 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 11 March 2025: New South Wales Ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred, March 2025 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 11 March 2025: Queensland Ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred, March 2025 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 5 February 2025: North Queensland Floods – January-February 2025 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 30 December 2024: Bushfires in Western Victoria, December 2024 (Disaster Recovery Allowance and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 29 October 2024: Far West New South Wales Storms and Power Outages, October 2024 (Disaster Recovery Allowance and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Allowance).

For the 2023–24 financial year, emergency payments were activated for the following events:

- 19 February 2024: Western Victoria Bushfires, February 2024 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment only).
- 12 February 2024: Heavy Rainfall and Flooding, City of Moreton Bay, January 2024 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment only).
- 4 January 2024: Southeast Queensland Severe Storms and Flooding, December 2023 to January 2024 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 18 December 2023: Tropical Cyclone Jasper, December 2023 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 27 October 2023: Western and Darling Downs Bushfires, October 2023 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).

Emergency Response

For disaster events activated in the 2023–24 financial year, as at midnight 27 July 2025, 58,700 claims have been granted and \$80.2 million paid:

- 55,100 claims for Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Payment have been granted, with \$64.1 million paid.
- 3,600 claims for Disaster Recovery Allowance and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Allowance claims have been granted, with \$16.1 million paid.
- 36,700 calls were answered on the Australian Government Emergency Information Line (180 22 66).
- 95.4 per cent of daily claims received by the Agency were made through a Centrelink online account through myGov.

Service Centre Network Facts and Figures

Issue

What is the Government doing to meet Australian's need for face-to-face services delivered by Services Australia?

Headline Response

Services Australia is committed to maintaining and modernising the service centre network. Services Australia regularly reviews its progress to ensure a sustainable, accessible, and fit-for-purpose network that meets community and customer needs.

Facts and Figures

- The Face-to-Face Transformation Program was launched in 2019 to modernise service delivery. As at 30 June 2025:
 - 182 service centres have been transformed.
 - 57 of the 102 sites at higher risk of customer aggression have received enhanced security treatments.
- Services Australia (the Agency) is committed to maintaining and modernising the service centre network. The Agency supports other channels such as telephony and digital services to deliver improved government services that are simple, helpful, respectful, and transparent.
- When considering the placement of service centres, the Agency undertakes detailed research and analysis, and considers:
 - Customer and community needs.
 - Accessibility and range of services offered.
 - Proximity to other service centres and government services.
 - Offering a mix of online and face-to-face services.
 - Partnership opportunities with community and government agencies.
 - Public transport availability.
- To meet Australians' needs, face-to-face services are available through:
 - 318 service centres.
 - 376 agent service locations.

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Division: Service Design and Face to Face Transformation	PDR Number: QB25-000047
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- 192 access points.
- 4 Mobile Service Centres.
- Agent service locations provide personnel trained to assist customers with digital services and provide referrals. They have direct phone support for complex inquiries. In addition to the services provided in access points.
- Access points offer self-help facilities, including internet-enabled computers, printers, document upload, self-service phones, and free Wi-Fi.
- Mobile Service Centres travel to rural, regional, and disaster-affected areas, providing Centrelink and Medicare services. They have disabled access and from time to time include representatives from other government agencies.

If pressed**Dungog Shire Community Centre (Dungog Agent)**

- The Dungog Shire Community Centre (DSCC) is contracted to provide agent services to the community at Dungog.
- The Agency has a contract in place with the Dungog Community Centre until 30 June 2026.
- Should DSCC relinquish the agent service, the Agency will initiate an approach to market to ensure services continue for the community of Dungog. Advertisements will be placed in local print media.
- Dungog residents will continue to have access to service centres located at Raymond Terrace (40 km) and Maitland (41 km), with agent services available at Bulahdelah (42 km), and Access Point services at Clarencetown (20 km).

Policy Commitments

- The Government made a commitment as part of the 2022 election to retain 318 service centres.

Background

Due to the Agency's efforts to improve the digital experience, more customers now use digital services like the myGov website and app.

Phone self-service allows customers to access and update their information quickly and conveniently.

Customers can book and manage appointments online at their preferred time, either by phone or at a service centre. Since the commencement on 22 June 2024, customers have booked over 500,000 appointments online.

Agency Support and Protection for People Experiencing Domestic Violence

Issue

How is Services Australia supporting people experiencing Family and Domestic Violence?

Headline Response

Services Australia's *Family and Domestic Violence Strategic Commitment* was launched in December 2024, which reaffirms the Agency's commitment to supporting people affected by family and domestic violence.

Facts and Figures

- Services Australia (the Agency) has a range of support tools, resources, and processes to:
 - Identify family and domestic violence circumstances early.
 - Tailor services to the person's circumstances.
 - Empower customers and staff with valuable information and resources.
- The Agency's workforce is enhanced through comprehensive training relating to family and domestic violence, including more specialised training packages for managers and leaders.
 - This equips our staff to connect customers with the right payments and services provided by the Agency and refer them to appropriate supports in community.
- To secure the personal information of customers leaving a relationship and those experiencing family and domestic violence, the Agency offers practical support, including:
 - Providing information on the Agency's website for customers and within internal documents for staff on how to keep their information safe when leaving a relationship or living with violence or abuse.
 - De-linking a customer's Centrelink record from their partner's when they inform Centrelink they have separated.
 - Transferring customers onto their own Medicare card when they inform Medicare they have separated.

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Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Communities	PDR Number: QB25-000038
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 11:41:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 11:41:00 AM

- Reviewing nominee arrangements.
- Connecting customers with Agency social workers for short-term support and intervention.

Policy Commitments

- On 6 September 2024, National Cabinet announced a comprehensive \$4.7 billion package on practical next steps to accelerate action to end gender-based violence in a generation, deliver on the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032, and support legal assistance.
- This package brings together efforts and funding to:
 - Deliver much needed support for frontline specialist and legal services responding to gender based violence.
 - Provide innovative approaches to better identify and respond to high-risk perpetrators to stop violence escalating.
 - Address the role that systems and harmful industries play in exacerbating violence.
- As part of this package, the Government commenced an audit of key government systems to identify areas where they are being weaponised by perpetrators of family and domestic violence.
- The Agency continues to undertake work with the Department of Social Services and the Office for Women on identifying points of risk for abuse, manipulation and coercion within the social security system, and how we can better support victim-survivors.
- On 3 June 2025, the Commonwealth Ombudsman released the findings from an investigation into the weaponisation of the Child Support system. The investigation produced 8 recommendations aimed at strengthening the Child Support Scheme to better support children and separated parents.
- The Agency has accepted all 8 recommendations and is working with colleagues in the Australian Taxation Office to implement structural reform.

Background

The *Family and Domestic Violence Strategic Commitment* (the Commitment) outlines the Agency's approach to supporting customers and staff impacted by family and domestic violence by aligning to the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032* and *The First Action Plan*.

The Commitment reaffirms the Agency's vision to deliver simple, helpful, respectful, and transparent services and support to people affected by family and domestic violence. It drives the Agency's approach to continually refine and strengthen our systems, processes, and support, to minimise risk to those affected by family and domestic violence.

The Agency is currently operationalising our Commitment through the development of a Ways of Working - Action Plan to be released later in 2025. The Agency will engage internal and external stakeholders to drive tangible and practical initiatives to support people experiencing family and domestic violence and develop a framework to measure outcomes.

Income Apportionment

Agency Response to Income Apportionment

Issue

What action is the Government taking to address the issue of income apportionment?

Headline Response

Services Australia is working in consultation with the Department of Social Services to address and resolve the issue of income apportionment.

Facts and Figures

- On 15 July 2025, the Full Court of the Federal Court of Australia handed down its judgment in the matter of *Chaplin v Secretary, DSS* (before the Tribunal as *DSS v FTXB*).
- The majority has accepted the Secretary of the Department of Social Services' preferred meaning of the word "earned" and has confirmed that employment income may be taken into account when it was received.
- The Secretary has publicly stated that as there is certainty to the legal position, paused debt activities involving the assessment of employment income for social security recipients prior to 7 December 2020 will re-commence in line with the Court's decision.
- The Government will now evaluate the impact of the Court's decision and consider its response.
- Anyone who believes they have a debt which was affected by income apportionment can call the dedicated Services Australia (the Agency) helpline on 1800 560 870 or visit the Agency's website.
- The Agency and the Department of Social Services are working to resolve the complex policy and legal issues this matter presents, including addressing the Ombudsman's recommendations.
- To address and resolve income apportionment, the Department of Social Services and the Agency are preparing options for the Government to consider.
- Between July and September 2021, the Agency paused the raising of undetermined debts (potential debts not yet raised) and reviews relating to income apportionment.

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Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Legal Compliance and Remediation Division	PDR Number: QB25-000052
Date Updated: 24/07/2025 11:25:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 24/07/2025 11:25:00 AM

Income Apportionment

- As at 30 June 2025, these pauses related to approximately 16,000 formal reviews, 6,000 explanations on how debts were calculated, and approximately 88,000 undetermined debts.
- The Agency also paused the recovery of 154,000 debts potentially impacted by income apportionment:
 - Approximately 112,000 debts were paused from 30 October 2023.
 - Approximately 42,000 additional debts were paused from 11 April 2024.
- In December 2024, the Agency wrote to all customers affected by the debt pauses advising them:
 - Recovery of their debts would remain paused due to potentially having been affected by income apportionment.
 - Their options to have their case reviewed or voluntarily repay their debt if they wish.
 - Information about the Federal Court appeal.
- As of 30 June 2025, 57 customers have made requests for their review to progress – these are currently being managed by the Agency.
- The Agency website has been updated to ensure people have access to the most up to date information about income apportionment.

If pressed

What does Income apportionment mean for people who have been prosecuted?

- Convictions and prosecutions are matters managed by the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions.
- Other implications for historical prosecutions are one of the aspects of income apportionment that the Government is considering.
- The Agency only makes a referral to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions for serious matters that are supported by a brief of evidence and are never referred for overpayments alone.
- The Agency is working closely with the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions in relation to historical matters which may be impacted by income apportionment.

Income Apportionment

How many customers have been affected by income apportionment?

- The Agency is still determining the total number of customers who may be affected by income apportionment.
- Estimates provided by the Department of Social Services indicate 5.3 million debts, held by 2.9 million Australians, may be impacted by income apportionment.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Income Apportionment

Background

Services Australia and the Department of Social Services (DSS) became aware of issues regarding the use of income apportionment in late 2020.

Since July 2021, the Agency has paused internal reviews, explanations of decision, and the raising and recovery of debts that may be affected by income apportionment, pending instructions from DSS.

In 2023, the Commonwealth Ombudsman (the Ombudsman) conducted two investigations in relation to income apportionment.

From 29 April 2024, the Agency recommenced activity on a small number of debts impacted by income apportionment, in line with instructions and General Guidance for Decision Makers (General Guidance) provided by DSS.

On 28 August 2024, the Administrative Review Tribunal handed down its decision in *Secretary DSS v FTXB*, setting aside a debt that was calculated using the General Guidance and rejecting the Secretary's submissions on how to lawfully recalculate income apportioned debts.

On 25 September 2024, the decision was appealed by the Respondent.

On 22 October 2024, DSS issued the Agency with updated advice to re-pause activity on debts potentially affected by income apportionment, except in certain circumstances.

On 6 March 2025, the appeal, *Chaplin v Secretary DSS*, was heard by the Full Federal Court.

On 15 July 2025, the appeal was dismissed, with an order for the Respondent to pay the Applicant's costs, as agreed.

Enhanced Income Management Program

Issue

How is Services Australia supporting customers transition from Income Management to enhanced Income Management?

Headline Response

Services Australia supports existing Income Management customers to choose to move to enhanced Income Management with a SmartCard or remain on Income Management with a BasicsCard. Newly eligible customers are placed directly on enhanced Income Management.

Facts and Figures

- As at 4 July 2025, there were 21,758 customers on enhanced Income Management, with 10,480 customers on Income Management across Australia.
- Of the customers currently on enhanced Income Management:
 - 7,136 have chosen to move to enhanced Income Management (from Income Management).
 - 14,622 have been placed on the enhanced Income Management program.
- Customers can choose to move to, or volunteer for, enhanced Income Management by calling the SmartCard enhanced Income Management hotline, or by visiting a Services Australia Service Centre or Remote Servicing Team.
- All customers are provided with a personalised SmartCard from their chosen card issuer and have access to temporary SmartCards.
- Enhanced Income Management customers are supported by experienced Agency staff through a dedicated SmartCard enhanced Income Management hotline and face-to-face services.
- For customers in the Northern Territory who choose to have their enhanced Income Management account and SmartCard managed by the Traditional Credit Union, card and account support is provided by Traditional Credit Union.
- The Agency holds comprehensive discussions with all Income Management customers who are considering moving to enhanced Income Management to ensure they understand how the change will apply to their circumstances.
- Customers are offered tailored support from the Agency, such as support using the SmartCard, available payment options (i.e. BPAY, direct debit and Centrepay),

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Division: Communities	PDR Number: QB25-000039
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Income Management

advice on how deductions can be paid, and referrals to internal financial support services, such as Financial Information Service Officers.

Policy Commitments

- The Agency works closely with the Department of Social Services, which has policy responsibility for the Income Management programs. This includes supporting activities to design the future of Income Management.

Income Management

Background

Enhanced Income Management

Enhanced Income Management is a tool that helps customers manage their payments and prioritise spending on essential goods and services such as food, housing, bills and education.

- Income Management program rules apply under the enhanced Income Management program. This means the quarantine rate is 50 per cent (except for Child Protection customers and Cape York and Doomadgee regions), and restrictions apply to the purchasing of tobacco products, pornography, alcohol, gambling products, and cash and cash-like products.

Under the enhanced Income Management program, the Family Responsibilities Commission is responsible for referring participants in the Cape York and Doomadgee region. Participants have a quarantine rate between 60 and 90 per cent, determined by the Family Responsibilities Commission.

A 2023–2024 ANAO Performance Audit found the transition to the enhanced Income Management program from the Cashless Debit Card program was largely effective, and that the Agency's limited tender procurement was largely compliant with Commonwealth Procurement Rules.

Income Management

Income Management is a tool to help customers manage their money to meet essential household needs and expenses.

Customers supported by Income Management have a percentage (varies between 50 per cent or 70 per cent) of their income support payment set aside in an Income Management account.

Customers on Income Management can make payments from their income managed account for priority needs such as rent, bills or food by:

- Using their BasicsCard.
- Asking the Agency to set up regular or one-off payments to approved organisations.

ANAO Financial Statements Audit 2023-24 Finding

Issue

How is Services Australia addressing the Australian National Audit Office's Category A finding (Finding 26) in relation to Medicare Compensation Recovery Program Governance?

Headline Response

Services Australia is progressing an audit Implementation Action Plan to address the audit findings. Services Australia continues to make improvements to its compensation recovery system and its operations to support more timely action and has increased its completion rates to 79.1 per cent of claims completed within legislated timeframes for the 2024–25 financial year. Services Australia continues to work with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing on policy matters in respect to this finding.

Facts and Figures

- Services Australia (the Agency) is addressing the Category A finding. This includes continuing to work with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing as the relevant policy agency on potential legislative and system changes, including:
 - Seeking clarification on the interpretation of the *Health and Other Services (Compensation) Act 1995* (the HOSC Act).
 - Considering legislative reform to the HOSC Act to align to the policy intent of the Medicare Compensation Recovery Program and clarify the law.
- Since June 2023, the Agency has:
 - Implemented over 200 system fixes to improve the efficiency of its Medicare Compensation Recovery System.
 - Reduced work on hand to 3,083 as at 30 June 2025, compared to a 20,939 as at 30 June 2024.
 - Increasing its claim timeliness to 79.1 per cent of claims completed within legislated timeframes for the 2024–25 financial year.
- For the months of May and June 2025, the Agency has achieved approximately 98 per cent of claims completed within timeliness.

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Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Payment Assurance Program and Appeals	PDR Number: QB25-000054
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 3:26:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 3:26:00 PM

Medicare Compensation

Australian National Audit Office Audit Findings

- During the 2023–24 audit, the Australian National Audit Office identified that over 50 per cent of cases were not assessed by the Agency within the statutory timeframes, contrary to specific requirements in the HOSC Act to process claims within timeframes or to make decisions to not pursue recovery.
- The Act requires that the Agency must issue notices prior to statutory time periods expiring and has no discretion to not pursue recovery. The Australian National Audit Office identified that the Agency did not take sufficient steps during 2023–24 to address these known issues.
- The Agency's non-compliance with the HOSC Act resulted in:
 - Non-collection of revenue from 'non-advance payments' that would have otherwise been owed to the Commonwealth.
 - The identification of an error in the Agency's prior period financial statements, relating to the recognition and treatment of revenue and receivables associated with the Medicare Compensation Recovery System program.
- The Agency has not pursued recovery for non-advance cases closed outside of timeliness since commencement of the program in 1996.

The Agency's performance on claims processing

- In the 2023–24 financial year, the program completed processing of 41,490 claims. Of these, 22,258 (53.65 per cent) were completed outside legislated timeframes.
- In the 2024–25 financial year, the program completed processing of 49,610 claims. Of these, 10,369 (20.90 per cent) were completed outside of legislative timeframes.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Medicare Compensation

Background

When an injured person receives more than \$5,000 in compensation for an injury or illness, the Agency is responsible for recovering Medicare benefits and aged care costs related to that injury under the HOSC Act.

The Agency engages with claimants/injured persons, insurers, legal providers, and third-party representatives to administer the program on behalf of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

There are two pathways within the Medicare Compensation Recovery Program, advance payments and non-advance payments.

Advance payments

Advance payments relate to claims where the compensation payer or insurer has elected to provide the Agency with 10% of the settlement amount to cover any potential Medicare services and care costs that relate to the compensated injury and paying the remaining 90% to the injured person.

When the Agency closes an Advance payment claim outside of legislative timeframes, a full refund of any payments received is made to the compensation recipient, regardless of if a debt is identified during the assessment of the claim in accordance with the HOSC Act.

Non-advance payments

Non-advance payments relate to claims where the insurer has elected to withhold the compensation payment amount until the Agency identifies the amount to be recovered. The insurer then pays the Agency the amount owed for Medicare services and care costs before paying the remaining amount to the injured person.

When the Agency closes a non-advance payment claim outside legislative timeframes, a \$0.00 debt amount is sent to the compensation recipient, regardless of whether a debt is identified during the assessment of the claim.

The Australian National Audit Office findings identified that the Agency should be pursuing the debt from the customer in these instances. This is contrary to the policy intent from the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and is not how the Agency has operated since 1996.

Disruption to Mobile Service Centre – Golden Wattle

Issue

Why does Services Australia currently have only 3 of its 4 Mobile Service Centres supporting regional and remote communities?

Headline Response

One of Services Australia's fleet of 4 Mobile Services Centres, Golden Wattle, is temporarily out of service due to a mechanical failure.

Facts and Figures

- The Government remains committed to providing Mobile Service Centres, that travel throughout rural and regional Australia and disaster-affected communities, bringing government services to people where and when they need it most.
- Mobile Service Centre, Golden Wattle, will remain out of service from 1 July 2025 for approximately 9 weeks until a maintenance issue is resolved.
- Golden Wattle was scheduled to visit north-eastern and north-western New South Wales flood affected towns within the Taree, Coffs Harbour, Kempsey and Port Macquarie regions during this period. Once Golden Wattle is operational again, it will re-commence servicing in these areas.
- Services Australia (the Agency) has contacted local councils and key organisations within these communities to apologise for the change in schedule and provide them with information about the servicing arrangements available via on-line services, over the phone or at one of the closest service centres, agents or access points.
- The Agency Community Engagement Officers will continue to provide assistance to these communities by contacting key organisations and identifying any needs for further support. Agency staff will also continue to provide assistance at open Recovery Centres and attend community events.
- From 2006 to 30 June 2025, Mobile Service Centres have:
 - Travelled 1,210,138 km.
 - Visited 7,497 communities.
 - Helped 222,939 people.
 - Attended 38 emergency events, spending 652 days in 423 disaster affected communities helping 36,960 people.

Contact: Simon Noble	Cleared by: Bo Robertson
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Division: Face to Face Services	PDR Number: QB25-000059
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Mobile Servicing

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Mobile Servicing

Background

Mobile Service Centres provide a convenient and personalised service to rural and regional communities. Their mobile capabilities mean during emergencies they can also be quickly diverted to provide rapid response for communities in need.

The disruption to mobile servicing in north-eastern and north-western New South Wales during July to September 2025 is due to a mechanical failure to Mobile Service Centre, Golden Wattle.

The hydraulic leg on Golden Wattle malfunctioned, and the vehicle has undergone assessments by specialist mechanics and engineers at a maintenance centre in Newcastle. The fault has been identified as a custom-built sensor issue.

The sensor and hydraulic leg require replacement. The maintenance provider has engaged a third-party supplier, and sourcing and installation of the parts will take a minimum of 9 weeks.

Itineraries for Mobile Service Centres Desert Rose (Queensland), Kangaroo Paw II (South Australia), and Blue Gum (Victoria), will be maintained.

myGov Funding and Operations including Future Improvements

Issue

How is the Government ensuring that myGov remains a reliable and secure part of Australia's digital infrastructure?

Headline Response

Every day, myGov helps more than 979,000 Australians access critical government services easily, quickly and securely. The Government has made a significant investment in the future of myGov, which will help Australians do more, whilst keeping myGov secure and reliable as critical national infrastructure.

Facts and Figures

- myGov makes it easy for Australians to use one account to access 18 services across the Commonwealth and state and territory governments, including the Australian Taxation Office, Centrelink and Medicare.
- In the 2024–25 Budget, Services Australia (the Agency) received \$630.3 million over four years from the 2024–25 financial year (and \$144.8 million per year ongoing) to sustain and enhance the myGov platform, and ensure the continued development of its capability, including continuing an independent advisory board to provide guidance and advice to Government on potential myGov enhancements until the 2027–28 financial year.
- Since the myGov User Audit, the Agency has delivered significant improvements for customers.
 - The myGov app makes it easier to access services and messages from mobile devices, including 6 cards now available in the digital wallet. Nearly 8 million people are now using the myGov app.
 - A new security dashboard is helping people better secure their myGov accounts, providing extra protection against scams. 1.2 million users have now set up a passkey, which helps protect against phishing scams.
 - Commonwealth Statutory Declarations can now be completed in myGov with Digital ID, saving people time by not having to find an in-person witness.

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Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Customer and Staff Digital Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000049
Date Updated: 11/07/2025 4:04:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 11/07/2025 4:04:00 PM

- Further improvements in myGov are underway in 2025, including:
 - Providing the option for people to be notified about and complete the 2026 Census through myGov.
 - Migrating the Express Plus apps functionality into myGov, starting with Medicare, so people can get more things done inside the myGov app.
- The Agency is exploring the potential for new whole-of-government capabilities through the myGov Pipeline. This includes making it easy to track appointments and making it simpler for more government services to join myGov.

If pressed on Inadvertent Closure of myGov Accounts

- Since early 2024, myGov has successfully closed over 2.4 million unused myGov accounts. The process of closing inactive accounts is a common security practice to reduce the risk of fraud and unauthorised access through compromised sign in credentials.
- On 27 June 2025, myGov inadvertently closed 1393 active myGov accounts. A post implementation review identified human error as the cause.
- All impacted users were sent an email apologising for the error and inconvenience, with the offer of support from the myGov Helpdesk to open a new myGov account.
- Since the closure, 28 affected customers have sought assistance and advice from the myGov helpdesk.

Policy Commitments

- \$580.3 million over four years from the 2024–25 financial year (and \$139.6 million per year ongoing) to sustain the myGov platform and ensure the continued development of its capability, including continuing an independent advisory board to provide guidance and advice to Government on potential myGov enhancements until the 2027–28 financial year.
- \$50.0 million over four years from the 2024–25 financial year (and \$5.2 million per year ongoing) for enhancements to the myGov platform to continue to respond to the findings of the Critical National Infrastructure myGov User Audit and advice from the independent advisory board, including enhancements to the myGov support tool, strengthening myGov fraud detection capabilities, improving the myGov inbox and other communication tools and supporting users to better secure their myGov accounts.
- This measure builds on the 2023–24 Budget measure, Sustain myGov and the 2023–24 MYEFO measures, Services Australia – additional resourcing, modernising myGov, and Services Australia’s improved safety for staff and customers.

Background

Interim Independent Advisory Board

The establishment of an independently chaired advisory board was a key action from the myGov User Audit (Recommendation 7) to put in place citizen centred governance to drive inclusion and performance.

In the 2024–25 Budget, the Government invested in the Advisory Board, until June 2028, to provide the independent expertise and insights to progress towards making public services more accessible, ethical and effective.

The Advisory Board will continue to provide the Minister for Government Services with advice and assurance on designing, prioritising, and investing in people-centred services and improvements.

Ombudsman’s report on Keeping myGov secure

Issue

What action is the Government taking to ensure that myGov remains a safe and secure platform for government service delivery?

Headline Response

On 6 August 2024, the Commonwealth Ombudsman, Mr Iain Anderson, published the *Keeping myGov Secure* report following an own motion investigation into fraud arising from unauthorised linking to myGov accounts.

Services Australia has completed 3 of the 4 recommendations in the report and has made significant progress on the final recommendation. Services Australia will provide a formal response to the Commonwealth Ombudsman in August 2025.

Facts and Figures

- Maintaining the security of myGov and the protection of people’s personal information remains a top priority for Services Australia (the Agency), and it remains committed to ongoing improvement.
- The Commonwealth Ombudsman’s report made 4 recommendations and 2 suggestions in relation to:
 - myGov’s security controls for unauthorised linking and high-risk transactions.
 - The management of shared risks across the myGov ecosystem.
 - Supporting people whose member service accounts have been impacted by myGov fraud.
- In response to the recommendations, the Agency has implemented additional security measures to support customers, including:
 - Disrupting fraudulent payment redirection through additional controls on updating payment details online.
 - Introducing the myGov Security Dashboard to help customers switch to stronger sign in methods, such as Digital ID and Passkeys.

Contact: Aaron Wilkins	Cleared by: Jonathon Thorpe
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Customer and Staff Digital Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000053
Date Updated: 25/07/2025 9:34:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 25/07/2025 9:34:00 AM

- obfuscating bank details in online accounts across Centrelink, Medicare, Child Support and myGov.
- The Agency will introduce multifactor authentication steps when updating account settings in myGov in August.
- The Agency continues work to strengthen customer authentication processes, including when linking myGov accounts to Centrelink, Medicare and Child Support. These updates are due to be delivered in September 2025.
- In recognition of myGov's whole-of-government role, the Agency has also strengthened processes across member services to identify and manage shared risks, share operational updates, and respond to suspected fraudulent activity.
- The Agency identifies and responds to around 300 scams per week that impersonate myGov. In a challenging global security environment, myGov is continually evolving to meet the challenges of increasingly sophisticated and numerous scams, identity theft and other cyber security threats.
- The Agency has observed, analysed, and responded to 15,149 unique agency impersonation scams for July 2024 to June 2025. This does not include additional malicious websites identified and actioned directly by other organisations.
- myGov is the most targeted brand, with over 77 per cent of these scams in the 2024–25 financial year referencing myGov in some way.
- Since the introduction of the myGov Security Dashboard, approximately 1.8 million users have now updated to a stronger sign in method, such as Passkeys or Digital ID. In addition, over 780,000 users have switched off their password.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Contact: Aaron Wilkins	Cleared by: Jonathon Thorpe
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Customer and Staff Digital Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000053
Date Updated: 25/07/2025 9:34:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 25/07/2025 9:34:00 AM

PDR Number: QB25-000053

Background

The full list of recommendations and suggestions from the Commonwealth Ombudsman Final Report are:

- **Recommendation 1.** Consistent with its responsibilities for driving improvement in fraud control practices, we recommend Services Australia:
 - a) Assess existing Proof of Record Ownership processes across the myGov ecosystem to identify and document, shared risks, and work with member services to agree and implement appropriate controls.
 - b) Consider establishing baseline Proof of Record Ownership requirements, which must be met by all member services.
- **Recommendation 2a.** We recommend Services Australia implement additional security controls such as two factor authentication across its three member services for all high-risk transactions, including linking a member service account to myGov and updating contact and bank account details.
- **Recommendation 2b.** Services Australia should ensure that a high standard of security settings for high-risk transactions applies consistently across all available service delivery channels for its member services.
- **Recommendation 3.** We recommend Services Australia establish formal processes for managing all shared risks across the myGov ecosystem, including identifying, assessing and documenting shared risks, periodically assessing the effectiveness of agreed controls and responding to indications that risk assessments should be updated.
- **Recommendation 4.** We recommend Services Australia seek external legal advice about options to facilitate a greater level of information sharing across linked member services and support member services to act proactively to reduce fraud risk or other unlawful activity while meeting their other legislative obligations.
- **Suggestion 1.** We suggest Services Australia share learnings and information about its authentication and Proof of Record Ownership processes with other myGov member services to support them to build their capability.
- **Suggestion 2.** We suggest Services Australia regularly reviews and updates its communications regarding potential myGov and member service account breaches, including security notifications, staff guidance and online content, to ensure people are supported to take real time action to mitigate breaches to their myGov and or linked member service accounts.

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Division: Customer and Staff Digital Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000053
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PDR Number: QB25-000053

Services Australia's Response to People Released from Immigration Detention

Issue

How is Services Australia supporting individuals released from immigration detention?

Headline Response

Services Australia continues to work with the Department of Home Affairs regarding people who have been released from held detention or residence determination arrangements because of the High Court ruling in *NZYQ v Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs*.

This includes processing applications from people who, upon release, apply for the Special Benefit payment.

Facts and Figures

- Services Australia (the Agency) supports individuals released from immigration detention when they engage with the Agency.
- The High Court ruling resulted in the Agency engaging with people who:
 - were in residence determination arrangements and may already have been in receipt of the Status Resolution Support Services payment from the Agency, or
 - persons who had been released directly from held detention and at the time of release were not receiving a payment from the Agency.
- As at 1 July 2025, there are approximately 225 customers receiving payments from the Agency on a visa sub-class 070.
- The Agency assesses and processes all claims in line with current arrangements for vulnerable customers with complex needs, including applying servicing arrangements where staff safety concerns are identified.
- The Agency continues to work closely with the Department of Social Services and the Department of Home Affairs to provide information to support impacted people.
- Any questions regarding the total number of people released from immigration detention, including those in receipt of the Status Resolution Support Services

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Division: Fraud Control Investigations Division	PDR Number: QB25-000041
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payment, should be referred to the Department of Home Affairs as the Agency does not have visibility of this information.

Special Benefit

- Persons released from immigration detention may also test their eligibility for Special Benefit, which is a payment for persons who are not able to receive any other social security payment.
 - The Special Benefit payment has been available to eligible customers since 1945.
 - The Agency administers the Special Benefit payment on behalf of the Department of Social Services.
 - Special Benefit is a discretionary payment designed to assist individuals in financial hardship who:
 - are not eligible for other income support payments, and
 - are unable to earn a sufficient livelihood for themselves and their dependants.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

On 8 November 2023, the High Court handed down the decision, *NZYQ v Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs [2023] HCA 37*, requiring immediate release from immigration detention of an individual on the basis that their detention was unlawful as there was no real prospect of removal from Australia.

The Department of Home Affairs contracted Service Providers to work closely with people impacted by this decision and to support them in lodging their claim for Special Benefit with the Agency. Impacted customers can also claim online.

Customers already in receipt of Status Resolution Support Services payments from the Agency were eligible to receive that payment until their claim for Special Benefit was granted or the Department of Home Affairs cancelled their Status Resolution Support Services payment.

The Agency has put in place processes to assist in the identification of people in this cohort who lodge Special Benefit claims.

Information to support impacted people includes:

- the process Service Providers need to follow to assist a person to initiate a Special Benefit claim
- Proof of Identity requirements
- the application of a 13-week activity test exemption by the Agency for people in this cohort to ensure no impacts to payment, and
- other payments and support people may be eligible for outside of Special Benefit, including Health Care Card, Family Tax Benefit, Parental Leave Pay, Child Care Subsidy, and Medicare.

Status Resolution Support Services Payment

On 1 April 2014, the Agency commenced the administration of the Status Resolution Support Services payment on behalf of the Department of Home Affairs.

The Status Resolution Support Services payment provides financial support to asylum seekers, as part of the broader Status Resolution Support Services program administered by the Department of Home Affairs. The Status Resolution Support Services program provides temporary, needs-based support to asylum seekers who are unable to support themselves while resolving their immigration status.

The Department of Home Affairs determines a person's eligibility for Status Resolution Support Services, and the Agency determines a customer's payability for Status Resolution Support Services payment. The Status Resolution Support Services payment is not a social security payment and customers receiving the payment do not have access to other Agency payments or services.

Discrepancies in Centrelink Payment Summaries

Issue

What is the Government doing to address the system issues that are causing incorrect reportable income amounts (taxable and non-taxable) to display within Centrelink payment summaries?

Headline

Services Australia has informed a cohort of impacted customers of a delay in the availability of their 2024–25 Centrelink payment summary and dedicated over 100 staff to remediation work so that accurate payment summaries can be provided to the customers early in the 2025–26 financial year.

Facts and Figures

Key Dates	
20 May 2025	The Agency engaged with the Australian Taxation Office on the identified payment summary issues.
13 June 2025	The Agency commenced manual remediation of impacted records.
27 June 2025	The Agency started notifying impacted customers of the payment summary issues. Letters issued to customers via mail and myGov.
1 July 2025	Payment summary data transferred to the Australian Taxation Office for s47E(d) customers and withheld for s47E(d) impacted customers.
3 July 2025	Mailout to all impacted customers completed.

- On 1 July 2025, Services Australia (the Agency) shared 2024-25 Centrelink payment summary data with the Australian Taxation Office via the standard process for s47E(d) customers. The Australian Taxation Office has confirmed the records have pre-filled into individual tax returns through myTax.
- The Agency has identified a cohort of s47E(d) customers with potential inaccuracies in their 2024-25 Centrelink payment summaries which were withheld from the Australian Tax Office.
- For these customers, system issues are causing incorrect reportable income amounts (taxable and non-taxable) to display within their Centrelink payment summaries where:
 - s47E(d)

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Division: Families and Participation	PDR Number: QB25-000042
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Payment Summaries

- s47E(d)
-
- From 27 June 2025 to 3 July 2025, the Agency issued letters to all s47E(d) customers notifying them of the issue and a delay to the availability of their 2024-25 Centrelink payment summary.
- Customers may not be able to lodge their individual tax return until their record has been remediated. This delay may financially impact customers who are expecting to receive a tax refund.
- The Agency has dedicated over 100 staff to remediate the inaccurate payment summaries and on 23 July 2025, s47E(d) payment summaries had been remediated.
- The Agency is working with the Australian Taxation Office to share remediated payment summaries daily to improve customer experience and reduce customer contact.
- The Agency is aiming to remediate approximately s47E(d) payment summaries (for customers who are likely to lodge tax returns) by the end of August 2025, and the remaining impacted payment summaries by late September 2025, ahead of the 31 October 2025 individual tax return lodgement date.
- Where customers contact the Agency and raise concerns about the delay in the availability of their payment summary, the Agency has a process to escalate their payment summary for remediation.
- The Agency has been working closely with the Australian Taxation Office to align website, Interactive Voice Response and staff communications about the payment summary issues.
- The Agency is analysing Information and Communication Technology solutions to prevent the identified issues from occurring in future financial years.
- The Agency is undertaking historical analysis to identify previous financial year payment summaries that were affected and will develop a remediation strategy with the Australian Taxation Office to address prior year inaccuracies.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

From 1 July each year, Centrelink payment summary information is made available to customers and shared with the Australian Taxation Office to assist customers with completing their individual tax returns. The Agency produces over 6 million payment summaries each year. Data is transferred to the Australian Taxation Office to be used as pre-fill data for tax returns.

Many Centrelink customers will not be taxable. For example, customers in receipt of an Income Support Payment for at least one day have a tax-free threshold of \$22,575, and customers in receipt of an Income Support Payment for every day of the financial year, who are also a liable parent or a recipient parent under a child support assessment, have a tax-free threshold of \$29,842.

Customers in receipt of Family Tax Benefit and Child Care Subsidy are required to complete a tax return or advise the Agency of non-lodgement to balance their payments at end of the financial year.

Robodebt Royal Commission - Government Response

Issue

What has the Government done in response to the Robodebt Royal Commission?

Headline Response

Many of the Royal Commission's findings align with the priorities and reforms the Australian Government has maintained focus on – rebuilding trust in government, investing in a capable public sector, delivering strong institutions and ensuring people are at the centre of service delivery.

Facts and Figures

- As at 30 June 2025, Services Australia (the Agency) has fully implemented 21 recommendations, partially implemented 2 recommendations (recommendations 16.2 & 20.1), and is well progressed on implementing its remaining 3 recommendations.
- Recommendation 16.2 – Review and strengthen governance of data-matching programs:
 - The Agency continues to work across government, including with the Australian Government Solicitor and the Australian Taxation Office to fully implement this recommendation.
- Recommendation 20.1 – Administrative Appeals Tribunal cases with significant legal and policy issues:
 - The Agency continues to assess the new systems for screening cases flowing from the new Administrative Review Tribunal to fully implement this recommendation.
- Key changes implemented by the Agency to address recommendations include:
 - The Advocates' Channel with Economic Justice Australia has provided opportunities to enhance how advocates can engage with the Agency. The Agency will continue to build on the existing advocacy channel with findings from the pilot to inform a possible scalable solution.
 - Recruited over 160 ongoing social workers in 2024 with 665 social workers in 214 locations.
 - Embedding human-centred design and customer research into core practices, incorporating insights from customers, staff and peak advocacy organisations.

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Division: Legal Compliance and Remediation	PDR Number: QB25-000056
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- Proactive and inclusive staff feedback mechanisms, such as surveys, round table meetings, operational feedback, systematic issues register, and a dedicated staff feedback tool.
- Improvements to debt policy including no longer using external collection agencies to recover debts and enabling customers to self-pause their debts when impacted by disaster or crisis.

Timeline of Significant Events

- 11 June 2021: The Federal Court of Australia approved the Class Action Settlement agreement, including the Settlement Distribution Scheme.
- 25 August 2022: Announcement confirming the establishment of the Robodebt Royal Commission, its Terms of Reference and reporting date.
- 7 July 2023: The Report of the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme was presented by the Commissioner and tabled in Parliament.
- 10 July 2023: The Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Australian Public Service Commissioner announced that a taskforce would be established and led by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Attorney-General's Department, and the Australian Public Service Commission to support Ministers in preparing the Government's response.
- 8 September 2023: The former CEO of Services Australia, Ms Rebecca Skinner PSM, apologised to all Services Australia staff for Robodebt and how it affected them.
- 13 November 2023: The Government released its response to the Royal Commission's recommendations, which was tabled in Parliament.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

The Income Compliance Programme (the Robodebt Scheme) was initiated in 2015 and was supported through budget measures between 2015–16 and 2018–19. The Scheme was ceased in November 2019.

On 7 July 2023, Commissioner Catherine Holmes AC SC, presented the Report of the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme, to the Governor-General, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd).

On 13 November 2023, the Australian Government released its response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme.

The Government accepted (49), or accepted in-principle (7), all 56 recommendations made by the Royal Commission. Of these, Services Australia is the lead agency for 26 recommendations.

Scams Prevention and Protection

Issue

How is Services Australia ensuring that customers are protected from scams impersonating trusted organisations and brands like myGov?

Headline Response

Services Australia takes the protection of customer information seriously. Scams present an evolving threat to all Australians, and Services Australia continues to observe a significant number of scams targeting customers by impersonating trusted organisations and brands, such as myGov.

Facts and Figures

- Services Australia (the Agency) observed, analysed, and responded to 15,149 unique Agency impersonation scams between July 2024 to June 2025.
- myGov is the most targeted Agency brand, with over 77 per cent of these scams in the 2024–25 financial year referencing myGov in some way.
- The Agency's Scams and Identity Theft Helpdesk supports customers affected by scams and identity security concerns by providing advice on how customers can protect their personal information, checking their record for suspicious activity, correcting unauthorised updates, offering additional security measures, and referring to support services as needed.
 - Between July 2024 to June 2025, the helpdesk responded to over 30,000 calls.
- The Agency continues to support customers to strengthen their accounts and sign in processes and is implementing measures to help protect customers from scams impersonating myGov.
- In July 2024, the Agency introduced a phishing resistant sign-in security method, known as a passkey, to provide myGov users greater protection from scams.
- A passkey will only work with the genuine website or app that the passkey is connected with and will not work with fake websites. This means users cannot accidentally sign-in to a fraudulent version of myGov using their passkey.
- The Agency recently released the first version of the myGov Security Review that prompts customers to take actions to make their accounts more secure.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Sharna Bartley
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Fraud Control and Investigations	PDR Number: QB25-000057
Date Updated: 25/07/2025 9:32:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 25/07/2025 9:32:00 AM

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

The Agency is committed to protecting customers from the harm of scams and supporting customers who are the victim of identity compromise.

The Agency's scam response involves helping customers avoid scams and to protect their personal information, detecting and taking action against scams that impersonate the agency, providing support to customers who are victim of identity compromise, and strengthening our systems and processes to improve our resilience to scam activity.

Raising scam awareness and educating staff and customers is one way the Agency actively responds to scams. The Agency helps customers recognise and avoid scams, through a range of communication and engagement activities, such as:

- Presenting to external government groups such as not-for-profits supporting vulnerable cohorts.
- Running the Services Australia Scams Awareness booth at relevant expos.
- Maintaining and enhancing messaging via the Agency's website and the myGov site on how to avoid scams and protect identity.
- Scam alerts on the Agency's websites and social media accounts.

The Agency is participating in the Australian Communications and Media Authority's pilot SMS Sender ID Register. This pilot builds on earlier initiatives (Telstra – Cleaner Pipes; Optus – Trusted Sources) and provides protections by blocking fraudulent text messages that target customers by impersonating Agency brands, such as myGov or Medicare.

Security Risk Management Review Implementation

Issue

What action is the Government taking to ensure the safety and security of staff working to provide vital services for the Australian community?

Headline Response

The Government has invested \$361 million in response to the Security Risk Management Review to continue to improve the safety of Services Australia's staff and customers.

Facts and Figures

- The safety of all staff is paramount, and Services Australia (the Agency) is committed to ensuring that all staff can serve the Australian public without fear of violence.
- Funding committed by the Government and internal Agency resources will enable the Agency to implement all 44 recommendations of the Security Risk Management Review (the Review) by July 2026.
- Of the 44 recommendations, 20 have been completed in full, and the remaining 24 recommendations are in progress at various stages based on size and complexity.
- Examples of the work already delivered that sees immediate improvements includes:
 - Upgrades to the Airport West Service Centre were completed in December 2023.
 - The Criminal Code Amendment (Protecting Commonwealth Frontline Workers) Bill 2024 was enacted on 9 July 2024 to strengthen offences for acts of violence and aggression against Commonwealth frontline staff.
 - The customer online appointment booking system was rolled out nationally on 24 June 2024. Customers can now book and cancel their own 15-minute phone appointment or a 30-minute face-to-face appointment online, without the requirement to call or attend in-person. This has streamlined interactions and reduced customer frustration.

Contact: Jodie Robinson	Cleared by: Bo Robertson
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Community Engagement and Servicing Redesign	PDR Number: QB25-000040
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Security Review

- Advanced Customer Aggression training has been delivered to 3,548 frontline staff skilling them with the confidence to respond and de-escalate customer aggression incidents. The roll out of this training is continuing to all face-to-face frontline service delivery staff uplifting the capability of the Agency to effectively respond to customer aggression.
- 57 service centres at risk of high levels of customer aggression have received enhanced security treatments, including 24 site remediations, with the ongoing program of work continuing this financial year.
- Customer Self Check-in Kiosks are operational in 83 service centres to minimise frustrations caused by queues, and to provide real time information about presenting customers and any known risks.
- The Government will also soon reintroduce a Commonwealth Workplace Protection Order Bill which will set out a Commonwealth Workplace Protection Orders scheme to provide legal protections for Commonwealth workplaces and workers and deter acts of violence and other harmful behaviours by members of the public.
- A new Protective Security Operations Centre will be operational in June 2026 to enable the agency to respond in real time as security incidents occur.

Policy Commitments

- The Government has invested \$361 million to enable the Agency to implement the recommendations of the Review in full to continue to improve the safety of the Agency's staff and customers.

Background

On 24 May 2023, the Review was initiated immediately following an incident at the Airport West Service Centre in Melbourne, where a staff member was seriously injured by a customer on 23 May 2023.

The Review was informed by significant staff consultation and outlines the extensive range of measures the Agency already had in place to protect staff and in addition offers recommendations to improve these measures.

The Key Findings and 44 Recommendations cover security capabilities, service centre design, managed service plans and the adequacy of legislation to prevent and respond to customer aggression.

Services Australia Current Staffing Levels

Issue

What are the current staff levels at Services Australia and will there be a reduction in the 2025-26 financial year?

Headline Response

A key focus for Services Australia last year was building on the injection of new staff to reduce the time it takes to process claims or to answer the phone. Services Australia has made improvements compared to this time last year and continues to head in the right direction.

Facts and Figures

- As of 30 June 2025, Services Australia (the Agency) had a workforce of approximately 37,500 staff. This includes approximately:
 - 35,200 (94 per cent) Australian Public Service (APS) staff
 - 2,300 (6 per cent) non-APS staff (labour hire and contractors), and
 - 17 (< 1 per cent) other Commonwealth employees seconded to the Agency.
- The Agency's APS employee headcount increased by over 1,600 between 30 June 2024 and 30 June 2025 (from approximately 33,600 to 35,200).
- This workforce is supplemented by 2 Service Delivery Partners (SDPs) that allows the Agency to scale up and down quickly, comprising a headcount of 668 staff, as of 30 June 2025.
- The Agency's 2024–25 Average Staffing Level (ASL) was 31,442, which is 1,224 ASL above the 2024–25 Budget ASL portfolio allocation of 30,218. This increase in the Agency's ASL reflects further investment in APS staffing to reduce reliance on contractor services.
- The Agency's 2025–26 Approved ASL is 29,612 which is 606 below the 30,218 approved ASL for the Agency during the 2024–25 financial year.
- Between 1 December 2020 and 30 June 2025, approximately 4,500 non-APS employees, including labour hire, contractor and SDP staff, have transitioned to APS employment in the Agency.
- In the last 12 months (1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025), approximately 158 APS employees (non-ongoing and Intermittent/Irregular) have transitioned to APS ongoing employment.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Randall Brugeaud
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Workforce Capability	PDR Number: QB25-000048
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 1:00:00 PM	Date Last Printed: N/A

Policy Commitments

- Between 1 May 2022 and 30 June 2025, the Agency has employed (commenced) approximately 350 additional staff in Far North Queensland¹, and is continuing to recruit to work towards the Government's election commitment.
- As part of the 2024–25 Budget, the Agency received \$1.8 billion over 3 financial years to the 2025–26 financial year to:
 - Maintain a customer service workforce to deliver timely services and payments to Australians experiencing vulnerability in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis.
 - Sustain emergency response capability.
 - Support other aspects of the Agency's operations.
- This has improved claim processing times, and resulted in shorter call wait times for customers.

¹ Far North Queensland includes Atherton, Cairns, Innisfail, Mareeba and Yarrabah locations.

Background

APS staff, whether ongoing, non-ongoing, or casual, remain the core of the Agency's workforce. They are the current and future leaders, who hold the institutional knowledge and expertise central to the culture of the Agency.

The Agency's non-APS workforce (comprising of labour hire personnel and contractors) and its outsourced Service Delivery Partner providers, give the Agency additional flexibility to engage short-term specialist or surge services, to support day-to-day operations and workload requirements.

The Agency's workforce size and composition will fluctuate based on forecasted and actual customer volumes and is heavily impacted by events such as natural disasters, pandemic events, and changes to government policy.

QB25-000060 – Stillborn Baby Payment

Issue

Are there circumstances where Services Australia pays Stillborn Baby Payment following late term or intentional abortion?

Headline Response

Stillborn Baby Payment may be paid in the tragic circumstances of a stillbirth. All stillbirths are required to be certified by a medical professional. Services Australia must rely on this information to assess and pay claims.

Facts and Figures

- As at 30 June 2025, 805 customers were paid Stillborn Baby Payment for 818 children during the 2024-25 financial year.

If Pressed

- There may be circumstances where a late term abortion might be categorised as a stillbirth where an appropriate medical professional has verified the baby was delivered. An example is where there is a medical determination the foetus is incompatible with life. Services Australia (the Agency) must rely on the information certified by the appropriate medical professional when assessing claims.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Contact: s22		Cleared by: Stuart Turnbull	
Contact No: s22		Contact No: s47F(1)	
Division: Families and Participation Division		PDR Number: QB25-000060	
Date Updated: 30/07/2025 11:33:00 AM		Date Last Printed: 30/07/2025 11:33:00 AM	

Stillborn Payment**Background**

Stillborn Baby Payment assists with the extra costs associated with a stillborn child. The current rate of payment is a \$4,326.57 lump sum for each stillborn child.

A customer may be eligible for Stillborn Baby Payment where they, or their partner, meet Australian Residence requirements, income test requirements, would have been the primary carer of a stillborn child, and:

- the child would have been a Family Tax Benefit (FTB) child of the customer had the child been born alive and at any time within 26 weeks of the delivery
- they would have been eligible to receive FTB
- they did not receive Parental Leave Pay for the same child.

When assessing a claim for Stillborn Baby Payment, the Agency uses the definition, set out by the Department of Social Services, as a baby who weighed at least 400 grams at delivery or whose period of gestation was at least 20 weeks, who has not breathed since delivery and whose heart has not beaten since delivery.

To qualify, customers must have a combined adjusted taxable income \$77,177 or less in the 6-month period beginning on the day of the baby's delivery or be eligible for FTB Part A for another child within 52 weeks of the stillbirth.

Customers can claim Stillborn Baby Payment through their myGov Centrelink online account, by completing a paper form issued when they are in hospital containing a doctor/midwife declaration that is used as verification of the stillbirth, or by calling the Child Bereavement and Double Orphan Pension Helpdesk on 1800 118 388.

Other suitable verification may include a letter from the hospital from the doctor/midwife or appropriate hospital representative or, if a home delivery, a letter from the doctor/midwife in attendance of the delivery.

Customers meeting criteria for both Parental Leave Pay and Stillborn Baby Payment can choose which payment is the best financial decision for their family. For multiple births, Parental Leave Pay may be paid for one child and Stillborn Baby Payment for the other child, or children, or Stillborn Baby Payment may be paid for each baby.

Ombudsman Investigation into the Targeted Compliance Framework

Issue

What is the Government doing to address issues raised in the Commonwealth Ombudsman's report into the Targeted Compliance Framework?

Headline Response

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and Services Australia are supporting the Commonwealth Ombudsman's current investigation into the Targeted Compliance Framework. Services Australia will carefully consider and respond to the Ombudsman's recommendations, in collaboration with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

Facts and Figures

- In July 2024, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations paused cancellations of people's income support for 'persistent mutual obligation failures' after they became concerned that the decisions may not be valid due to the absence of discretion in the decision-making process.
- On 4 December 2024, the Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations advised the Commonwealth Ombudsman that, contrary to legislative changes in 2022 that required consideration of a job seeker's circumstances before deciding to cancel income support, decisions to cancel income support had occurred automatically.
- On 4 February 2025, the Ombudsman announced the commencement of an investigation into the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and Services Australia's (the Agency) cancellation of income support payments under the Targeted Compliance Framework.

If pressed

Why did Services Australia not change its processes in 2022?

- The Agency did not change its processes when the amendment was introduced in April 2022 as the Agency was instructed that the intent of the amendment was to support existing practices, for example, temporary pauses of compliance processes during emergencies such as a pandemic or natural disaster.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Tina Anderson
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Families and Participation Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000043
Date Updated: 11/07/2025 12:06:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 11/07/2025 12:06:00 PM

On automated decision making

- In part, the Targeted Compliance Framework did include human decision-making. Decisions about whether a job seeker had a reasonable excuse for not meeting their requirements were made by a staff member. In the absence of a reasonable excuse from the job seeker, cancellation was then applied without further discretion.

On remediation

- The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and the Agency have finalised remediation for cancellations for 'persistent mutual obligation failures' that occurred between 8 April 2022 and 4 July 2024.

On customer deaths

- It is not a routine practice for the Agency to record a cause of death on an individual's record.
- During the remediation process, no representation was made to the Agency by family members or next of kin in relation to deceased customers.
- The Agency is not aware of any connection between the cancellation of payments and the persons' deaths.

Policy Commitments

- The Government is committed to returning the Targeted Compliance Framework to lawful operation, with additional steps to ensure the protection of the most vulnerable people in our community.

Background

The Targeted Compliance Framework is the framework used by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, employment service providers and the Agency to manage compliance with mutual obligation requirements for individuals receiving income support.

Recent Media

- 4 June 2025 – The Canberra Times
[Ombudsman expands scope of investigation into JobSeeker cancellations](#)

Trust Exchange Proof of Concept

Headline Response

Services Australia is collaborating with the Department of Finance and the Australian Taxation Office on an extension to the Australian Government Digital ID System to support Verifiable Credentials and digital wallets.

As part of this work, Services Australia completed the Trust Exchange proof of concept, testing how Verifiable Credentials and the myGov app wallet can be used by real people in real-life use cases.

Services Australia is ready to support the Department of Finance, who is responsible for the Digital ID Program, on future next steps.

Facts and Figures

- The Trust Exchange Proof of Concept builds on the Government's investment in the Digital ID System, to issue Verifiable Credentials on behalf of government entities.
- The Trust Exchange Proof of Concept includes the ability for customers to share selected, verified details from their credentials within their digital wallet, to access the services they need.
- Four Trust Exchange Proof of Concepts were completed between November 2024 and January 2025:
 - Using Medicare cards, Centrelink Concession cards and Department of Veterans' Affairs Veterans' cards as Verifiable Credentials to register as a new patient at a medical practice.
 - Allowing a user to add identity information from an Australian Passport as a verified ID to their myGov App wallet.
 - Using a Verifiable Credential (derived from the date of birth on the user's ImmiCard) to prove that the holder is over 18 years old, to enter a licenced premises.
 - Using a Verifiable Credential of the Medicare Card to support the identity checking processes when registering as a new customer at a bank.
- In May 2025, an independent review found that the proof of concept achieved its outcomes. The findings from the proof of concept are now informing the design of a second phase.

Contact: Lisa Jansen	Cleared by: Jonathon Thorpe
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Customer and Staff Digital Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000055
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 1:44:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 1:44:00 PM

- The Proof of Concept aims to give individuals control over the information they share. This will limit the need for third parties to store government-issued credentials, including ID documents, cards and certificates - reducing the potential privacy impact of data breaches.
- The Proof of Concept tested a decentralised solution, where the individual's credentials remain at the originating source, and are only made available on the individual's personal device. This means there is no central store of ID documents, entitlement cards or credentials.

Policy Commitments

- In the 2024-25 Budget, the Government invested \$23.4 million for the Department of Finance, the Australian Taxation Office and Services Australia to pilot the use of government digital wallets and Verifiable Credentials. Services Australia was allocated \$11.4 million in the 2024–25 financial year to develop a Proof of Concept to extend the Digital ID Exchange to support Verifiable Credentials.

Vaccine Claims

COVID-19 Vaccine Claims Scheme

Issue

How many COVID-19 vaccine claims are still being worked on at Services Australia?

Headline Response

The COVID-19 Vaccine Claims Scheme demonstrates the Government's commitment to supporting individuals throughout the approved vaccine program. Claim processing times vary due to complexity of evidence provided and where medical or legal expertise is deemed necessary.

Talking Points

CLAIMS		
Claims in Progress	In progress	570
	Need further information	247
	Total claims in progress	817
Claims Finalised	Withdrawn	1,048
	Not payable	2,602
	Paid	495
	Total claims finalised	4,145
Total Claims Received		4,962

- The COVID-19 Vaccine Claims Scheme (the Scheme) provides compensation in cases of moderate to severe adverse reactions for Therapeutic Goods Administration approved COVID-19 vaccines.
- AstraZeneca, Pfizer, Moderna and Novavax COVID-19 vaccines are covered under the Scheme.
- Services Australia (the Agency) administers the Scheme on behalf of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, which maintains policy responsibility.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Cathy Toze
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Capability and Partnered Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000044
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 3:27:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 3:27:00 PM

Vaccine Claims

- Ten clinical conditions and administration-related injuries are covered under the Scheme. Compensation is payable where all eligibility criteria are met, including the hospitalisation requirement and minimum losses.
- On 24 September 2024, the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing updated the Scheme policy to broaden the review of decision rights for customers.
- On 30 September 2024, the Scheme closed to new claims.
- As at 30 June 2025, 495 claims have been paid to the value of \$45.8 million.
- The Agency will continue to assess all claims received on or before 30 September 2024.
- If individuals have queries on the progress of their claim, the Agency can be contacted on 1800 813 167 or by email at:
COVID19.vaccine.claims.scheme@servicesaustralia.gov.au.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

The Government established the COVID-19 Vaccine Claims Scheme to provide further assurance and confidence to patients and health professionals in the COVID-19 vaccine rollout.

The Scheme responded to calls from peak bodies – including the Australian Medical Association and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, and medical indemnity insurers – for extended medical indemnity coverage for health professionals and their patients given the unique nature of the pandemic and response.

The Scheme is intended to provide a similar level of compensation to what individuals would receive through a court-based personal injury claim, without the need to pursue costly and time-consuming litigation. However, individuals can seek compensation through the courts either as an alternative to compensation under the Scheme or simultaneously with the Agency.

There has been parliamentary interest on Scheme payout amounts, calculations and timeframes for claim determinations. The Agency releases data around the Scheme periodically, ensuring the privacy of individuals is not compromised.

The Scheme does not have an overall cap on compensation paid to eligible claimants. The Commonwealth pays all payable claims under the Scheme.

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Comcare charge against Services Australia for Airport West matter

Issue

Why has Services Australia been charged by the Health and Safety Regulator over the stabbing of a staff member?

Headline Response

Services Australia has cooperated with Comcare during its 2-year investigation. The matter is now before the Magistrates Court and it is not appropriate for the Government to comment on the matter at this stage.

Facts and Figures

- On 23 May 2023, Elijah Chase entered the Airport West Service Centre and stabbed a staff member, Joanne Cassar.
- On the same day, Services Australia (the Agency) notified Comcare of a serious incident. Comcare investigators attended the site to commence a monitoring compliance activity. Following the site visit, Comcare commenced an investigation.
- On 24 May 2023, the former Minister for Government Services, the Hon Bill Shorten announced the engagement of the former Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police, Mr Graham Ashton AM APM, to conduct a review of the Agency's security risk management practices.
- In July 2023, Mr Ashton concluded his Security Risk Management Review and made 44 recommendations.
- On 13 October 2023, the former Minister announced that the Government would act on all 44 recommendations. The Agency commenced a Security Risk Management Review Program to implement the recommendations.

Policy Commitments

- The Government has committed \$361 million, \$46.9 million through the 2023–24 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook and \$314.1 million over the 2024–25 and 2025–26 financial years through the 2024–25 Budget to the Agency to respond to the Security Risk Management Review.

Contact: s22 and s22	Cleared by: Randall Brugeaud
Contact No: s22 and s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Wellbeing and HR Support, and Legal Services Divisions	PDR Number: QB25-000058
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 4:25:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 4:25:00 PM

Background

Between 25 May 2023 and October 2024, Comcare issued the Agency with statutory notices requiring the Agency to produce documents and answer questions. The Agency responded to all notices and produced over 1,000 documents.

The Agency has knowledge of Comcare having conducted interviews with 30 Agency workers.

On 7 March 2024, Comcare advised the Agency that it had received a request for Comcare to prosecute an alleged work health and safety breach regarding the incident. Comcare are not obliged to and did not advise who requested for the Agency to be prosecuted. Comcare advised that its investigation was ongoing.

On 20 November 2024, the Comcare inspector advised the Agency that he had reached the view there were reasonable grounds to believe the Agency may have committed criminal offences under the Act. The Agency declined Comcare's invitation to participate in a voluntary interview.

On 22 May 2025, Comcare filed and served on the Agency a charge and summons alleging that the Commonwealth (through the Agency) failed to comply with its health and safety duty and that failure exposed one or more individuals to the risk of death or serious injury.

The charge alleges the Agency failed to take five measures to protect workers, relating to security guard staffing, managed entry into the Service Centre and sharing of images of aggressive customers.

The first mention scheduled for 1 July 2025 was adjourned. The next mention is on 24 September 2025 at the Broadmeadows Magistrates Court.

Maddocks and Garry Livermore KC are engaged to advise and represent the Agency in the proceedings.

Public comment about the charge, or the safety and security enhancements made by the Agency since the incident in direct response to a question about the charge, could be criticised as interfering with the proceedings.



Government agency charged after worker assault

26 May 2025

Services Australia has been charged with breaching federal work health and safety laws after a worker was violently attacked at a Melbourne Centrelink office.

Following a Comcare investigation, the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions has filed a single charge alleging Services Australia failed to comply with its duties under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act).

The incident happened at the Airport West Centrelink office on 23 May 2023. A Centrelink worker suffered serious injuries when they were stabbed by an individual at the workplace.

Comcare's investigation found that Services Australia failed to comply with its primary health and safety duty to ensure, so far as was reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers (section 19(1) of the WHS Act).

The charge alleges Services Australia failed to undertake a range of measures to eliminate or minimise the risk of physical violence to workers, including:

- Providing at least two uniformed security guards at the workplace at all times, including one guard inside the public entrance
- Managing entry to the workplace
- Giving the service centre manager the authority to decide whether managed entry to the workplace should be implemented and remain in place.

The charge is a Category 2 criminal offence under the WHS Act, carrying a maximum penalty of \$1.5 million.

The matter is listed for mention in the Broadmeadows Magistrates' Court on 1 July 2025.

Media contact

E: media@comcare.gov.au

Services Australia 2025-26 Budget Measures

Headline Response

The goal of Services Australia is to make government services simple, so people can get on with their lives.

As part of the 2025-26 Portfolio Budget Statements, the Government has provided Services Australia with additional funding for Budget measures of \$53.2 million in 2025-26 and a total of \$173.7 million from 2025-26 to 2028-29.

BUDGET MEASURES LED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, DISABILITY AND AGEING

Strengthening Medicare

- This measure will expand eligibility for all GP bulk billing incentives to all Australians, supporting GPs to bulk bill an additional 15 million people. The measure is expected to increase the GP bulk billing rate from 77.4 per cent to 87.6 per cent.
- This measure will also implement the Stronger Medicare Bulk Billing Clinics Program, which provides an additional payment valued at 12.5 per cent of Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) benefits for GP non-referred attendance services if practices commit to bulk bill all of these services.
- This measure will provide MRI licences to 3 hospitals from 1 July 2025:
 - Lakeview Private, Norwest NSW,
 - Barwon Health North, Geelong VIC, and
 - Sandringham Hospital, Sandringham VIC.
- This measure will also list new and amended services on the MBS.
- Services Australia (the Agency) has received \$214.5 million from 2025-26 to 2028-29 to implement this measure.

Strengthening Medicare – Women's Health

- This measure increases access to long-acting reversible contraception MBS items, including:
 - Increase the MBS fee for 4 existing MBS items.
 - Create 3 new MBS items for nurse practitioners to use for long-acting reversible contraception items.

Contact: Angela Diamond	Cleared by: Randall Brugeaud
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: CFO Division	PDR Number: QB25-000046
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 1:11:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 1:11:00 PM

- Create 2 new MBS items that provide a percentage additional fee loading (at 40 per cent) to encompass the existing 4 long-acting reversible contraception items.
- Services Australia has received \$2.9 million in 2025-26 and \$3.8 million from 2025-26 to 2028-29 to administer this measure.

Strengthening Medicare – Expanding Medicare Urgent Care Clinics

- This measure will boost the Medicare Urgent Care Clinics program with a further 50 Medicare Urgent Care Clinics (bringing the total to 137 nationally).
- This measure will also extend MBS billing for 10 state-funded urgent care sites in Victoria and extend the Batemans Bay Medicare Urgent Care Clinic's opening hours.
- Services Australia has received \$2.4 million from 2025-26 to 2027-28 to cover MBS flow-on costs associated with the additional clinics.

Strengthening Medicare – Health Workforce

- This measure will help attract more doctors to vocational GP training by allowing more leave types for GP registrars.
- This includes:
 - 5 days of paid leave per year to prepare for exams and assessments
 - 20 weeks of paid parental leave for eligible GP registrars
 - a \$30,000 incentive payment to first-year GP registrars on Commonwealth-funded pathways, paid in monthly instalments, and
 - indexation of existing non-cash payments (NCP), consistent with Wage Cost Index.
- Services Australia has received \$1.3 million from 2025-26 through to 2028-29 to support the implementation of this measure.

Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme – New and Amended Listings

- The Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme provides subsidised access to medicines to Australian residents and overseas visitors from countries under Reciprocal Health Care Agreements.
- The Agency has received \$0.5 million from the 2025–26 financial year through to the 2028–29 financial year to list new medicines on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and expands access to others. It will provide better treatment and improved health for Australians.
- The Agency also received \$0.4 million in 2024-25 for this measure.

Improving Access to Medicines and Pharmacy Programs

- This measure will strengthen pharmaceutical services within Australia through:
 - changing the wholesale mark-up tiers of pharmaceutical benefits, and
 - continuing the mandate to use an electronic prescribing system for all dangerous and high-cost drugs.
- The wholesale mark-up is paid directly to community pharmacies, who then pass on to their relevant wholesaler.
- The mandate for electronic prescribing was introduced in the 2023-24 Budget to increase patient safety and reduce inappropriate access to dangerous drugs. This measure continues this mandate to 30 June 2026.
- This measure builds on the 2024-25 Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements measure *New Government Offer for a Pharmaceutical Wholesaler Agreement*.
- Services Australia has received \$0.8 million in 2025-26 to implement this measure.

CROSS PORTFOLIO BUDGET MEASURES**Savings from External Labour – Further Extension**

- This measure extends the 2024-25 Budget measure Savings from External Labour – extension to 2028-29.
- This measure will harvest \$54.4 million from the Services Australia Budget in 2028-29 as a result of savings from external labour utilised by the Agency.

BUDGET MEASURES LED BY THE NATIONAL INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS AGENCY**Closing the Gap – Further Investments**

- This measure will re-profile funding for the Community Development Program.
- The re-profile of funding reduced the Agency's budget by \$2.8 million in 2024-25 and by \$7.1 million in 2025-26, before an \$11.8 million increase in the Agency's budget in 2026-27.

BUDGET MEASURES LED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**Building Australia's Future – Improving Outcomes in Australian Schools**

- This measure is for Services Australia to update websites and systems for the new 3-day guarantee of the childcare subsidy. Families will get 3 days of Child Care Subsidy per week without needing to complete an activity test.
- Services Australia will be partially funded via a Section 74 arrangement with the Department of Education for this measure.

PRE-ELECTION ECONOMIC AND FISCAL OUTLOOK MEASURES**Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme**

- This measure provides a 25 per cent increase in rates of assistance over two years to the Tasmanian Freight Equalisations Scheme.
- The Agency has been provided \$3.5 million in 2025-26 and \$0.5 million in 2026-27 to provide updates to information and communications technology systems, new communications products and to process additional claims under the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme.

Services Australia Call Wait Times & Processing Wait Times

Issue

What action is the Government taking to address wait times for payments and services?

Headline Response

To ensure Services Australia was able to sustainably deliver services to Australians, government funding was increased to support an additional 3,000 frontline staff in the latter part of 2023 and into January 2024. This has brought service delivery performance back into expected timeframes. Services Australia continues to make improvements to its services to support Australians in need.

Facts and Figures

- Following the injection of an extra 3,000 staff approximately 18 months ago, Services Australia (the Agency) has made significant improvements in the delivery of services.
- These extra staff helped reduce call wait times, significantly reduced congestion messaging and vastly improved processing times across nearly every work type.
- Since these new staff commenced, the Agency has reduced Centrelink claims from over 238,100 (or 66 per cent) to just over 123,200. Medicare activities have dropped by over 622,000 activities (or 73 per cent) to just under 234,000. Since 30 November 2023, Child Support work on hand has reduced by 59,234 activities (or 31.8 per cent).
- The Agency is now answering Centrelink calls approximately 5 minutes faster and Medicare customer calls 14 minutes faster than in January 2024. Child Support calls are 6 minutes slower than in January 2024. Congestion messaging has reduced by 85 per cent.
- These reductions have enabled further improvements, like offering callbacks on some phone lines, so customers don't have to stay on the phone while waiting to get to the front of the queue.
- Additionally, most customers (67.5 per cent) are being served within 15 minutes at 318 service centres across Australia.

Contact: Mark Cousins	Cleared by: Bo Robertson
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Operations Management Division	PDR Number: QB25-000035
Date Updated: 28/07/2025 10:13:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 28/07/2025 10:13:00 AM

Calls & Processing

If pressed on current delivery times

- The Agency hosts approximately 8.9 million Centrelink, Medicare and Child Support customer contacts each week across face-to-face, digital and telephony channels.
 - Of these, approximately 88 per cent arrive by digital channels and 12 per cent by face-to-face service centres or over the phone.
- In the last 7 days ending 27 July 2025, 1.4 million customer outcomes were completed by staff:
 - 202,000 people were served in person at one of 318 face-to-face service centres.
 - 243,000 Centrelink calls were answered, 65,200 claims and 281,000 non-claim work items were finalised.
 - 131,000 Health calls were answered, 288,000 claims and 31,400 non-claim work items were finalised.
 - 28,800 Child Support calls were answered, and 84,600 work items were finalised.
 - 290,000 calls received were self-managed by customers through phone self-service.
- In the last 7 days ending 27 July 2025, the average speed of answer for:
 - Centrelink was approximately 18 minutes.
 - Medicare Customer was approximately 15 minutes.
 - Medicare Provider was 6 minutes.
 - Child Support was 16 minutes.
- During the 2024-25 financial year, the Agency processed more than 484.1 million Centrelink claims and Medicare services, and 3.8 million Child Support activities, supporting families to help with the costs of raising children.

If pressed on Social Security Processing Improvements

- The Agency has made significant inroads to reduce processing times. Across Social Security, the average days to process activities are as follows:

Social Security claim type	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
ABSTUDY - Non-Schooling A	28	25
ABSTUDY - Pensioner Education Supplement	11	7
ABSTUDY - Schooling A	22	15
Additional Child Care Subsidy Child Wellbeing Application	11	4
Additional Child Care Subsidy Child Wellbeing Certificate –	12	4

Calls & Processing

Social Security claim type	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Exceptional Circumstances		
Additional Child Care Subsidy Child Wellbeing Determination Exceptional Circumstances	12	4
Additional Child Care Subsidy Grandparent	47	23
Additional Child Care Subsidy Temporary Financial Hardship	51	21
Additional Child Care Subsidy Transition to Work	68	26
Age Pension	76	37
Assistance for Isolated Children	0	0
Austudy	56	32
Carer Allowance	42	12
Carer Payment	54	15
Child Care Subsidy	24	8
Crisis Payment	3	1
Dad and Partner Pay	63	4
Disability Support Pension	93	52
Double Orphan Pension	8	5
Essential Medical Equipment	42	19
Ex-Carer Allowance (Child) Health Care Card	8	5
Family Tax Benefit Lump Sum	13	3
Family Tax Benefit New Claim	47	8
Fares Allowance	0	0
Farm Household Allowance	48	35
Foster Child Health Care Card	22	14
Home Equity Access Scheme	65	60
JobSeeker Payment	22	9
Low Income Card	53	20
Mobility Allowance	29	24
Paid Parental Leave	25	3
Parenting Payment Partnered	52	22
Parenting Payment Single	28	18
Pensioner Education Supplement	20	21
Seniors Health Card	42	20
Special Benefit	20	14
Status Resolution Support Services	11	12
Stillborn Baby Payment	8	5
Tertiary Access Payment	42	16
Youth Allowance Apprentice	62	37
Youth Allowance Jobseekers	26	11
Youth Allowance Students	54	29

Calls & Processing

If pressed on Disability Support Pension Processing Improvements

- The Agency is committed to improving service delivery for people with disability.
- Disability Support Pension claims are very complex and take longer to assess as they are lifelong payments, and, as such, more information is often required than for other income support payments.
- As at 30 June 2025, when compared to the end of the 2023-24 financial year, Disability Support Pension claims on hand have reduced by 14,900 (55 per cent) and over standard claims by 10,100 (94 per cent).
 - Of the 12,000 claims on hand 3,700 (31 per cent) are actionable and 8,300 (69 per cent) are on hold awaiting further information or assessment.
- Around 68 per cent of customers receive another payment (e.g. Jobseeker payments) while waiting on a Disability Support Pension outcome.
- Agency decisions on Disability Support Pension claims are informed by comprehensive assessments by its qualified health professionals. Assessments are based on each person's circumstances and consider all available medical evidence from treating doctors and health professionals, including specialists.
- The Agency prioritises and fast-tracks Disability Support Pension claims for people experiencing financial hardship or for those who are likely to be manifestly eligible, including due to a terminal illness.
- Some Disability Support Pension claims can take longer than others for varying reasons, including the need for comprehensive medical assessments, complex circumstances, or time required to get more details to help finalise claims.

Disability Support Pension Claims on Hold	
Awaiting the return of an external medical assessment	1,400
Awaiting an internal Medical Assessment	1,000
Referred for a Job Capacity Assessment	4,200
Awaiting customer to supply information	600
Other	1,100

If pressed on Age Pension Processing Improvements

- The Agency is committed to improving service delivery for older Australians.
- Age Pension claims are very complex and take longer to assess as they are lifelong payments, and as such, more information is often required than for other income support payments.
- As at 30 June 2025, when compared to the end of the 2023-24 financial year, Age Pension claims on hand have reduced by 10,800 (37 per cent) and over standard claims by 8,800 (53 per cent).

Calls & Processing

- Of the 18,500 claims on hand 6,700 (36 per cent) are actionable and 11,800 (64 per cent) are on hold.
- Claims may be placed on hold due to additional information required from the customer. Many customers have complicated financial affairs (e.g. family or business trusts, investments, superannuation, real estate assets, foreign pensions and inheritances) requiring assessment against the income and assets test.
- These assessments can take an extended period to conduct and complete the corresponding report/s.
- Delays can often occur if customers fail to provide all the required documentation in a timely manner.
- The Agency continues to train more staff in this complex work and expects to see the average processing time fall even further as their proficiency grows.
- The Agency urges anyone waiting on these claim types to go online and check there are no tasks that need to be completed.
- Those nearing Age Pension age can apply up to 13 weeks earlier so their claim can be assessed before they turn Age Pension age.

Age Pension Claims on Hold	
Awaiting customer to supply information	5,700
Awaiting complex assessments of income and assets for specialised staff	5,200
Awaiting Centrelink International Services Assessment	100
Other	800

If pressed on Health (Medicare) Processing Improvements

- As at 30 June 2025, the Agency has made significant inroads to reduce processing times. Across Health, the average days to process activities are as follows:

Health Services - Claims	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Aged Care - Customer	52	72
Aged Care - Customer - Home Care	42	44
Aged Care - Customer - Residential Care	46	45
Aged Care - Provider	10	6
Aged Care - Provider - Home Care	33	1
Aged Care - Provider - Residential Care	0	1
Australian Immunisation Register	6	4
Australian Organ Donor Register	10	3
Bulk Bill	3	1
Complex Drugs	6	1
Continence Aids Payment Scheme	49	16
Disaster Health Care Assistance Scheme	14	12

Calls & Processing

Health Services - Claims	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
eBusiness	19	12
External Breast Prosthesis	6	3
Healthcare Identifiers	8	6
Incentives	0	0
Medicare Eligibility & Enrolment	49	10
Medicare Entitlement Statement	82	27
Medicare Safety Net	15	17
Organisation Register	12	14
Patient Claims	9	2
Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme Patient Refunds	119	24
Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme Safety Net	98	12
Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme	6	3
Provider Registration	17	8
Simplified Billing	4	2
Veterans Affairs Processing	5	3

Health Services – Non-Claims	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Aged Care - Customer	18	21
Aged Care - Customer - Residential Care	148	163
Aged Care - Provider	96	15
Aged Care - Provider - Home Care	70	17
Aged Care Provider - Residential Care	0	1
Australian Immunisation Register	10	2
Australian Organ Donor Register	20	2
Boutique	36	3
Bulk Bill	154	144
Complex Drugs	4	1
Continence Aids Payment Scheme	60	18
eBusiness	89	51
eServices	75	16
Healthcare Identifiers	16	25
Home Vacation Review	151	182
Incentives	11	3
Medicare Eligibility & Enrolment	28	13
Medicare Entitlement Statement	69	19
Medicare Payments - Customer	54	14
Medicare Payments - Provider	172	182
Medicare Safety Net	194	202
My Medicare		11
Organisation Register	66	4
Patient Claims	63	78
Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme	7	3

Calls & Processing

Health Services – Non-Claims	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Provider Registration	8	21
Simplified Billing	247	233
Veterans Affairs Processing	30	35

If pressed on Medicare pressure points

- The Medicare Entitlement Statement peak period commenced in July and will extend through September/October. An additional 70 staff are being upskilled in Medicare Entitlement Statement to help manage the expected increase in workload, increasing the overall workforce to just over 200.
 - There were 2,500 Medicare Entitlement Statement claims processed per day of the fourth week in the 2025-26 financial year, compared to 2,500 per day for the comparative week in the 2024-25 financial year.
- Veterans Affairs Processing continues to be a focus for the Agency, with upskilling of existing staff occurring to boost capacity. The learning pathway for Veterans Affairs is complex and requires staff to learn a number of separate processes to become fully proficient.
 - There have been significant improvements to the Veterans' Affairs work on hand during the 2024-25 financial year. As at 30 June 2025, there was 5,725 items on hand, compared to 15,053 items on hand at 30 June 2024.
 - There has been a significant increase in the number of Veterans' Affairs claims made through the online channel. This channel is more efficient for both claimants and processing staff. There has been an increase of 10.6 per cent of Veterans' Affairs claims received via the online channel for the 2024-25 financial year with 1.76 million lodged through the online channel, as opposed to 1.57 million in the 2023-24 financial year.

If pressed on Aged Care

- The Agency is committed to improving service delivery for Aged Care customers in preparation for the Aged Care Reform from 1 November this year.
- As at 30 June 2025, when compared to the end of the 2023-24 financial year, there are 5,900 (46 per cent) more Aged Care work claims on hand.
- The Agency has been focussed on completing the older and more complex work for our customers. This has meant the average days to process increased by 21 days for Aged Care Customers and by 2 days for Home Care.
- Some Aged Care claims can take longer than others for varying reasons including complex financial circumstances, or additional time required to gather further details to help finalise claims.

Calls & Processing

- The Agency has expanded its workforce to support the upcoming Aged Care Reform, increasing from 285 in July 2024 to 540 staff in July 2025 (an increase of 90 per cent or 255).

If pressed on Formal Reviews

- The Agency is committed to improving service delivery for people who lodge a formal review.
- Formal reviews are very complex and are carried out by specialised Authorised Review Officers.
- As at 30 June 2025, there were 72,772 formal reviews on hand. When compared to the end of the 2023-24 financial year, there are 18,410 (25 per cent) more formal reviews on hand.
- The Agency is boosting its Authorised Review Officer workforce to target additional effort on more complex and sensitive reviews with recruitment efforts commencing from 30 June 2025.

If pressed on Child Support

- The Agency is committed to improving service delivery for people who access Child Support.
- The Agency continues to reduce the Child Support backlog, and work on hand is around 129,836, which is 9.7 per cent (14,030) lower compared to 28 June 2024. Of this, 51,031 are work items relating to objections, changes of assessment and care changes.
- The Agency received further funding in the 2024-25 Budget which has helped to lift performance. The Agency has boosted its Child Support workforce by around 500 (or 37 per cent) during the 2024-25 financial year, enabling the upskilling of more experienced staff to help recover backlogs and service standard for the more complex priorities.
- Child Support is a complex program and staff take time to build capability and confidence in this work. As staff embed their skills, work on hand will continue to reduce.
- Child Support matters often take longer to assess as they are complex and sensitive scenarios, often involving disagreements between separated parties.
- Across Child Support, the average days to process activities are as follows.

Child Support Activities	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
New Registrations	31	35
Change of Assessment applications	83	76

Calls & Processing

Child Support Activities	Figures Represent an Average Across the	
	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Objections (Domestic)	97	194
Objections (International)	122	125
Workload (intrays)	17	17

If pressed on 2021-22 and 2023-24 Performance and Data Comparisons

- The data referenced by some media outlets does not reflect current service delivery performance. Also, it does not include important context necessary for interpreting trends in wait times accurately over time– such as the impact of additional temporary staff during COVID-19.
- Additionally, some of the data used by media outlets reflects the full 2023-24 financial year. This includes 6 months before the progressive recruitment and onboarding of the additional staff when the Agency acknowledges that performance was not at expected levels.
- Since this injection of staff, both claim processing times and call wait times have progressively improved.
- For example, overall Centrelink call wait times have fallen from an average of more than 30 minutes in 2023-24 to just over 21 minutes in 2024-25. For Health customers, its nearly halved, from almost 23 minutes to just over 13 minutes over the same period. Almost half of all Centrelink calls were answered within 15 minutes.
- Congestion messaging has reduced significantly from around 15 million in the 2023-24 financial year to 2 million in 2024-25, allowing more customers to access services when they need it.
- The initial extra funding the Agency received for additional staff was specifically for Social Security and Health, so that's where the improvements have been delivered so far.
- Although Child Support call wait times have increased, the Agency received further funding in the 2024-25 Budget, which will help lift performance across Child Support.
- The Agency will continue to onboard new staff in Child Support to address backlogs and expect to see improvements as these staff are fully trained.
- The Agency has seen significant improvements in the 2024-25 financial year. This data is available on data.gov.au.

Calls & Processing

CLAIM	AVERAGE PROCESSING TIME			% change (from 2018- 19 FY)
	Days to process (2018-19 FY)	Days to process (2023-24 FY)	Days to process (2024-25 FY)	
Age Pension	75 days	76 days	37 days	-50% ▼
ABSTUDY Schooling	15 days	22 days	15 days	0%
Carer Allowance	59 days	42 days	12 days	-80% ▼
Carer Payment	64 days	54 days	15 days	-77% ▼
Crisis Payment	1 day	3 day	1 day	0
Commonwealth Seniors Health Card	73 days	42 days	20 days	-73% ▼
Disability Support Pension	88 days	93 days	53 days	-40% ▼
Family Tax Benefit New Claim	36 days	47 days	8 days	-78% ▼
Family Tax Benefit Lump Sum	22 days	13 days	3 days	-86% ▼
JobSeeker Payment	24 days (Newstart)	22 days	9 days	-63% ▼
Low Income Card	31 days	53 days	20 days	-35% ▼
Paid Parental Leave	21 days	25 days	3 days	-86% ▼
Parenting Payment Single	48 days	28 days	18 days	-63% ▼
Parenting Payment Partnered	58 days	52 days	22 days	-62% ▼
Youth Allowance Jobseekers	27 days	26 days	11 days	-59% ▼

CALLS	2018-19 FY	2023-24 FY	2024-25 FY
Congestion messaging	1,331,654*	14,975,078	2,173,375
Average Speed of Answer (Agency wide)	10:31	19:37	15:22
Average Speed of Answer (Social Security and Welfare)	15:32	30:37	21:48
Average Speed of Answer (Health Customer)	6:59	22:49	13:12
Average Speed of Answer (Child Support)	12:45	10:50	15:24
Calls Answered within 15 minutes (Social Security and Welfare)	8,713,535 (53.7%)	4,168,418 (43.7%)	5,112,733 (46.9%)
Total Handled Calls (Agency wide)	50,115,614*	53,923,043	44,269,308

*During 2018-2019 financial year, the Agency used call blocking. This provided a busy signal to customers and is not included in congestion messages or handled calls numbers.

Centrepay Reforms and Regulatory Actions

Issue

What action is the Government taking to ensure customers who use Centrepay are protected from financial exploitation?

Headline Response

In December 2024, the Government announced its support of Services Australia's proposed reforms to Centrepay, which focus on ensuring Centrepay helps Australians and reduces financial risk. These proposed reforms are expected to be announced in the coming weeks and implemented progressively from November 2025.

Facts and Figures

- In the 2024–25 financial year, 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025:
 - On average, 609,450 customers used the Centrepay service per month.
 - There was a total of 23 million Centrepay deductions worth \$3 billion.
 - 81.9 per cent of the value of deductions through Centrepay were for accommodation and utilities.
 - As at 30 June 2025, there were 10,969 approved Centrepay businesses.
 - 1.88 per cent of the value of all Centrepay deductions made were for consumer leases (down from 7.9 per cent in the 2020-2021 financial year).
- The proposed reforms aim to enhance customer protections and minimise the risk of financial exploitation by:
 - Removing high-risk or underutilised service reasons.
 - Strengthening policy and contracts to impose mandatory conditions on businesses.
 - Strengthening business application and onboarding processes.
 - Implementing strict compliance and complaints processes to ensure accountability.
- Remaining Centrepay products and services will continue with improved safeguards to reduce financial harm.

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Division: Communities	PDR Number: QB25-000036
Date Updated: 30/07/2025 11:32:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 30/07/2025 11:32:00 AM

- Once a decision is made on the proposed reforms, Services Australia (the Agency) will communicate directly with Centrepay registered businesses and Centrepay customers to outline changes to Centrepay and provide details of the phased implementation.
- The Agency has made significant improvements to Centrepay to prevent exploitation including setting target amounts for certain goods, providing better support for overpayment reimbursements, and introducing a dedicated Centrepay complaints process.
- To maintain the integrity of the Centrepay program, the Agency conducts regular assurance and compliance checks. It acts decisively against businesses found non-compliant with their Centrepay obligations, ensuring customers are safeguarded against financial harm.
- The Agency works closely with regulators, including the Australian Securities and Investments Commission and the Australian Energy Regulator, regarding Centrepay businesses that may breach regulatory requirements.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

Centrepay was first established in 1998 as a voluntary free bill paying service offered by the Agency for Centrelink customers. Centrepay helps reduce vulnerability by ensuring payments occur on time, protects against late fees, and allows customers to access goods and services they may otherwise not get without the guarantee of payment by the Centrepay service. Customers who get an eligible income support payment can use Centrepay to pay for approved goods and services with Centrepay registered businesses.

The Agency supports the Australian Securities and Investments Commission messaging around Stop Orders to prevent certain businesses from establishing new Centrepay deductions. This includes Indy-C Fashion and Accessories Pty Ltd, a household goods business, for non-compliance with the design and distribution obligations, and Coral Coast Distributors (Cairns) Pty Ltd, a household goods business, for similar issues.

The Australian Securities and Investments Commission pursued legal action against Darranda Pty Ltd, a consumer leasing business, for breaching the *National Consumer Credit Protection Act 2009* (Cth) (Credit Act) by operating a business model designed to circumvent consumer protections.

On 19 December 2024, following proceedings by the Australian Energy Regulator, the Federal Court of Australia imposed penalties totalling \$25 million on AGL Retail Energy Limited for failing to comply with Centrepay payment obligations.

Following proactive outbound engagement by the Agency in November 2024, Synergy, an energy and gas retailer in Western Australia, advised the Agency in March 2025 that they had identified customers who had account credits accrued through Centrepay deductions on utility accounts that were now closed.

Since the issue was identified, the Agency has been working collaboratively with Synergy to assist with the return of funds back to customers.

Synergy self-reported this issue to the Western Australia Economic Regulation Authority. Following the Economic Regulation Authority's investigation into this matter, they issued Synergy with a compliance enforcement (rectification) notice for breaching its Electricity Retail Licence.

Services Australia Claims & Payments Figures

Headline Response

As the Government’s primary service delivery agency, Services Australia supports millions of Australians each year by efficiently delivering high quality, accessible services and payments on behalf of government.

Facts and Figures

- Significant figures for the 2024-25 financial year:

CLAIMS	
Centrelink	3.5 million
Medicare (services)	480.6 million
Child support registrations	59,400

PAYMENTS	
Total payments	\$263.0 billion
Centrelink	\$163.8 billion
Medicare	\$97.2 billion
Child support facilitated	\$2.0 billion

CONTACTS	
Online transactions	1.1 billion
Call handled	44.3 million
Face-to-face contacts	10.7 million

- As at 3 July 2025:

AGENCY REACH			
State	Face-to-face Sites	Access Points	Agents
ACT	4	0	0
NSW	102	42	69
NT	16	8	58
QLD	70	32	81
SA	24	21	27
TAS	10	5	15
VIC	59	30	43
WA	33	51	74
Total	318	189	367

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Date Updated: 28/07/2025 10:21:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 28/07/2025 10:21:00 AM

Claims & Payments

- As at 27 July 2025:

MYGOV SIGN-INS	
Peak this financial year (FY) to date	2.8 million in one day (15 July 2025)
Peak in last Fortnight	2.8 million in one day (15 July 2025)
Average in 2025–26 FY to date (26 July 2025)	1.9 million per day
Average in 2024–25 FY	979,000 per day

MYGOV APP REGISTRATIONS	
Total registrations to date (26 July 2025)	8.2 million
Registrations for the week ending (27 July 2025)	110,000

DISASTER PAYMENTS ACTIVATED IN THE 2024-25 FY AS AT 27 JULY 2025	
NSW East Coast Severe Weather and Flooding – May 2025	
• Claims Granted	180,000
• Paid	\$212.4 million
• Individuals supported	245,000
• Portion of online claims	96%
• Calls answered	47,500
Western Queensland Heavy Rain & Flooding – March 2025	
• Claims Granted	2,000
• Paid	\$2.7 million
• Individuals supported	2,600
• Portion of online claims	96%
• Calls answered	1,200
New South Wales Ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred – March 2025	
• Claims Granted	43,700
• Paid	\$66.6 million
• Individuals supported	58,100
• Proportion of online claims	96%
Queensland Ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred – March 2025	
• Claims Granted	287,000
• Paid	\$447.7 million
• Individuals supported	388,000
• Proportion of online claims	97%

Claims & Payments

North Queensland Floods – January-February 2025	
• Claims Granted	55,200
• Paid	\$70.7 million
• Individuals supported	77,700
• Proportion of online claims	95%
Ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred – March 2025 / North Queensland Floods – January-February 2025	
• Calls answered	142,000
Bushfires in Western Victoria – December 2024	
• Claims Granted	200
• Paid	\$699,000
• Individuals supported	200
• Portion of online claims	97%
• Calls answered	300
Far West NSW Storms and Power Outages – October 2024	
• Claims Granted	100
• Paid	\$437,000
• Individuals supported	100
• Proportion of online claims	99 %
• Calls answered	500

*NSW and QLD ex TC share the same telephony queue. *From 11th March 2025 NSW and QLD ex TC DRA share the same telephony queue as Nth QLD Floods DRA – figures cannot be separated.

Social Security Claims Completed – 2024–25 Financial Year

Service Reason	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	UNK	VIC	WA
Families and Child Care	22,701	421,982	13,098	308,194	91,584	25,593	155	379,735	142,017
ACCS CWB Application	959	20,205	339	21,742	5,161	1,111	11	32,713	8,198
ACCS Grandparent	26	659	16	660	228	52	-	680	270
ACCS Temporary Financial Hardship	44	926	18	855	193	45	-	997	359
ACCS Transition to Work	29	756	39	892	260	69	-	736	402
ACCS CWB Certificate - Exc Circ - SA	276	4,931	133	4,152	796	173	<5	4,287	1,524
ACCS CWB Determination - Exc Circ - SA	150	4,329	135	4,192	1,148	353	-	3,359	1,605
Child Care Subsidy	7,496	131,101	3,639	92,905	26,492	6,515	49	110,533	42,516

Claims & Payments

Service Reason	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	UNK	VIC	WA
Dad and Partner Pay	-	23	<5	<5	<5	-	-	16	<5
Double Orphan Pension	-	33	<5	40	13	<5	-	46	17
Family Tax Benefit Lump Sum	329	10,664	301	7,679	2,506	888	7	9,009	3,938
Family Tax Benefit New Claim	5,387	116,682	5,170	88,457	26,593	8,405	58	101,032	41,038
Foster Child Health Care Card	20	342	8	306	119	26	-	340	141
Paid Parental Leave	7,964	130,879	3,245	85,910	27,943	7,921	27	115,652	41,828
Stillborn Baby Payment	21	452	51	402	130	32	-	335	180
Older Australians, Disabilities and Carers	8,159	229,179	5,318	146,483	55,868	18,050	1,914	175,231	66,824
Age Pension	2,525	75,659	1,299	50,288	18,643	6,338	1,759	57,660	24,828
Carer Allowance	1,266	44,203	1,059	27,646	10,863	3,476	10	35,176	11,185
Carer Payment	773	33,768	878	19,549	7,092	2,365	12	24,283	7,599
Disability Support Pension	1,624	42,396	1,687	30,483	10,417	3,707	111	33,685	11,563
Ex-Carer Allowance (Child) Health Care Card	131	1,408	14	1,223	458	138	-	1,766	596
Mobility Allowance	93	2,220	50	1,847	1,085	196	<5	1,909	710
Pensions Loan Scheme									
Home Equity Access Scheme	81	1,734	23	1,358	549	211	<5	1,531	665
Seniors Health Card	1,666	27,791	308	14,089	6,761	1,619	20	19,221	9,678
Youth, Education and Employment	12,264	310,992	15,101	230,860	70,327	22,389	255	279,181	107,232
Assistance for Isolated Children	50	1,726	288	2,611	481	202	<5	966	1,429
Austudy	577	12,898	231	9,515	3,183	929	14	14,692	4,811
Fares Allowance	44	548	82	785	207	241	<5	422	250

Claims & Payments

Service Reason	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	UNK	VIC	WA
JobSeeker Payment	6,298	159,217	8,315	120,098	36,854	11,287	95	143,623	55,629
Parenting Payment Partnered	508	13,825	746	9,657	3,091	928	<5	13,381	4,265
Parenting Payment Single	917	26,090	1,676	23,023	5,615	1,983	18	19,831	10,772
Pensioner Education Supplement	286	9,722	147	6,153	2,030	750	6	6,107	2,634
Special Benefit	154	4,859	72	2,686	744	171	14	3,808	1,251
Tertiary Access Payment	37	2,775	135	1,921	493	379	<5	2,288	568
Youth Allowance Apprentice	112	3,058	36	1,739	515	182	<5	3,105	803
Youth Allowance Jobseekers	1,011	27,333	2,854	25,460	6,771	2,442	61	20,990	10,646
Youth Allowance Students	2,270	48,941	519	27,212	10,343	2,895	36	49,968	14,174
Remote and ABSTUDY	171	8,779	3,100	7,982	2,248	487	13	2,430	3,234
ABSTUDY - Non-Schooling A	137	5,742	2,693	5,269	997	303	11	1,478	2,312
ABSTUDY - Schooling A	27	1,861	337	1,945	353	81	<5	193	696
ABSTUDY - PES	6	480	62	324	46	16	-	83	113
Farm Household Allowance	<5	696	8	444	852	87	<5	676	113
Cross Programme	3,205	73,301	5,481	67,769	22,422	8,288	104	85,658	33,194
Crisis Payment	1,500	45,768	5,032	43,184	11,965	3,896	62	26,517	20,121
Essential Medical Equipment	86	2,359	38	2,738	1,400	401	<5	1,955	762
Low Income Card	1,613	24,909	411	21,742	9,037	3,991	41	56,931	12,284
Status Resolution Support Services	6	265	-	105	20	-	-	255	27

- UNK refers to claims which location is unknown at the time of claim lodgement.
- To protect individuals' privacy, cell sizes of less than 5 are represented as "<5". Caution should be taken in re-calculating values from suppressed figures as it may provide incorrect results.

Claims & Payments

Strategic Performance Measures

- The Agency measures its performance against 7 Strategic Performance Measures, which outline the Agency's results across its 3 major programs: Social Security, Health, and Child Support.
- As at 31 March 2025, of the 7 Strategic Performance Measures:
 - 4 are On Track
 - 2 are Substantially On Track, and
 - 1 is Partially On Track.

Strategic Performance Measures (SPMs) results and targets				
SPM	Target 2023–24	Result 2023–24	Target 2024–25	FYTD Result to 31 March 2024–25
SPM 1: Customer satisfaction	≥85 out of 100	79.1 out of 100	≥85 out of 100	77.6 out of 100
SPM 2: Customer trust	≥72 out of 100	75.8 out of 100	≥74 out of 100	76.9 out of 100
SPM 3: Administrative correctness of payments – Existing methodology	≥98%	97.8%	≥98%	98.1%
SPM 4: Customers served within 15 minutes	≥70%	55.2%	≥70%	58.9%
SPM 5: Work processed within timeliness standards	≥90%	71.8%	≥90%	89.3%
SPM 6: Availability of digital channels	≥99%	99.9%	≥99%	99.7%
SPM 7: Tasks managed by customers in digital channels	≥82%	91.9%	≥83%	95.1%

On Track	Substantially On Track	Partially On Track
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- SPM 4 Result for the 2023-24 financial year represents 17.5 million customers served within 15 minutes.
- SPM 4 Result for the 2024-25 financial year to date represents 13.4 million customers served within 15 minutes.

Ombudsman Own Motion Investigation and Report into Child Support

Issue

What is the Government doing to address family and domestic violence, in particular, financial abuse in Child Support?

Headline

The Government is committed to supporting customers and staff experiencing family and domestic violence, including financial abuse.

Facts and Figures

- Services Australia (the Agency) has agreed to all 8 of the recommendations made by the Commonwealth Ombudsman's report *Weaponising Child Support: when the system fails* families published on 3 June 2025.
- The Agency will implement many of the recommendations by December 2025, with targeted operational-level changes to take effect within the next 3 months.
- To combat financial abuse over the next 3 months the Agency is:
 - Developing new Child Support staff guidance and a response framework to assist staff to identify, escalate and manage the risk of financial abuse through Child Support.
 - Strengthening the capacity and capability of Child Support debt management and collection so that it can proactively focus on customers who can pay but aren't.
 - Improving the accuracy of income estimates by requesting supporting evidence more often. This will reduce flow-on Child Support overpayments and debts, as well as Family Tax Benefit debts.
 - Improving customer and staff understanding of the Maintenance Action Test and exemption options for Family Tax Benefit payments, through better communication and operational materials that assist customers to receive the financial support they are entitled to.
- The Agency will also be prioritising Child Support service delivery resourcing and performance.
- Policy departments are also considering possible legislative and policy reform across government to address financial abuse risks in Child Support and to improve customer outcomes. Any legislative or policy reforms are a decision for Government.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Cathy Toze
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Families and Participation	PDR Number: QB25-000037
Date Updated: 16/07/2025 12:16:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 16/07/2025 12:16:00 PM

Policy Commitments

- The Government is conducting an audit of key Commonwealth systems to identify areas where they are being weaponised by perpetrators of family and domestic violence and stamp out opportunities for abuse.

Background

The Commonwealth Ombudsman commenced an own motion investigation into financial abuse through Child Support in February 2025. Following the report, Financial abuse: an insidious form of domestic violence, from the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services, and in tandem with an investigation of the Inspector-General of Taxation culminating in the report, Identification and management of financial abuse within the tax system. These reports suggest that financial abuse is pervasive and that perpetrators are weaponising the system to harm the other parent in their Child Support case and, in some instances, their children.

The Agency provided substantial and comprehensive information to support the investigation and was invited to review and comment on the findings and recommendations in April 2025.

The Ombudsman made eight broad ranging recommendations, including developing a publicly available strategy to address financial abuse through Child Support, a comprehensive review of the Change of Assessment process, strengthening Child Support compliance and enforcement programs, improving staff knowledge of financial abuse and pursuing options for legislative reform.

The Agency accepted all 8 recommendations and will consider and progress these in the context of the broader audit of Australian Government systems currently under way and coordinated by the Office for Women, which is focussed on strengthening systems to stamp out opportunities for systems abuse.

Some of the recommendations are not able to be implemented solely by the Agency and are dependent on the Department of Social Services, the Australian Taxation Office and future Government decisions. The Agency worked closely with the Department of Social Services and the Australian Taxation Office in developing the response and is currently collaborating with them to respond to the report, and progress broader legislative and policy changes.

To effectively tackle financial abuse, the Agency will review and uplift existing processes, business and system capabilities, as well as compliance and enforcement strategies. It is important that parallel policy and legislative reforms are also made to more effectively and systemically counter financial abuse and weaponisation and better protect vulnerable customers.

Support for Customers Impacted by Third Party Data Breaches

Issue

How does Services Australia support customers whose information has been impacted by third party data breaches?

Headline Response

Services Australia takes the protection of customer information seriously. Services Australia is committed to protecting customers from identity theft and supporting customers if their personal information has been lost, stolen, or exposed by a third party. Services Australia has procedures for how it responds to third party data breaches or compromised events.

Facts and Figures

- Third party organisations and individuals continue to experience data loss, often as the result of cyber-incidents. These incidents and scams, can result in the exposure of personally identifiable information, including identity credentials. This can expose individuals to the risk of identity theft.
- In some cases, these data breaches can involve Services Australia (the Agency) credentials, such as Medicare cards, or information that could be relevant to accessing a Services Australia record.
- The Agency is committed to protecting customers from identity theft and supporting customers if their personal information has been lost, stolen, or exposed by a third party.
- The Agency has procedures for how it responds to third party data breaches or compromised events. These outline how the Agency works with the third-party entity to enable the Agency to strengthen its controls around customer records.
- Many data breaches are high profile, receive significant media commentary, and/or result in large-scale impacts to mutual customers and organisations.
- The Agency collaborates with the National Office of Cyber Security and other Australian Government agencies and industry experts, such as IDCARE, to respond to data breaches and support impacted customers.
- The Agency provides information to customers about steps they can take to safeguard their personal information, which is publicly available on the Agency's website or by calling the Agency's Scams and Identity Theft Helpdesk.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Sharna Bartley
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Fraud Control and Investigation Division	PDR Number: QB25-000050
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 12:59:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 12:59:00 PM

Data Breaches

- Where appropriate, the Agency applies additional security measures to affected customer records to increase security and reduce the risk of future misuse.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Data Breaches

Background

Under the Notifiable Data Breaches Scheme, any organisation or agency covered by the *Privacy Act 1988*, must notify affected individuals and the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner when a data breach is likely to result in serious harm to an individual whose personal information is involved.

Third parties are responsible for managing their own data breaches. The Agency is not responsible for the handling of the incidents, including customer contact.

The Agency works with the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner to prepare any required program protocols for data breach events, which allows the Agency to match data provided with customer records in a way that complies with the Australian Privacy Principles and the *Privacy Act 1988* and remains consistent with good privacy practice.

The data matching process enables the Agency to identify customer records at increased risk of identity compromise and allows the Agency to apply additional security measures to these records where appropriate.

Timeline of significant Data Breaches and Agency consultation

Date	Event
August 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bloom Hearing Specialists – a national hearing specialist. • Meli – a not-for-profit community centre that provides services such as support for family violence, youth, and housing.
September 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texas Family Medical Centre – Family and general medical practice.
October 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Nursing Home Foundation – provides accommodation and community care services for elderly people from Chinese and Southeast Asian backgrounds.
November 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jewish Care – provides a range of aged care, in-home services, social services, disability support and Holocaust survivor support programs.
December 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muswellbrook Shire Council – a local government area in NSW. • Waverley Christian College – a co-educational independent Christian school.
January 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spectrum Medical Imaging – an independent radiology practice.
February 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genea – IVF clinic providing fertility treatments.
March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southern Regional Medical Group – Family and general medical practice.

Data Breaches

Date	Event
April 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hurwitz Geller – a chartered accountancy practice.• Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland – represents the needs and goals of multicultural communities, and provides aged care, health and employment programs.
May 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr Paul B Sparks – Cardiologist & Electrophysiologist at The Royal Melbourne Hospital and Director of Electrophysiology at Epworth Hospital.

Debt Management and Recovery

Issue

What action is Services Australia taking to recover overpayments and support customers who have been overpaid?

Headline Response

Services Australia provides support to customers to assist them in being paid the correct amount. Customers with a debt can self-manage debt repayments online using the myGov app, Services Australia's 'Money you owe' service, or by contacting Services Australia by phone or face to face in one of its Service Centres.

Facts and Figures

- When customers have been overpaid, Services Australia (the Agency) provides several options to help people manage and repay their debt, taking into account the person's individual circumstances. These include:
 - Withholding a percentage of payments for people in receipt of social security payments or allowances.
 - Providing the ability for people who are no longer receiving payments to use a number of repayment arrangement options.
- Flexible repayment options are also available where the person is experiencing family or domestic violence, financial hardship, or where there are other indicators of vulnerability.
- Anyone who owes a debt and is experiencing difficulty with repayments is encouraged to contact the Agency to discuss their circumstances. They can do this on the dedicated debt phone line (1800 076 072).
- The Agency has made enhancements to online services to allow people the flexibility during a crisis or disaster event to change or pause their repayment arrangements.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Robert Higgins
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Payment and Assurance Program and Appeals Division	PDR Number: QB25-000051
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 3:25:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 3:25:00 PM

Debt Management

- If people who are no longer receiving payments refuse to enter into a repayment arrangement with the Agency, further recovery action can occur. This can include:
 - garnisheeing money held on behalf of, or owed to, a customer, for example, from wages, income tax refunds or money held with a financial institution
 - issuing a Departure Prohibition Order, or
 - through civil legal action.

Total Value of Debts

- As at 30 June 2025:
 - The outstanding value of social security debts totalled \$4.74 billion, with 1.34 million debts owed by 780,404 customers.
 - 123,502 debts are currently temporarily written off to a total value of \$474.41 million.
- For the 2024–25 financial year, as at 30 June 2025:
 - 1.40 million debts have been raised with a total value of \$2.35 billion.
 - Of the raised debts, 513,985 with a value of \$43.75 million have been raised and waived.
- For the 2023–24 financial year there were:
 - 1.50 million debts raised to the total value \$2.50 billion.
 - 939,029 debts raised for recovery.
 - 603,348 debts raised and waived.
 - 110,993 debts temporarily written off to the total value of \$405.41 million.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

Australian National Audit Office Audit

On 31 May 2023, the Australian National Audit Office tabled its performance audit on 'Debt Management and Recovery in Services Australia'. The Audit examined whether the Agency has fit-for-purpose debt management and governance arrangements, effective strategies and processes, and assessed and reported on the effectiveness of activities undertaken. The Australian National Audit Office made 4 recommendations, aimed at:

- debt oversight arrangements,
- effectiveness and usability of policies and procedures,
- establishing a debt management strategy, and
- developing internal targets for performance.

The Agency acknowledges improvements can be made to the management and recovery of debts and is working with the relevant policy agencies to implement the recommendations.

Past use of External Collection Agents

As at 30 June 2023, the Agency ceased using External Collection Agents with all social security debt recovery now managed by Agency staff.

Customers are no longer repaying their debts through External Collection Agents. The Agency has been establishing repayment arrangements directly with customers. This change ensures customers deal with specialist Agency staff who understand their situation best, and who are experienced in supporting vulnerable people.

As at 30 June 2025, there were approximately 327 customers who were previously registered with External Collection Agents who are yet to establish a repayment arrangement with the Agency.

This has reduced from 592 customers since all debts were returned to the Agency in June 2023. The Agency will continue to seek to establish repayment arrangements with these customers.

Administration of Emergency Payments

Issue

What is the Australian Government doing to support Australians impacted by natural disasters?

Headline Response

The Australian Government is committed to supporting individuals impacted by natural disasters. Services Australia plays a key role in the delivery of support and services to those affected.

Facts and Figures

- For all disaster events activated in the 2024–25 financial year, as at midnight 27 July 2025, 568,000 claims have been granted and \$801.2 million paid:
 - 521,000 claims for Disaster Recovery Payment and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Payment have been granted, with \$596.3 million paid
 - 46,900 claims for Disaster Recovery Allowance and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Allowance claims have been granted, with \$204.9 million paid
 - 192,000 calls were answered on the Australian Government Emergency Information Line (180 22 66), and
 - 96.2 per cent of daily claims received by the Agency were made through a Centrelink online account through myGov.
- In preparation for the 2025–26 disaster season, Services Australia (the Agency) is working closely with the National Emergency Management Agency.
- In the case of an emergency event, the Minister for Emergency Management, Senator the Hon Kristy McBain, has the delegation to activate Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payments, the Disaster Recovery Allowance, and their equivalents for eligible New Zealand citizens.
- Once an emergency response has been activated, the Agency can provide the following disaster payments to eligible persons in declared areas as directed by the National Emergency Management Agency:
 - Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment provides \$1,000 per eligible adult and \$400 per eligible child directly into bank accounts.
 - Disaster Recovery Allowance provides assistance for claimants who have lost income for a period of up to 13 weeks, starting from the first day their income

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Division: Service Delivery Optimisation Division	PDR Number: QB25-000045
Date Updated: 28/07/2025 8:56:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 28/07/2025 8:56:00 AM

Emergency Response

was impacted, which can be from the event start date, as written in the signed Instrument.

- New Zealand Disaster Recovery Payment provides one-off financial assistance to eligible New Zealand citizens residing in Australia who hold a non-protected Special Category Visa (subclass 444).
- New Zealand Disaster Recovery Allowance provides short-term income support to eligible New Zealand citizens residing in Australia who hold a non-protected Special Category Visa (subclass 444).
- There are different ways for people to claim disaster support:
 - The fastest way to claim is online. People with internet access can claim online via myGov.
 - The Agency has staff on the ground, who can assist people face-to-face.
 - People can call to claim on 180 22 66, between 8am and 5pm local time Monday to Friday.
- The Agency can tailor a response that is targeted and provides accessible services for customers in remote or isolated communities. For example, the Agency can:
 - Establish temporary offices and provide access to mobile devices for customers to lodge their claims.
 - Provide on the ground support to assist customers with how to claim and provide any additional assistance where required.
 - Provide information in-language, or link people with interpreters for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customers.
 - Offer dedicated culturally sensitive remote servicing staff to help streamline the claiming process.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Emergency Response

Background

For the 2024-25 financial year, emergency payments were activated for the following events:

- 22 May 2025: New South Wales East Coast Severe Weather and Flooding, May 2025 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 30 March 2025: Western Queensland Heavy Rain and Flooding, March 2025 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 11 March 2025: New South Wales Ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred, March 2025 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 11 March 2025: Queensland Ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred, March 2025 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 5 February 2025: North Queensland Floods – January-February 2025 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 30 December 2024: Bushfires in Western Victoria, December 2024 (Disaster Recovery Allowance and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 29 October 2024: Far West New South Wales Storms and Power Outages, October 2024 (Disaster Recovery Allowance and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Allowance).

For the 2023–24 financial year, emergency payments were activated for the following events:

- 19 February 2024: Western Victoria Bushfires, February 2024 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment only).
- 12 February 2024: Heavy Rainfall and Flooding, City of Moreton Bay, January 2024 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment only).
- 4 January 2024: Southeast Queensland Severe Storms and Flooding, December 2023 to January 2024 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 18 December 2023: Tropical Cyclone Jasper, December 2023 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).
- 27 October 2023: Western and Darling Downs Bushfires, October 2023 (Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery Allowance).

Emergency Response

For disaster events activated in the 2023–24 financial year, as at midnight 27 July 2025, 58,700 claims have been granted and \$80.2 million paid:

- 55,100 claims for Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Payment have been granted, with \$64.1 million paid.
- 3,600 claims for Disaster Recovery Allowance and New Zealand Disaster Recovery Allowance claims have been granted, with \$16.1 million paid.
- 36,700 calls were answered on the Australian Government Emergency Information Line (180 22 66).
- 95.4 per cent of daily claims received by the Agency were made through a Centrelink online account through myGov.

Service Centre Network Facts and Figures

Issue

What is the Government doing to meet Australian's need for face-to-face services delivered by Services Australia?

Headline Response

Services Australia is committed to maintaining and modernising the service centre network. Services Australia regularly reviews its progress to ensure a sustainable, accessible, and fit-for-purpose network that meets community and customer needs.

Facts and Figures

- The Face-to-Face Transformation Program was launched in 2019 to modernise service delivery. As at 30 June 2025:
 - 182 service centres have been transformed.
 - 57 of the 102 sites at higher risk of customer aggression have received enhanced security treatments.
- Services Australia (the Agency) is committed to maintaining and modernising the service centre network. The Agency supports other channels such as telephony and digital services to deliver improved government services that are simple, helpful, respectful, and transparent.
- When considering the placement of service centres, the Agency undertakes detailed research and analysis, and considers:
 - Customer and community needs.
 - Accessibility and range of services offered.
 - Proximity to other service centres and government services.
 - Offering a mix of online and face-to-face services.
 - Partnership opportunities with community and government agencies.
 - Public transport availability.
- To meet Australians' needs, face-to-face services are available through:
 - 318 service centres.
 - 376 agent service locations.

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Division: Service Design and Face to Face Transformation	PDR Number: QB25-000047
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- 192 access points.
- 4 Mobile Service Centres.
- Agent service locations provide personnel trained to assist customers with digital services and provide referrals. They have direct phone support for complex inquiries. In addition to the services provided in access points.
- Access points offer self-help facilities, including internet-enabled computers, printers, document upload, self-service phones, and free Wi-Fi.
- Mobile Service Centres travel to rural, regional, and disaster-affected areas, providing Centrelink and Medicare services. They have disabled access and from time to time include representatives from other government agencies.

If pressed**Dungog Shire Community Centre (Dungog Agent)**

- The Dungog Shire Community Centre (DSCC) is contracted to provide agent services to the community at Dungog.
- The Agency has a contract in place with the Dungog Community Centre until 30 June 2026.
- Should DSCC relinquish the agent service, the Agency will initiate an approach to market to ensure services continue for the community of Dungog. Advertisements will be placed in local print media.
- Dungog residents will continue to have access to service centres located at Raymond Terrace (40 km) and Maitland (41 km), with agent services available at Bulahdelah (42 km), and Access Point services at Clarencetown (20 km).

Policy Commitments

- The Government made a commitment as part of the 2022 election to retain 318 service centres.

Background

Due to the Agency's efforts to improve the digital experience, more customers now use digital services like the myGov website and app.

Phone self-service allows customers to access and update their information quickly and conveniently.

Customers can book and manage appointments online at their preferred time, either by phone or at a service centre. Since the commencement on 22 June 2024, customers have booked over 500,000 appointments online.

Agency Support and Protection for People Experiencing Domestic Violence

Issue

How is Services Australia supporting people experiencing Family and Domestic Violence?

Headline Response

Services Australia's *Family and Domestic Violence Strategic Commitment* was launched in December 2024, which reaffirms the Agency's commitment to supporting people affected by family and domestic violence.

Facts and Figures

- Services Australia (the Agency) has a range of support tools, resources, and processes to:
 - Identify family and domestic violence circumstances early.
 - Tailor services to the person's circumstances.
 - Empower customers and staff with valuable information and resources.
- The Agency's workforce is enhanced through comprehensive training relating to family and domestic violence, including more specialised training packages for managers and leaders.
 - This equips our staff to connect customers with the right payments and services provided by the Agency and refer them to appropriate supports in community.
- To secure the personal information of customers leaving a relationship and those experiencing family and domestic violence, the Agency offers practical support, including:
 - Providing information on the Agency's website for customers and within internal documents for staff on how to keep their information safe when leaving a relationship or living with violence or abuse.
 - De-linking a customer's Centrelink record from their partner's when they inform Centrelink they have separated.
 - Transferring customers onto their own Medicare card when they inform Medicare they have separated.

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Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Communities	PDR Number: QB25-000038
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 11:41:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 11:41:00 AM

- Reviewing nominee arrangements.
- Connecting customers with Agency social workers for short-term support and intervention.

Policy Commitments

- On 6 September 2024, National Cabinet announced a comprehensive \$4.7 billion package on practical next steps to accelerate action to end gender-based violence in a generation, deliver on the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032, and support legal assistance.
- This package brings together efforts and funding to:
 - Deliver much needed support for frontline specialist and legal services responding to gender based violence.
 - Provide innovative approaches to better identify and respond to high-risk perpetrators to stop violence escalating.
 - Address the role that systems and harmful industries play in exacerbating violence.
- As part of this package, the Government commenced an audit of key government systems to identify areas where they are being weaponised by perpetrators of family and domestic violence.
- The Agency continues to undertake work with the Department of Social Services and the Office for Women on identifying points of risk for abuse, manipulation and coercion within the social security system, and how we can better support victim-survivors.
- On 3 June 2025, the Commonwealth Ombudsman released the findings from an investigation into the weaponisation of the Child Support system. The investigation produced 8 recommendations aimed at strengthening the Child Support Scheme to better support children and separated parents.
- The Agency has accepted all 8 recommendations and is working with colleagues in the Australian Taxation Office to implement structural reform.

Background

The *Family and Domestic Violence Strategic Commitment* (the Commitment) outlines the Agency's approach to supporting customers and staff impacted by family and domestic violence by aligning to the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032* and *The First Action Plan*.

The Commitment reaffirms the Agency's vision to deliver simple, helpful, respectful, and transparent services and support to people affected by family and domestic violence. It drives the Agency's approach to continually refine and strengthen our systems, processes, and support, to minimise risk to those affected by family and domestic violence.

The Agency is currently operationalising our Commitment through the development of a Ways of Working - Action Plan to be released later in 2025. The Agency will engage internal and external stakeholders to drive tangible and practical initiatives to support people experiencing family and domestic violence and develop a framework to measure outcomes.

Income Apportionment

Agency Response to Income Apportionment

Issue

What action is the Government taking to address the issue of income apportionment?

Headline Response

Services Australia is working in consultation with the Department of Social Services to address and resolve the issue of income apportionment.

Facts and Figures

- On 15 July 2025, the Full Court of the Federal Court of Australia handed down its judgment in the matter of *Chaplin v Secretary, DSS* (before the Tribunal as *DSS v FTXB*).
- The majority has accepted the Secretary of the Department of Social Services' preferred meaning of the word "earned" and has confirmed that employment income may be taken into account when it was received.
- The Secretary has publicly stated that as there is certainty to the legal position, paused debt activities involving the assessment of employment income for social security recipients prior to 7 December 2020 will re-commence in line with the Court's decision.
- The Government will now evaluate the impact of the Court's decision and consider its response.
- Anyone who believes they have a debt which was affected by income apportionment can call the dedicated Services Australia (the Agency) helpline on 1800 560 870 or visit the Agency's website.
- The Agency and the Department of Social Services are working to resolve the complex policy and legal issues this matter presents, including addressing the Ombudsman's recommendations.
- To address and resolve income apportionment, the Department of Social Services and the Agency are preparing options for the Government to consider.
- Between July and September 2021, the Agency paused the raising of undetermined debts (potential debts not yet raised) and reviews relating to income apportionment.

Contact: Rachael Clarke	Cleared by: Chris Birrer
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Legal Compliance and Remediation Division	PDR Number: QB25-000052
Date Updated: 24/07/2025 11:25:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 24/07/2025 11:25:00 AM

Income Apportionment

- As at 30 June 2025, these pauses related to approximately 16,000 formal reviews, 6,000 explanations on how debts were calculated, and approximately 88,000 undetermined debts.
- The Agency also paused the recovery of 154,000 debts potentially impacted by income apportionment:
 - Approximately 112,000 debts were paused from 30 October 2023.
 - Approximately 42,000 additional debts were paused from 11 April 2024.
- In December 2024, the Agency wrote to all customers affected by the debt pauses advising them:
 - Recovery of their debts would remain paused due to potentially having been affected by income apportionment.
 - Their options to have their case reviewed or voluntarily repay their debt if they wish.
 - Information about the Federal Court appeal.
- As of 30 June 2025, 57 customers have made requests for their review to progress – these are currently being managed by the Agency.
- The Agency website has been updated to ensure people have access to the most up to date information about income apportionment.

If pressed

What does Income apportionment mean for people who have been prosecuted?

- Convictions and prosecutions are matters managed by the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions.
- Other implications for historical prosecutions are one of the aspects of income apportionment that the Government is considering.
- The Agency only makes a referral to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions for serious matters that are supported by a brief of evidence and are never referred for overpayments alone.
- The Agency is working closely with the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions in relation to historical matters which may be impacted by income apportionment.

Income Apportionment

How many customers have been affected by income apportionment?

- The Agency is still determining the total number of customers who may be affected by income apportionment.
- Estimates provided by the Department of Social Services indicate 5.3 million debts, held by 2.9 million Australians, may be impacted by income apportionment.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Income Apportionment

Background

Services Australia and the Department of Social Services (DSS) became aware of issues regarding the use of income apportionment in late 2020.

Since July 2021, the Agency has paused internal reviews, explanations of decision, and the raising and recovery of debts that may be affected by income apportionment, pending instructions from DSS.

In 2023, the Commonwealth Ombudsman (the Ombudsman) conducted two investigations in relation to income apportionment.

From 29 April 2024, the Agency recommenced activity on a small number of debts impacted by income apportionment, in line with instructions and General Guidance for Decision Makers (General Guidance) provided by DSS.

On 28 August 2024, the Administrative Review Tribunal handed down its decision in *Secretary DSS v FTXB*, setting aside a debt that was calculated using the General Guidance and rejecting the Secretary's submissions on how to lawfully recalculate income apportioned debts.

On 25 September 2024, the decision was appealed by the Respondent.

On 22 October 2024, DSS issued the Agency with updated advice to re-pause activity on debts potentially affected by income apportionment, except in certain circumstances.

On 6 March 2025, the appeal, *Chaplin v Secretary DSS*, was heard by the Full Federal Court.

On 15 July 2025, the appeal was dismissed, with an order for the Respondent to pay the Applicant's costs, as agreed.

Enhanced Income Management Program**Issue**

How is Services Australia supporting customers transition from Income Management to enhanced Income Management?

Headline Response

Services Australia supports existing Income Management customers to choose to move to enhanced Income Management with a SmartCard or remain on Income Management with a BasicsCard. Newly eligible customers are placed directly on enhanced Income Management.

Facts and Figures

- As at 4 July 2025, there were 21,758 customers on enhanced Income Management, with 10,480 customers on Income Management across Australia.
- Of the customers currently on enhanced Income Management:
 - 7,136 have chosen to move to enhanced Income Management (from Income Management).
 - 14,622 have been placed on the enhanced Income Management program.
- Customers can choose to move to, or volunteer for, enhanced Income Management by calling the SmartCard enhanced Income Management hotline, or by visiting a Services Australia Service Centre or Remote Servicing Team.
- All customers are provided with a personalised SmartCard from their chosen card issuer and have access to temporary SmartCards.
- Enhanced Income Management customers are supported by experienced Agency staff through a dedicated SmartCard enhanced Income Management hotline and face-to-face services.
- For customers in the Northern Territory who choose to have their enhanced Income Management account and SmartCard managed by the Traditional Credit Union, card and account support is provided by Traditional Credit Union.
- The Agency holds comprehensive discussions with all Income Management customers who are considering moving to enhanced Income Management to ensure they understand how the change will apply to their circumstances.
- Customers are offered tailored support from the Agency, such as support using the SmartCard, available payment options (i.e. BPAY, direct debit and Centrepay),

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Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Communities	PDR Number: QB25-000039
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Income Management

advice on how deductions can be paid, and referrals to internal financial support services, such as Financial Information Service Officers.

Policy Commitments

- The Agency works closely with the Department of Social Services, which has policy responsibility for the Income Management programs. This includes supporting activities to design the future of Income Management.

Income Management

Background

Enhanced Income Management

Enhanced Income Management is a tool that helps customers manage their payments and prioritise spending on essential goods and services such as food, housing, bills and education.

- Income Management program rules apply under the enhanced Income Management program. This means the quarantine rate is 50 per cent (except for Child Protection customers and Cape York and Doomadgee regions), and restrictions apply to the purchasing of tobacco products, pornography, alcohol, gambling products, and cash and cash-like products.

Under the enhanced Income Management program, the Family Responsibilities Commission is responsible for referring participants in the Cape York and Doomadgee region. Participants have a quarantine rate between 60 and 90 per cent, determined by the Family Responsibilities Commission.

A 2023–2024 ANAO Performance Audit found the transition to the enhanced Income Management program from the Cashless Debit Card program was largely effective, and that the Agency's limited tender procurement was largely compliant with Commonwealth Procurement Rules.

Income Management

Income Management is a tool to help customers manage their money to meet essential household needs and expenses.

Customers supported by Income Management have a percentage (varies between 50 per cent or 70 per cent) of their income support payment set aside in an Income Management account.

Customers on Income Management can make payments from their income managed account for priority needs such as rent, bills or food by:

- Using their BasicsCard.
- Asking the Agency to set up regular or one-off payments to approved organisations.

ANAO Financial Statements Audit 2023-24 Finding

Issue

How is Services Australia addressing the Australian National Audit Office's Category A finding (Finding 26) in relation to Medicare Compensation Recovery Program Governance?

Headline Response

Services Australia is progressing an audit Implementation Action Plan to address the audit findings. Services Australia continues to make improvements to its compensation recovery system and its operations to support more timely action and has increased its completion rates to 79.1 per cent of claims completed within legislated timeframes for the 2024–25 financial year. Services Australia continues to work with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing on policy matters in respect to this finding.

Facts and Figures

- Services Australia (the Agency) is addressing the Category A finding. This includes continuing to work with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing as the relevant policy agency on potential legislative and system changes, including:
 - Seeking clarification on the interpretation of the *Health and Other Services (Compensation) Act 1995* (the HOSC Act).
 - Considering legislative reform to the HOSC Act to align to the policy intent of the Medicare Compensation Recovery Program and clarify the law.
- Since June 2023, the Agency has:
 - Implemented over 200 system fixes to improve the efficiency of its Medicare Compensation Recovery System.
 - Reduced work on hand to 3,083 as at 30 June 2025, compared to a 20,939 as at 30 June 2024.
 - Increasing its claim timeliness to 79.1 per cent of claims completed within legislated timeframes for the 2024–25 financial year.
- For the months of May and June 2025, the Agency has achieved approximately 98 per cent of claims completed within timeliness.

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Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Payment Assurance Program and Appeals	PDR Number: QB25-000054
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 3:26:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 3:26:00 PM

Medicare Compensation

Australian National Audit Office Audit Findings

- During the 2023–24 audit, the Australian National Audit Office identified that over 50 per cent of cases were not assessed by the Agency within the statutory timeframes, contrary to specific requirements in the HOSC Act to process claims within timeframes or to make decisions to not pursue recovery.
- The Act requires that the Agency must issue notices prior to statutory time periods expiring and has no discretion to not pursue recovery. The Australian National Audit Office identified that the Agency did not take sufficient steps during 2023–24 to address these known issues.
- The Agency's non-compliance with the HOSC Act resulted in:
 - Non-collection of revenue from 'non-advance payments' that would have otherwise been owed to the Commonwealth.
 - The identification of an error in the Agency's prior period financial statements, relating to the recognition and treatment of revenue and receivables associated with the Medicare Compensation Recovery System program.
- The Agency has not pursued recovery for non-advance cases closed outside of timeliness since commencement of the program in 1996.

The Agency's performance on claims processing

- In the 2023–24 financial year, the program completed processing of 41,490 claims. Of these, 22,258 (53.65 per cent) were completed outside legislated timeframes.
- In the 2024–25 financial year, the program completed processing of 49,610 claims. Of these, 10,369 (20.90 per cent) were completed outside of legislative timeframes.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Medicare Compensation

Background

When an injured person receives more than \$5,000 in compensation for an injury or illness, the Agency is responsible for recovering Medicare benefits and aged care costs related to that injury under the HOSC Act.

The Agency engages with claimants/injured persons, insurers, legal providers, and third-party representatives to administer the program on behalf of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

There are two pathways within the Medicare Compensation Recovery Program, advance payments and non-advance payments.

Advance payments

Advance payments relate to claims where the compensation payer or insurer has elected to provide the Agency with 10% of the settlement amount to cover any potential Medicare services and care costs that relate to the compensated injury and paying the remaining 90% to the injured person.

When the Agency closes an Advance payment claim outside of legislative timeframes, a full refund of any payments received is made to the compensation recipient, regardless of if a debt is identified during the assessment of the claim in accordance with the HOSC Act.

Non-advance payments

Non-advance payments relate to claims where the insurer has elected to withhold the compensation payment amount until the Agency identifies the amount to be recovered. The insurer then pays the Agency the amount owed for Medicare services and care costs before paying the remaining amount to the injured person.

When the Agency closes a non-advance payment claim outside legislative timeframes, a \$0.00 debt amount is sent to the compensation recipient, regardless of whether a debt is identified during the assessment of the claim.

The Australian National Audit Office findings identified that the Agency should be pursuing the debt from the customer in these instances. This is contrary to the policy intent from the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and is not how the Agency has operated since 1996.

Disruption to Mobile Service Centre – Golden Wattle

Issue

Why does Services Australia currently have only 3 of its 4 Mobile Service Centres supporting regional and remote communities?

Headline Response

One of Services Australia's fleet of 4 Mobile Services Centres, Golden Wattle, is temporarily out of service due to a mechanical failure.

Facts and Figures

- The Government remains committed to providing Mobile Service Centres, that travel throughout rural and regional Australia and disaster-affected communities, bringing government services to people where and when they need it most.
- Mobile Service Centre, Golden Wattle, will remain out of service from 1 July 2025 for approximately 9 weeks until a maintenance issue is resolved.
- Golden Wattle was scheduled to visit north-eastern and north-western New South Wales flood affected towns within the Taree, Coffs Harbour, Kempsey and Port Macquarie regions during this period. Once Golden Wattle is operational again, it will re-commence servicing in these areas.
- Services Australia (the Agency) has contacted local councils and key organisations within these communities to apologise for the change in schedule and provide them with information about the servicing arrangements available via on-line services, over the phone or at one of the closest service centres, agents or access points.
- The Agency Community Engagement Officers will continue to provide assistance to these communities by contacting key organisations and identifying any needs for further support. Agency staff will also continue to provide assistance at open Recovery Centres and attend community events.
- From 2006 to 30 June 2025, Mobile Service Centres have:
 - Travelled 1,210,138 km.
 - Visited 7,497 communities.
 - Helped 222,939 people.
 - Attended 38 emergency events, spending 652 days in 423 disaster affected communities helping 36,960 people.

Contact: Simon Noble	Cleared by: Bo Robertson
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Face to Face Services	PDR Number: QB25-000059
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Mobile Servicing

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

Mobile Service Centres provide a convenient and personalised service to rural and regional communities. Their mobile capabilities mean during emergencies they can also be quickly diverted to provide rapid response for communities in need.

The disruption to mobile servicing in north-eastern and north-western New South Wales during July to September 2025 is due to a mechanical failure to Mobile Service Centre, Golden Wattle.

The hydraulic leg on Golden Wattle malfunctioned, and the vehicle has undergone assessments by specialist mechanics and engineers at a maintenance centre in Newcastle. The fault has been identified as a custom-built sensor issue.

The sensor and hydraulic leg require replacement. The maintenance provider has engaged a third-party supplier, and sourcing and installation of the parts will take a minimum of 9 weeks.

Itineraries for Mobile Service Centres Desert Rose (Queensland), Kangaroo Paw II (South Australia), and Blue Gum (Victoria), will be maintained.

myGov Funding and Operations including Future Improvements

Issue

How is the Government ensuring that myGov remains a reliable and secure part of Australia's digital infrastructure?

Headline Response

Every day, myGov helps more than 979,000 Australians access critical government services easily, quickly and securely. The Government has made a significant investment in the future of myGov, which will help Australians do more, whilst keeping myGov secure and reliable as critical national infrastructure.

Facts and Figures

- myGov makes it easy for Australians to use one account to access 18 services across the Commonwealth and state and territory governments, including the Australian Taxation Office, Centrelink and Medicare.
- In the 2024–25 Budget, Services Australia (the Agency) received \$630.3 million over four years from the 2024–25 financial year (and \$144.8 million per year ongoing) to sustain and enhance the myGov platform, and ensure the continued development of its capability, including continuing an independent advisory board to provide guidance and advice to Government on potential myGov enhancements until the 2027–28 financial year.
- Since the myGov User Audit, the Agency has delivered significant improvements for customers.
 - The myGov app makes it easier to access services and messages from mobile devices, including 6 cards now available in the digital wallet. Nearly 8 million people are now using the myGov app.
 - A new security dashboard is helping people better secure their myGov accounts, providing extra protection against scams. 1.2 million users have now set up a passkey, which helps protect against phishing scams.
 - Commonwealth Statutory Declarations can now be completed in myGov with Digital ID, saving people time by not having to find an in-person witness.

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Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Customer and Staff Digital Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000049
Date Updated: 11/07/2025 4:04:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 11/07/2025 4:04:00 PM

- Further improvements in myGov are underway in 2025, including:
 - Providing the option for people to be notified about and complete the 2026 Census through myGov.
 - Migrating the Express Plus apps functionality into myGov, starting with Medicare, so people can get more things done inside the myGov app.
- The Agency is exploring the potential for new whole-of-government capabilities through the myGov Pipeline. This includes making it easy to track appointments and making it simpler for more government services to join myGov.

If pressed on Inadvertent Closure of myGov Accounts

- Since early 2024, myGov has successfully closed over 2.4 million unused myGov accounts. The process of closing inactive accounts is a common security practice to reduce the risk of fraud and unauthorised access through compromised sign in credentials.
- On 27 June 2025, myGov inadvertently closed 1393 active myGov accounts. A post implementation review identified human error as the cause.
- All impacted users were sent an email apologising for the error and inconvenience, with the offer of support from the myGov Helpdesk to open a new myGov account.
- Since the closure, 28 affected customers have sought assistance and advice from the myGov helpdesk.

Policy Commitments

- \$580.3 million over four years from the 2024–25 financial year (and \$139.6 million per year ongoing) to sustain the myGov platform and ensure the continued development of its capability, including continuing an independent advisory board to provide guidance and advice to Government on potential myGov enhancements until the 2027–28 financial year.
- \$50.0 million over four years from the 2024–25 financial year (and \$5.2 million per year ongoing) for enhancements to the myGov platform to continue to respond to the findings of the Critical National Infrastructure myGov User Audit and advice from the independent advisory board, including enhancements to the myGov support tool, strengthening myGov fraud detection capabilities, improving the myGov inbox and other communication tools and supporting users to better secure their myGov accounts.
- This measure builds on the 2023–24 Budget measure, Sustain myGov and the 2023–24 MYEFO measures, Services Australia – additional resourcing, modernising myGov, and Services Australia’s improved safety for staff and customers.

Background

Interim Independent Advisory Board

The establishment of an independently chaired advisory board was a key action from the myGov User Audit (Recommendation 7) to put in place citizen centred governance to drive inclusion and performance.

In the 2024–25 Budget, the Government invested in the Advisory Board, until June 2028, to provide the independent expertise and insights to progress towards making public services more accessible, ethical and effective.

The Advisory Board will continue to provide the Minister for Government Services with advice and assurance on designing, prioritising, and investing in people-centred services and improvements.

Ombudsman's report on Keeping myGov secure

Issue

What action is the Government taking to ensure that myGov remains a safe and secure platform for government service delivery?

Headline Response

On 6 August 2024, the Commonwealth Ombudsman, Mr Iain Anderson, published the *Keeping myGov Secure* report following an own motion investigation into fraud arising from unauthorised linking to myGov accounts.

Services Australia has completed 3 of the 4 recommendations in the report and has made significant progress on the final recommendation. Services Australia will provide a formal response to the Commonwealth Ombudsman in August 2025.

Facts and Figures

- Maintaining the security of myGov and the protection of people's personal information remains a top priority for Services Australia (the Agency), and it remains committed to ongoing improvement.
- The Commonwealth Ombudsman's report made 4 recommendations and 2 suggestions in relation to:
 - myGov's security controls for unauthorised linking and high-risk transactions.
 - The management of shared risks across the myGov ecosystem.
 - Supporting people whose member service accounts have been impacted by myGov fraud.
- In response to the recommendations, the Agency has implemented additional security measures to support customers, including:
 - Disrupting fraudulent payment redirection through additional controls on updating payment details online.
 - Introducing the myGov Security Dashboard to help customers switch to stronger sign in methods, such as Digital ID and Passkeys.

Contact: Aaron Wilkins	Cleared by: Jonathon Thorpe
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Customer and Staff Digital Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000053
Date Updated: 25/07/2025 9:34:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 25/07/2025 9:34:00 AM

PDR Number: QB25-000053

- obfuscating bank details in online accounts across Centrelink, Medicare, Child Support and myGov.
- The Agency will introduce multifactor authentication steps when updating account settings in myGov in August.
- The Agency continues work to strengthen customer authentication processes, including when linking myGov accounts to Centrelink, Medicare and Child Support. These updates are due to be delivered in September 2025.
- In recognition of myGov's whole-of-government role, the Agency has also strengthened processes across member services to identify and manage shared risks, share operational updates, and respond to suspected fraudulent activity.
- The Agency identifies and responds to around 300 scams per week that impersonate myGov. In a challenging global security environment, myGov is continually evolving to meet the challenges of increasingly sophisticated and numerous scams, identity theft and other cyber security threats.
- The Agency has observed, analysed, and responded to 15,149 unique agency impersonation scams for July 2024 to June 2025. This does not include additional malicious websites identified and actioned directly by other organisations.
- myGov is the most targeted brand, with over 77 per cent of these scams in the 2024–25 financial year referencing myGov in some way.
- Since the introduction of the myGov Security Dashboard, approximately 1.8 million users have now updated to a stronger sign in method, such as Passkeys or Digital ID. In addition, over 780,000 users have switched off their password.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Contact: Aaron Wilkins	Cleared by: Jonathon Thorpe
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Customer and Staff Digital Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000053
Date Updated: 25/07/2025 9:34:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 25/07/2025 9:34:00 AM

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Background

The full list of recommendations and suggestions from the Commonwealth Ombudsman Final Report are:

- **Recommendation 1.** Consistent with its responsibilities for driving improvement in fraud control practices, we recommend Services Australia:
 - a) Assess existing Proof of Record Ownership processes across the myGov ecosystem to identify and document, shared risks, and work with member services to agree and implement appropriate controls.
 - b) Consider establishing baseline Proof of Record Ownership requirements, which must be met by all member services.
- **Recommendation 2a.** We recommend Services Australia implement additional security controls such as two factor authentication across its three member services for all high-risk transactions, including linking a member service account to myGov and updating contact and bank account details.
- **Recommendation 2b.** Services Australia should ensure that a high standard of security settings for high-risk transactions applies consistently across all available service delivery channels for its member services.
- **Recommendation 3.** We recommend Services Australia establish formal processes for managing all shared risks across the myGov ecosystem, including identifying, assessing and documenting shared risks, periodically assessing the effectiveness of agreed controls and responding to indications that risk assessments should be updated.
- **Recommendation 4.** We recommend Services Australia seek external legal advice about options to facilitate a greater level of information sharing across linked member services and support member services to act proactively to reduce fraud risk or other unlawful activity while meeting their other legislative obligations.
- **Suggestion 1.** We suggest Services Australia share learnings and information about its authentication and Proof of Record Ownership processes with other myGov member services to support them to build their capability.
- **Suggestion 2.** We suggest Services Australia regularly reviews and updates its communications regarding potential myGov and member service account breaches, including security notifications, staff guidance and online content, to ensure people are supported to take real time action to mitigate breaches to their myGov and or linked member service accounts.

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Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Customer and Staff Digital Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000053
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PDR Number: QB25-000053

Services Australia's Response to People Released from Immigration Detention

Issue

How is Services Australia supporting individuals released from immigration detention?

Headline Response

Services Australia continues to work with the Department of Home Affairs regarding people who have been released from held detention or residence determination arrangements because of the High Court ruling in *NZYQ v Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs*.

This includes processing applications from people who, upon release, apply for the Special Benefit payment.

Facts and Figures

- Services Australia (the Agency) supports individuals released from immigration detention when they engage with the Agency.
- The High Court ruling resulted in the Agency engaging with people who:
 - were in residence determination arrangements and may already have been in receipt of the Status Resolution Support Services payment from the Agency, or
 - persons who had been released directly from held detention and at the time of release were not receiving a payment from the Agency.
- As at 1 July 2025, there are approximately 225 customers receiving payments from the Agency on a visa sub-class 070.
- The Agency assesses and processes all claims in line with current arrangements for vulnerable customers with complex needs, including applying servicing arrangements where staff safety concerns are identified.
- The Agency continues to work closely with the Department of Social Services and the Department of Home Affairs to provide information to support impacted people.
- Any questions regarding the total number of people released from immigration detention, including those in receipt of the Status Resolution Support Services

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Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Fraud Control Investigations Division	PDR Number: QB25-000041
Date Updated: 03 July 2025	Date Last Printed:

payment, should be referred to the Department of Home Affairs as the Agency does not have visibility of this information.

Special Benefit

- Persons released from immigration detention may also test their eligibility for Special Benefit, which is a payment for persons who are not able to receive any other social security payment.
 - The Special Benefit payment has been available to eligible customers since 1945.
 - The Agency administers the Special Benefit payment on behalf of the Department of Social Services.
 - Special Benefit is a discretionary payment designed to assist individuals in financial hardship who:
 - are not eligible for other income support payments, and
 - are unable to earn a sufficient livelihood for themselves and their dependants.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

On 8 November 2023, the High Court handed down the decision, *NZYQ v Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs [2023] HCA 37*, requiring immediate release from immigration detention of an individual on the basis that their detention was unlawful as there was no real prospect of removal from Australia.

The Department of Home Affairs contracted Service Providers to work closely with people impacted by this decision and to support them in lodging their claim for Special Benefit with the Agency. Impacted customers can also claim online.

Customers already in receipt of Status Resolution Support Services payments from the Agency were eligible to receive that payment until their claim for Special Benefit was granted or the Department of Home Affairs cancelled their Status Resolution Support Services payment.

The Agency has put in place processes to assist in the identification of people in this cohort who lodge Special Benefit claims.

Information to support impacted people includes:

- the process Service Providers need to follow to assist a person to initiate a Special Benefit claim
- Proof of Identity requirements
- the application of a 13-week activity test exemption by the Agency for people in this cohort to ensure no impacts to payment, and
- other payments and support people may be eligible for outside of Special Benefit, including Health Care Card, Family Tax Benefit, Parental Leave Pay, Child Care Subsidy, and Medicare.

Status Resolution Support Services Payment

On 1 April 2014, the Agency commenced the administration of the Status Resolution Support Services payment on behalf of the Department of Home Affairs.

The Status Resolution Support Services payment provides financial support to asylum seekers, as part of the broader Status Resolution Support Services program administered by the Department of Home Affairs. The Status Resolution Support Services program provides temporary, needs-based support to asylum seekers who are unable to support themselves while resolving their immigration status.

The Department of Home Affairs determines a person's eligibility for Status Resolution Support Services, and the Agency determines a customer's payability for Status Resolution Support Services payment. The Status Resolution Support Services payment is not a social security payment and customers receiving the payment do not have access to other Agency payments or services.

Discrepancies in Centrelink Payment Summaries

Issue

What is the Government doing to address the system issues that are causing incorrect reportable income amounts (taxable and non-taxable) to display within Centrelink payment summaries?

Headline

Services Australia has informed a cohort of impacted customers of a delay in the availability of their 2024–25 Centrelink payment summary and dedicated over 100 staff to remediation work so that accurate payment summaries can be provided to the customers early in the 2025–26 financial year.

Facts and Figures

Key Dates	
20 May 2025	The Agency engaged with the Australian Taxation Office on the identified payment summary issues.
13 June 2025	The Agency commenced manual remediation of impacted records.
27 June 2025	The Agency started notifying impacted customers of the payment summary issues. Letters issued to customers via mail and myGov.
1 July 2025	Payment summary data transferred to the Australian Taxation Office for s47E(d) customers and withheld for s47E(d) impacted customers.
3 July 2025	Mailout to all impacted customers completed.

- On 1 July 2025, Services Australia (the Agency) shared 2024-25 Centrelink payment summary data with the Australian Taxation Office via the standard process for s47E(d) customers. The Australian Taxation Office has confirmed the records have pre-filled into individual tax returns through myTax.
- The Agency has identified a cohort of s47E(d) customers with potential inaccuracies in their 2024-25 Centrelink payment summaries which were withheld from the Australian Tax Office.
- For these customers, system issues are causing incorrect reportable income amounts (taxable and non-taxable) to display within their Centrelink payment summaries where:
 - s47E(d)

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Division: Families and Participation	PDR Number: QB25-000042
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Payment Summaries

- s47E(d)
- s47E(d)
- From 27 June 2025 to 3 July 2025, the Agency issued letters to all s47E(d) customers notifying them of the issue and a delay to the availability of their 2024-25 Centrelink payment summary.
- Customers may not be able to lodge their individual tax return until their record has been remediated. This delay may financially impact customers who are expecting to receive a tax refund.
- The Agency has dedicated over 100 staff to remediate the inaccurate payment summaries and on 23 July 2025, s47E(d) payment summaries had been remediated.
- The Agency is working with the Australian Taxation Office to share remediated payment summaries daily to improve customer experience and reduce customer contact.
- The Agency is aiming to remediate approximately s47E(d) payment summaries (for customers who are likely to lodge tax returns) by the end of August 2025, and the remaining impacted payment summaries by late September 2025, ahead of the 31 October 2025 individual tax return lodgement date.
- Where customers contact the Agency and raise concerns about the delay in the availability of their payment summary, the Agency has a process to escalate their payment summary for remediation.
- The Agency has been working closely with the Australian Taxation Office to align website, Interactive Voice Response and staff communications about the payment summary issues.
- The Agency is analysing Information and Communication Technology solutions to prevent the identified issues from occurring in future financial years.
- The Agency is undertaking historical analysis to identify previous financial year payment summaries that were affected and will develop a remediation strategy with the Australian Taxation Office to address prior year inaccuracies.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

From 1 July each year, Centrelink payment summary information is made available to customers and shared with the Australian Taxation Office to assist customers with completing their individual tax returns. The Agency produces over 6 million payment summaries each year. Data is transferred to the Australian Taxation Office to be used as pre-fill data for tax returns.

Many Centrelink customers will not be taxable. For example, customers in receipt of an Income Support Payment for at least one day have a tax-free threshold of \$22,575, and customers in receipt of an Income Support Payment for every day of the financial year, who are also a liable parent or a recipient parent under a child support assessment, have a tax-free threshold of \$29,842.

Customers in receipt of Family Tax Benefit and Child Care Subsidy are required to complete a tax return or advise the Agency of non-lodgement to balance their payments at end of the financial year.

Robodebt Royal Commission - Government Response

Issue

What has the Government done in response to the Robodebt Royal Commission?

Headline Response

Many of the Royal Commission's findings align with the priorities and reforms the Australian Government has maintained focus on – rebuilding trust in government, investing in a capable public sector, delivering strong institutions and ensuring people are at the centre of service delivery.

Facts and Figures

- As at 30 June 2025, Services Australia (the Agency) has fully implemented 21 recommendations, partially implemented 2 recommendations (recommendations 16.2 & 20.1), and is well progressed on implementing its remaining 3 recommendations.
- Recommendation 16.2 – Review and strengthen governance of data-matching programs:
 - The Agency continues to work across government, including with the Australian Government Solicitor and the Australian Taxation Office to fully implement this recommendation.
- Recommendation 20.1 – Administrative Appeals Tribunal cases with significant legal and policy issues:
 - The Agency continues to assess the new systems for screening cases flowing from the new Administrative Review Tribunal to fully implement this recommendation.
- Key changes implemented by the Agency to address recommendations include:
 - The Advocates' Channel with Economic Justice Australia has provided opportunities to enhance how advocates can engage with the Agency. The Agency will continue to build on the existing advocacy channel with findings from the pilot to inform a possible scalable solution.
 - Recruited over 160 ongoing social workers in 2024 with 665 social workers in 214 locations.
 - Embedding human-centred design and customer research into core practices, incorporating insights from customers, staff and peak advocacy organisations.

Contact: Dan Blackmore	Cleared by: Chris Birrer
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Legal Compliance and Remediation	PDR Number: QB25-000056
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- Proactive and inclusive staff feedback mechanisms, such as surveys, round table meetings, operational feedback, systematic issues register, and a dedicated staff feedback tool.
- Improvements to debt policy including no longer using external collection agencies to recover debts and enabling customers to self-pause their debts when impacted by disaster or crisis.

Timeline of Significant Events

- 11 June 2021: The Federal Court of Australia approved the Class Action Settlement agreement, including the Settlement Distribution Scheme.
- 25 August 2022: Announcement confirming the establishment of the Robodebt Royal Commission, its Terms of Reference and reporting date.
- 7 July 2023: The Report of the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme was presented by the Commissioner and tabled in Parliament.
- 10 July 2023: The Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Australian Public Service Commissioner announced that a taskforce would be established and led by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Attorney-General's Department, and the Australian Public Service Commission to support Ministers in preparing the Government's response.
- 8 September 2023: The former CEO of Services Australia, Ms Rebecca Skinner PSM, apologised to all Services Australia staff for Robodebt and how it affected them.
- 13 November 2023: The Government released its response to the Royal Commission's recommendations, which was tabled in Parliament.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

The Income Compliance Programme (the Robodebt Scheme) was initiated in 2015 and was supported through budget measures between 2015–16 and 2018–19. The Scheme was ceased in November 2019.

On 7 July 2023, Commissioner Catherine Holmes AC SC, presented the Report of the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme, to the Governor-General, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd).

On 13 November 2023, the Australian Government released its response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme.

The Government accepted (49), or accepted in-principle (7), all 56 recommendations made by the Royal Commission. Of these, Services Australia is the lead agency for 26 recommendations.

Scams Prevention and Protection

Issue

How is Services Australia ensuring that customers are protected from scams impersonating trusted organisations and brands like myGov?

Headline Response

Services Australia takes the protection of customer information seriously. Scams present an evolving threat to all Australians, and Services Australia continues to observe a significant number of scams targeting customers by impersonating trusted organisations and brands, such as myGov.

Facts and Figures

- Services Australia (the Agency) observed, analysed, and responded to 15,149 unique Agency impersonation scams between July 2024 to June 2025.
- myGov is the most targeted Agency brand, with over 77 per cent of these scams in the 2024–25 financial year referencing myGov in some way.
- The Agency's Scams and Identity Theft Helpdesk supports customers affected by scams and identity security concerns by providing advice on how customers can protect their personal information, checking their record for suspicious activity, correcting unauthorised updates, offering additional security measures, and referring to support services as needed.
 - Between July 2024 to June 2025, the helpdesk responded to over 30,000 calls.
- The Agency continues to support customers to strengthen their accounts and sign in processes and is implementing measures to help protect customers from scams impersonating myGov.
- In July 2024, the Agency introduced a phishing resistant sign-in security method, known as a passkey, to provide myGov users greater protection from scams.
- A passkey will only work with the genuine website or app that the passkey is connected with and will not work with fake websites. This means users cannot accidentally sign-in to a fraudulent version of myGov using their passkey.
- The Agency recently released the first version of the myGov Security Review that prompts customers to take actions to make their accounts more secure.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Sharna Bartley
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Fraud Control and Investigations	PDR Number: QB25-000057
Date Updated: 25/07/2025 9:32:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 25/07/2025 9:32:00 AM

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

The Agency is committed to protecting customers from the harm of scams and supporting customers who are the victim of identity compromise.

The Agency's scam response involves helping customers avoid scams and to protect their personal information, detecting and taking action against scams that impersonate the agency, providing support to customers who are victim of identity compromise, and strengthening our systems and processes to improve our resilience to scam activity.

Raising scam awareness and educating staff and customers is one way the Agency actively responds to scams. The Agency helps customers recognise and avoid scams, through a range of communication and engagement activities, such as:

- Presenting to external government groups such as not-for-profits supporting vulnerable cohorts.
- Running the Services Australia Scams Awareness booth at relevant expos.
- Maintaining and enhancing messaging via the Agency's website and the myGov site on how to avoid scams and protect identity.
- Scam alerts on the Agency's websites and social media accounts.

The Agency is participating in the Australian Communications and Media Authority's pilot SMS Sender ID Register. This pilot builds on earlier initiatives (Telstra – Cleaner Pipes; Optus – Trusted Sources) and provides protections by blocking fraudulent text messages that target customers by impersonating Agency brands, such as myGov or Medicare.

Security Risk Management Review Implementation

Issue

What action is the Government taking to ensure the safety and security of staff working to provide vital services for the Australian community?

Headline Response

The Government has invested \$361 million in response to the Security Risk Management Review to continue to improve the safety of Services Australia's staff and customers.

Facts and Figures

- The safety of all staff is paramount, and Services Australia (the Agency) is committed to ensuring that all staff can serve the Australian public without fear of violence.
- Funding committed by the Government and internal Agency resources will enable the Agency to implement all 44 recommendations of the Security Risk Management Review (the Review) by July 2026.
- Of the 44 recommendations, 20 have been completed in full, and the remaining 24 recommendations are in progress at various stages based on size and complexity.
- Examples of the work already delivered that sees immediate improvements includes:
 - Upgrades to the Airport West Service Centre were completed in December 2023.
 - The Criminal Code Amendment (Protecting Commonwealth Frontline Workers) Bill 2024 was enacted on 9 July 2024 to strengthen offences for acts of violence and aggression against Commonwealth frontline staff.
 - The customer online appointment booking system was rolled out nationally on 24 June 2024. Customers can now book and cancel their own 15-minute phone appointment or a 30-minute face-to-face appointment online, without the requirement to call or attend in-person. This has streamlined interactions and reduced customer frustration.

Contact: Jodie Robinson	Cleared by: Bo Robertson
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Community Engagement and Servicing Redesign	PDR Number: QB25-000040
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 9:35:00 AM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 9:35:00 AM

Security Review

- Advanced Customer Aggression training has been delivered to 3,548 frontline staff skilling them with the confidence to respond and de-escalate customer aggression incidents. The roll out of this training is continuing to all face-to-face frontline service delivery staff uplifting the capability of the Agency to effectively respond to customer aggression.
- 57 service centres at risk of high levels of customer aggression have received enhanced security treatments, including 24 site remediations, with the ongoing program of work continuing this financial year.
- Customer Self Check-in Kiosks are operational in 83 service centres to minimise frustrations caused by queues, and to provide real time information about presenting customers and any known risks.
- The Government will also soon reintroduce a Commonwealth Workplace Protection Order Bill which will set out a Commonwealth Workplace Protection Orders scheme to provide legal protections for Commonwealth workplaces and workers and deter acts of violence and other harmful behaviours by members of the public.
- A new Protective Security Operations Centre will be operational in June 2026 to enable the agency to respond in real time as security incidents occur.

Policy Commitments

- The Government has invested \$361 million to enable the Agency to implement the recommendations of the Review in full to continue to improve the safety of the Agency's staff and customers.

Security Review

Background

On 24 May 2023, the Review was initiated immediately following an incident at the Airport West Service Centre in Melbourne, where a staff member was seriously injured by a customer on 23 May 2023.

The Review was informed by significant staff consultation and outlines the extensive range of measures the Agency already had in place to protect staff and in addition offers recommendations to improve these measures.

The Key Findings and 44 Recommendations cover security capabilities, service centre design, managed service plans and the adequacy of legislation to prevent and respond to customer aggression.

Services Australia Current Staffing Levels

Issue

What are the current staff levels at Services Australia and will there be a reduction in the 2025-26 financial year?

Headline Response

A key focus for Services Australia last year was building on the injection of new staff to reduce the time it takes to process claims or to answer the phone. Services Australia has made improvements compared to this time last year and continues to head in the right direction.

Facts and Figures

- As of 30 June 2025, Services Australia (the Agency) had a workforce of approximately 37,500 staff. This includes approximately:
 - 35,200 (94 per cent) Australian Public Service (APS) staff
 - 2,300 (6 per cent) non-APS staff (labour hire and contractors), and
 - 17 (< 1 per cent) other Commonwealth employees seconded to the Agency.
- The Agency's APS employee headcount increased by over 1,600 between 30 June 2024 and 30 June 2025 (from approximately 33,600 to 35,200).
- This workforce is supplemented by 2 Service Delivery Partners (SDPs) that allows the Agency to scale up and down quickly, comprising a headcount of 668 staff, as of 30 June 2025.
- The Agency's 2024–25 Average Staffing Level (ASL) was 31,442, which is 1,224 ASL above the 2024–25 Budget ASL portfolio allocation of 30,218. This increase in the Agency's ASL reflects further investment in APS staffing to reduce reliance on contractor services.
- The Agency's 2025–26 Approved ASL is 29,612 which is 606 below the 30,218 approved ASL for the Agency during the 2024–25 financial year.
- Between 1 December 2020 and 30 June 2025, approximately 4,500 non-APS employees, including labour hire, contractor and SDP staff, have transitioned to APS employment in the Agency.
- In the last 12 months (1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025), approximately 158 APS employees (non-ongoing and Intermittent/Irregular) have transitioned to APS ongoing employment.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Randall Brugeaud
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Workforce Capability	PDR Number: QB25-000048
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 1:00:00 PM	Date Last Printed: N/A

Policy Commitments

- Between 1 May 2022 and 30 June 2025, the Agency has employed (commenced) approximately 350 additional staff in Far North Queensland¹, and is continuing to recruit to work towards the Government's election commitment.
- As part of the 2024–25 Budget, the Agency received \$1.8 billion over 3 financial years to the 2025–26 financial year to:
 - Maintain a customer service workforce to deliver timely services and payments to Australians experiencing vulnerability in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis.
 - Sustain emergency response capability.
 - Support other aspects of the Agency's operations.
- This has improved claim processing times, and resulted in shorter call wait times for customers.

¹ Far North Queensland includes Atherton, Cairns, Innisfail, Mareeba and Yarrabah locations.

Background

APS staff, whether ongoing, non-ongoing, or casual, remain the core of the Agency's workforce. They are the current and future leaders, who hold the institutional knowledge and expertise central to the culture of the Agency.

The Agency's non-APS workforce (comprising of labour hire personnel and contractors) and its outsourced Service Delivery Partner providers, give the Agency additional flexibility to engage short-term specialist or surge services, to support day-to-day operations and workload requirements.

The Agency's workforce size and composition will fluctuate based on forecasted and actual customer volumes and is heavily impacted by events such as natural disasters, pandemic events, and changes to government policy.

QB25-000060 – Stillborn Baby Payment

Issue

Are there circumstances where Services Australia pays Stillborn Baby Payment following late term or intentional abortion?

Headline Response

Stillborn Baby Payment may be paid in the tragic circumstances of a stillbirth. All stillbirths are required to be certified by a medical professional. Services Australia must rely on this information to assess and pay claims.

Facts and Figures

- As at 30 June 2025, 805 customers were paid Stillborn Baby Payment for 818 children during the 2024-25 financial year.

If Pressed

- There may be circumstances where a late term abortion might be categorised as a stillbirth where an appropriate medical professional has verified the baby was delivered. An example is where there is a medical determination the foetus is incompatible with life. Services Australia (the Agency) must rely on the information certified by the appropriate medical professional when assessing claims.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Contact: s22		Cleared by: Stuart Turnbull	
Contact No: s22		Contact No: s47F(1)	
Division: Families and Participation Division		PDR Number: QB25-000060	
Date Updated: 30/07/2025 11:33:00 AM		Date Last Printed: 30/07/2025 11:33:00 AM	

Stillborn Payment**Background**

Stillborn Baby Payment assists with the extra costs associated with a stillborn child. The current rate of payment is a \$4,326.57 lump sum for each stillborn child.

A customer may be eligible for Stillborn Baby Payment where they, or their partner, meet Australian Residence requirements, income test requirements, would have been the primary carer of a stillborn child, and:

- the child would have been a Family Tax Benefit (FTB) child of the customer had the child been born alive and at any time within 26 weeks of the delivery
- they would have been eligible to receive FTB
- they did not receive Parental Leave Pay for the same child.

When assessing a claim for Stillborn Baby Payment, the Agency uses the definition, set out by the Department of Social Services, as a baby who weighed at least 400 grams at delivery or whose period of gestation was at least 20 weeks, who has not breathed since delivery and whose heart has not beaten since delivery.

To qualify, customers must have a combined adjusted taxable income \$77,177 or less in the 6-month period beginning on the day of the baby's delivery or be eligible for FTB Part A for another child within 52 weeks of the stillbirth.

Customers can claim Stillborn Baby Payment through their myGov Centrelink online account, by completing a paper form issued when they are in hospital containing a doctor/midwife declaration that is used as verification of the stillbirth, or by calling the Child Bereavement and Double Orphan Pension Helpdesk on 1800 118 388.

Other suitable verification may include a letter from the hospital from the doctor/midwife or appropriate hospital representative or, if a home delivery, a letter from the doctor/midwife in attendance of the delivery.

Customers meeting criteria for both Parental Leave Pay and Stillborn Baby Payment can choose which payment is the best financial decision for their family. For multiple births, Parental Leave Pay may be paid for one child and Stillborn Baby Payment for the other child, or children, or Stillborn Baby Payment may be paid for each baby.

s47F(1)



Australian Government
Services Australia

s47F(1)

Dear s47F(1)

Thank you for your correspondence of 9 June 2025 to the Minister for Government Services, Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher, about the eligibility criteria for Stillborn Baby Payment. I have been asked to respond on the Minister's behalf.

Stillborn Baby Payment is a one-off non-taxable payment that provides financial assistance with the extra costs associated with a stillborn baby. Services Australia (the Agency) is responsible for the administration of Stillborn Baby Payment and for making determinations for payment of claims, on behalf of the Department of Social Services.

The eligibility criteria for Stillborn Baby Payment do not exclude circumstances where the stillbirth was due to a medical termination, including an intentional abortion, provided the child has been certified by a qualified medical practitioner as having been delivered and the definition of a stillborn child is met.

Section 3 of the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999* defines a stillborn child as "a child who weighs at least 400 grams at delivery or whose period of gestation was at least 20 weeks; and who has not breathed since delivery; and whose heart has not beaten since delivery." This definition aligns with that used by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and the legislated definition of all state and territory registrars of births, deaths and marriages.

The birth mother or their partner may be eligible for Stillborn Baby Payment if they claim the payment within 52 weeks of the stillbirth, provided they would have been the primary carer of the stillborn child. The claim period can be extended, if necessary, due to severe illness associated with the stillbirth.

Claimants for Stillborn Baby Payment must also meet residence rules and an income test. You can find further information about the eligibility criteria for this payment on the Agency's website at: servicesaustralia.gov.au by searching for 'QC 43781'.

If you would like to discuss this further, s22 from the Agency can be contacted on s22.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely
s22

s22
 Director
 Ministerial and Parliamentary Services

02 July 2025

Ombudsman Investigation into the Targeted Compliance Framework

Issue

What is the Government doing to address issues raised in the Commonwealth Ombudsman's report into the Targeted Compliance Framework?

Headline Response

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and Services Australia are supporting the Commonwealth Ombudsman's current investigation into the Targeted Compliance Framework. Services Australia will carefully consider and respond to the Ombudsman's recommendations, in collaboration with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

Facts and Figures

- In July 2024, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations paused cancellations of people's income support for 'persistent mutual obligation failures' after they became concerned that the decisions may not be valid due to the absence of discretion in the decision-making process.
- On 4 December 2024, the Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations advised the Commonwealth Ombudsman that, contrary to legislative changes in 2022 that required consideration of a job seeker's circumstances before deciding to cancel income support, decisions to cancel income support had occurred automatically.
- On 4 February 2025, the Ombudsman announced the commencement of an investigation into the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and Services Australia's (the Agency) cancellation of income support payments under the Targeted Compliance Framework.

If pressed

Why did Services Australia not change its processes in 2022?

- The Agency did not change its processes when the amendment was introduced in April 2022 as the Agency was instructed that the intent of the amendment was to support existing practices, for example, temporary pauses of compliance processes during emergencies such as a pandemic or natural disaster.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Tina Anderson
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Families and Participation Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000043
Date Updated: 11/07/2025 12:06:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 11/07/2025 12:06:00 PM

On automated decision making

- In part, the Targeted Compliance Framework did include human decision-making. Decisions about whether a job seeker had a reasonable excuse for not meeting their requirements were made by a staff member. In the absence of a reasonable excuse from the job seeker, cancellation was then applied without further discretion.

On remediation

- The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and the Agency have finalised remediation for cancellations for 'persistent mutual obligation failures' that occurred between 8 April 2022 and 4 July 2024.

On customer deaths

- It is not a routine practice for the Agency to record a cause of death on an individual's record.
- During the remediation process, no representation was made to the Agency by family members or next of kin in relation to deceased customers.
- The Agency is not aware of any connection between the cancellation of payments and the persons' deaths.

Policy Commitments

- The Government is committed to returning the Targeted Compliance Framework to lawful operation, with additional steps to ensure the protection of the most vulnerable people in our community.

Background

The Targeted Compliance Framework is the framework used by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, employment service providers and the Agency to manage compliance with mutual obligation requirements for individuals receiving income support.

Recent Media

- 4 June 2025 – The Canberra Times
[Ombudsman expands scope of investigation into JobSeeker cancellations](#)

Trust Exchange Proof of Concept

Headline Response

Services Australia is collaborating with the Department of Finance and the Australian Taxation Office on an extension to the Australian Government Digital ID System to support Verifiable Credentials and digital wallets.

As part of this work, Services Australia completed the Trust Exchange proof of concept, testing how Verifiable Credentials and the myGov app wallet can be used by real people in real-life use cases.

Services Australia is ready to support the Department of Finance, who is responsible for the Digital ID Program, on future next steps.

Facts and Figures

- The Trust Exchange Proof of Concept builds on the Government's investment in the Digital ID System, to issue Verifiable Credentials on behalf of government entities.
- The Trust Exchange Proof of Concept includes the ability for customers to share selected, verified details from their credentials within their digital wallet, to access the services they need.
- Four Trust Exchange Proof of Concepts were completed between November 2024 and January 2025:
 - Using Medicare cards, Centrelink Concession cards and Department of Veterans' Affairs Veterans' cards as Verifiable Credentials to register as a new patient at a medical practice.
 - Allowing a user to add identity information from an Australian Passport as a verified ID to their myGov App wallet.
 - Using a Verifiable Credential (derived from the date of birth on the user's ImmiCard) to prove that the holder is over 18 years old, to enter a licenced premises.
 - Using a Verifiable Credential of the Medicare Card to support the identity checking processes when registering as a new customer at a bank.
- In May 2025, an independent review found that the proof of concept achieved its outcomes. The findings from the proof of concept are now informing the design of a second phase.

Contact: Lisa Jansen	Cleared by: Jonathon Thorpe
Contact No: s47F(1)	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Customer and Staff Digital Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000055
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 1:44:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 1:44:00 PM

- The Proof of Concept aims to give individuals control over the information they share. This will limit the need for third parties to store government-issued credentials, including ID documents, cards and certificates - reducing the potential privacy impact of data breaches.
- The Proof of Concept tested a decentralised solution, where the individual's credentials remain at the originating source, and are only made available on the individual's personal device. This means there is no central store of ID documents, entitlement cards or credentials.

Policy Commitments

- In the 2024-25 Budget, the Government invested \$23.4 million for the Department of Finance, the Australian Taxation Office and Services Australia to pilot the use of government digital wallets and Verifiable Credentials. Services Australia was allocated \$11.4 million in the 2024–25 financial year to develop a Proof of Concept to extend the Digital ID Exchange to support Verifiable Credentials.

Vaccine Claims

COVID-19 Vaccine Claims Scheme

Issue

How many COVID-19 vaccine claims are still being worked on at Services Australia?

Headline Response

The COVID-19 Vaccine Claims Scheme demonstrates the Government's commitment to supporting individuals throughout the approved vaccine program. Claim processing times vary due to complexity of evidence provided and where medical or legal expertise is deemed necessary.

Talking Points

CLAIMS		
Claims in Progress	In progress	570
	Need further information	247
	Total claims in progress	817
Claims Finalised	Withdrawn	1,048
	Not payable	2,602
	Paid	495
	Total claims finalised	4,145
Total Claims Received		4,962

- The COVID-19 Vaccine Claims Scheme (the Scheme) provides compensation in cases of moderate to severe adverse reactions for Therapeutic Goods Administration approved COVID-19 vaccines.
- AstraZeneca, Pfizer, Moderna and Novavax COVID-19 vaccines are covered under the Scheme.
- Services Australia (the Agency) administers the Scheme on behalf of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, which maintains policy responsibility.

Contact: s22	Cleared by: Cathy Toze
Contact No: s22	Contact No: s47F(1)
Division: Capability and Partnered Programs	PDR Number: QB25-000044
Date Updated: 9/07/2025 3:27:00 PM	Date Last Printed: 9/07/2025 3:27:00 PM

Vaccine Claims

- Ten clinical conditions and administration-related injuries are covered under the Scheme. Compensation is payable where all eligibility criteria are met, including the hospitalisation requirement and minimum losses.
- On 24 September 2024, the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing updated the Scheme policy to broaden the review of decision rights for customers.
- On 30 September 2024, the Scheme closed to new claims.
- As at 30 June 2025, 495 claims have been paid to the value of \$45.8 million.
- The Agency will continue to assess all claims received on or before 30 September 2024.
- If individuals have queries on the progress of their claim, the Agency can be contacted on 1800 813 167 or by email at:
COVID19.vaccine.claims.scheme@servicesaustralia.gov.au.

Policy Commitments

- N/A

Background

The Government established the COVID-19 Vaccine Claims Scheme to provide further assurance and confidence to patients and health professionals in the COVID-19 vaccine rollout.

The Scheme responded to calls from peak bodies – including the Australian Medical Association and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, and medical indemnity insurers – for extended medical indemnity coverage for health professionals and their patients given the unique nature of the pandemic and response.

The Scheme is intended to provide a similar level of compensation to what individuals would receive through a court-based personal injury claim, without the need to pursue costly and time-consuming litigation. However, individuals can seek compensation through the courts either as an alternative to compensation under the Scheme or simultaneously with the Agency.

There has been parliamentary interest on Scheme payout amounts, calculations and timeframes for claim determinations. The Agency releases data around the Scheme periodically, ensuring the privacy of individuals is not compromised.

The Scheme does not have an overall cap on compensation paid to eligible claimants. The Commonwealth pays all payable claims under the Scheme.