

<p>Welcome, introductions and apologies s 22 [redacted] a/g First Assistant Secretary, Families Group .</p>	
<p>Welcome to Country Brief introduction and general housekeeping Welcome to s 22 [redacted] from DIDS and s 22 [redacted] from Centrelink who was at the meeting as an observer..</p>	
<p>1. General Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes 23 June 2009 • Workplan and Terms of Reference • Action Items • Emerging Issues 	
<p>Minutes, Terms of Reference and Workplan were all accepted without change. s 22 [redacted] and s 22 [redacted] have been briefed. No new Emerging Issues were received for the meeting.</p>	
<p>Action Items</p>	
<p>s 22 [redacted] raised the issue that if an action item is closed does that mean the group is happy with the issue. s 22 [redacted] advised closed means the matter has been answered in line with the current policy. Members also raised concerns that responses which are provided may be in line with current policy but how does that relate to the group's differing views. s 22 [redacted] advised there is consensus on the advice provided and we can't change the fact there will always be different views. Our role is to facilitate and provide these views to the Minister; we can't always get their view to the Minister as it may not be in line with current policy. s 22 [redacted] explained the views of the group are relayed to the Minister. s 22 [redacted] stressed this group has an advisory role not an advocacy role.</p> <p>s 22 [redacted] didn't want action item 5.2 closed because the issue hadn't changed. s 22 [redacted] advised that the item is closed as a process but not the issue.</p> <p>s 22 [redacted] asked if all information could go to members</p> <p>Action provide answers out of session</p>	<p>Action Item1.1 Responses to all action items to be provided out of session.</p>
<p>2. Key Emerging Issue Late Payment Penalties (LPP) from 23 September 2009</p>	
<p>Originally this was Action Item 5.5 – s 22 [redacted] tabled response for members and spoke to her response</p>	

s 22 explained that if someone enters into an agreement with CSA and they know they will be getting a tax return it is possible to negotiate with the CSA to take some of the tax return so they will not have a fine imposed upon them.

s 22 stressed that if you negotiate with CSA there was always the possibility that LPPs would not be imposed.

s 22 advised a number of people are not aware of their child support debt and their tax returns are being taken. The CSA needs to warn people that this might happen and people should get advice on what they can do so that penalties can be waived. s 22 advised members the CSA will only consider the issue when the debt is remitted.

s 22 mentioned the high turnover of CSA staff added to this problem. s 22 agreed there is a lot of new recruitment and CSA were increasing the number of staff being employed in a proactive approach to explain what will happen if they have debt. CSA have an obligation to provide this information to clients.

s 22 pointed out collection rates had increased number and asked for an analysis of CSA's penalty strategy and how these penalties are collected. The CSA are now much stricter in their approach and perhaps the CSA could look at other ways of getting these penalties. s 22 advised that most collection occurs through tax refunds but the CSA will provide members with more specific numbers.

s 22 raised the issue that the money has gone before the person knows what is happening. s 22 advised the customer must contact the CSA to negotiate an approach that is acceptable to both the CSA and the customer.

s 22 asked if there could be a legislative amendment so this type of thing didn't happen. s 22 told members that FaHCSIA has been looking at this issue but the process is quite long and complicated as it must be considered within the compliance framework.

The discussion then moved to the difficulties around penalties and whether they are a cost recovery mechanism for the CSA. s 22 advised that it goes into Consolidated Revenue. The question was then raised on the policy that underpins this. s 22 advised there is clear information in guide which explains the process. FaHCSIA and CSA to provide the policy for members.

s 22 asked if someone is in debt but has been in credit in previous years can something be done about that.

s 22 advised that late payment penalties should be applied when they haven't been paid in full and on time.

s 22 asked why it has been so long in changing the legislation, previously it was achievable

Action Item 2.1
 CSA to provide an analysis of CSA's penalty strategy and how these penalties are collected.

Action Item 2.2
 FaHCSIA and CSA to provide the policy for members.

<p>s 22 advised the process of policy takes time plus we are competing with other programs and the timetable can be changed and amended according to what is important for the Government to achieve, plus the department can't discuss the changes to policy until they have been legislated.</p> <p>s 22 advised FaHCSIA would provide how the legislative process works and CSA will provide administrative process by next meeting to members.</p> <p>Action Item 8.1 s 22 spoke about Litigation costs and advised there are court discretion costs it is not a one for one process.</p> <p>s 22 wanted to know :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o the number of cases and disbursements; and o the time scale of the response was not detailed enough <p>s 22 advised the CSA would answer more fully if s 22 could provide specific questions she wanted answered.</p> <p>s 22 and s 22 both thought the costs associated with legal expenses was high and asked <i>what is the actual cost schedule?</i></p> <p>s 22 advised that FaHCSIA and CSA would take up this issue with AGD to see if they can provide the information so that the <i>haggling</i> stops</p>	<p>Action Item 2.3 FaHCSIA to provide how the legislative process works and CSA will provide administrative process by next meeting</p> <p>Action Item 2.4 CSA to liaise with Legal Aid and provide specific information to Legal Aid re litigation costs.</p> <p>Action Item 2.5 FaHCSIA and CSA to liaise with AGD to see if they can provide the information on costs associated with legal expenses.</p>
<p>3. CSA Complaint figures and trends – Commonwealth Ombudsman’s Office</p>	
<p>s 22 spoke to her presentation and then answered general questions regarding the statistics she provided.</p> <p>s 22 asked how is collection methods and failure to take action different? s 22 advised it is probably a missed collection opportunity and failure to collect is not taking enough action to collect. s 22 there is a long explanation provided in the Ombudsman’s submission to the s 22 review.</p>	

<p>s 22 asked given the CSA caseload what is considered to be an acceptable number of complaints.</p> <p>s 22 advised the CSA has a target not a number. CSA are trying to fix the issue initially in an attempt to address the problem before it gets to a complaint. The CSA are targeting complaints and the processes that are being used at the heart of the complaint.</p> <p>s 22 told the meeting the CSA is establishing an early intervention process with team leaders who have the authority and responsibility to play an active role as a broker to get a solution for customers. There is a systematic process for specific feedback on behaviour and consequence of behaviour and future direction approach. The CSA are trying to identify the driver within the complaint.</p> <p>The Ombudsman is trying to find the issues in the complaint process is it fair and does it take into account the issues of these customers. The CSA reiterated they are also trying to do this.</p>	
<p>4. Quality decision-making under the Child Support Scheme – Change of Assessment Pilot</p>	
<p>s 22 Project Manager Spoke to presentation.</p> <p>s 22 advised the CSA needs to have protocols in place for any referrals to Family Relationship Centres as they are already under pressure.</p> <p>s 22 asked if the CSA had done anything on claims decision makers are not looking at the proper needs of children it's an arithmetic calculation only. The quality of decision making is poor, not just the administrative process as 90% of SSAT decisions are actually being overturned at the moment.</p> <p>s 22 advised it is the CO's role to actually educate the customers. s 22 advised FaHCSIA reviews court cases and is aware that Just and Equitable is important. In the SSAT and COA jurisdiction this is being considered. It is FaHCSIA's job to look at how some decisions are being made. Many cases being assessed are very early in the SSAT process.</p> <p>s 22 asked if the form was also being reviewed. s 22 advised they will review it but it won't be done for the pilot as they were not holding up this process to wait for the form.</p> <p>s 22 told members the cost of children with special needs, are different to costs of caring for children and unless the form is changed real changes aren't achievable. s 22 advised this issue goes beyond the formula. CSA advised they don't have the capacity to do that as the Pilot is a small scale random selection.</p> <p>s 22 told the group there is an attachment to the formula which is the problem. The courts really needed to know how much does each household need to live. It was important to get the Just and Equitable bit correct in the first instance.</p>	<p>Action Item 4.1 CSA to provide an update on the Pilot into Dispute Resolution Referrals.</p>

s 22 raised the issue of unexpected and significant dental and the inconsistencies in getting a COA in place when this arises. FaHCSIA advised the formula doesn't have a list of things it covers it takes modelling of costs of caring for children and this varies on income levels. The modelling is in the task force report. The COA provisions were to provide a variation where the formula didn't take account of the cost associated with caring for children at certain periods. s 22 told the group that it's the capacity of both parents to pay for their children and the needs of parents need to be balanced.

s 22 said that well over 90% of cases won't change, but there is a group that won't fit this statistic and will need individual attention. COA is about exceptional cases not the bulk of cases.

s 22 told the group that it's the one off costs that are a problem for parents and the COA process doesn't help with these costs as they need to be paid NOW not next year.

s 22 asked in how many cases the male would have the money to pay for this type of expense.

s 22 agreed it wouldn't be often but there often but there are some who do have a higher income and they can pay and don't.

s 22 asked if the money is paid, then Family Tax Benefit would be affected and as it can't be quarantined why should the Government meet these costs.

s 22 – this needs to have an assisted communication process so that an outcome can be made that is agreeable to both parties. So should there be on the trial who can be assisted with mediation

s 22 told members the CSA would have further conversations with Stakeholders who want to be involved in the remainder of this pilot.

s 22 – is there a project plan or executive summary from s 22 **Action: CSA took on notice**

The discussion then moved to the actual format for COA interviews. s 22 and s 22 both agreed the decision maker up front proposal is an issue because CSA will only have separated conferences so there is a Procedural Fairness issue. CSA advised customers do have these choices. This is the problem as CSA have the ability to provide information to the other parent and then they can comment on what has been divulged. There is a mix up of roles and the Senior Case Officer has too much contact and really shouldn't be the decision maker. Also the time frame is really too tight and in rural and remote areas it won't work.

s 22 asked the group for information on the Pilot as CSA were trying to improve the process. The Pilot won't solve all the issues raised but it should make the process quicker.

s 22 advised that members were asked to be on this pilot and their input hasn't been sought. s 22 advised that this pilot is not the final process and CSA will look at your feedback and work on the processes.

Action Item 4.2
CSA to provide the project plan or executive summary from s 22 work.

<p>Objections process – CSA s 22 papers will be circulated out of session.</p> <p>s 22 suggested the CSA should start the trial to speed up CSA process. The trial should also show the issues with the Form, Quality decision making and training staff are getting. It was suggested a small group of 2-3 people should work with CSA in a co design way so engagement occurs. The process is a vehicle for a quality decision making. s 22 – nominated for this group.</p>	
<p>4. Social Security Appeals Tribunal – s 22</p>	
<p>s 22 provided general information on what the SSAT does and how they do their work.</p> <p>The bulk of SSAT members are part time. In child support the CSA is a party but don't often appear. The SSAT has powers that allow people to give evidence and also to ask the CSA to appear. In child support there are two parties and SSAT prefer that people appear in person. However parties can elect not to appear. This can cause issues for SSAT as they prefer both parties in person, so evidence can be tested. The decision making is usually better when both parties are present. SSAT do try to work with clients needs and have telephone and video conferences. Child support hearings are recorded as there is a right of appeal to the court and oral decisions can be delivered. Oral decisions can be given quickly which is good for all parties.</p> <p>When an appeal goes to SSAT they need to check they have jurisdiction i.e. it has been through an objections officer. The SSAT then contact the CSA who put together the relevant papers (differs to AAT process as they get the whole gamut of papers). CSA has never had the merits review of their decision therefore they are inquisitorial in their approach they need financial information that CSA wouldn't normally receive.</p> <p>SSAT agreed with CSA decisions in 23.1%; 34.5% decisions were set aside and 34.2% were dismissed for various reasons. When the SSAT make a decision they can set aside, dismiss or agree.</p> <p>The majority of cases are Change of Assessment and typical reasons for the case are that new information has come to light since the Objections officer made the initial decision. In pre-hearing conferences 10.2% reach a decision and that is a good result.</p> <p>Legislative objectives underpin everything SSAT do. If this means that the time frame isn't met then that is just bad luck the underlying principle is to be fair and just. If the information isn't provided then a decision would be made based on the evidence they have received. Hearings are not open to the public and a support person cannot go into the hearing.</p>	

<p>The SSAT is completely independent of the CSA and usually 2 -3 members will decide on the issue.</p> <p>Panel members are independently appointed by the Governor General.</p> <p>After an SSAT hearing you would go to the Federal Magistrates Court or the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.</p> <p><u>Prehearing conferences</u> are conducted by telephone, they are not recorded they start off talking together and then separately (the other party isn't involved). The aim is to explain procedures, explore the possibility of agreement and see if there are gaps in evidence. This is an important tool to improve so that more results can be achieved.</p> <p>Hearings can take from 2 hours plus it depends on the circumstances of the case.</p> <p>Case Managers are there to assist with the administration of the case they are not involved in any decision making.</p> <p>Questions –s 22 advised that you can only go to SSAT after all objections processes are exhausted. s 22 made a comment that SSAT processes do work well but at critical junctures SSAT are making opposite decisions to CSA, because there is more than one person involved in the process and both parties are involved. s 22 advised the suggestion about having a page on what the ACTUAL needs are for different children and to have a gender balance on all panels back to the Quality Analysis unit.</p> <p>s 22 was advised that children aren't allowed in hearings.</p> <p>s 22 asked if the SSA allowed representatives in the hearing. The answer is yes you can but the ultimate decision is up to the SSAT members so if it's a new partner who wants to be present at the hearing it may not be appropriate.</p> <p>s 22 finished by advising members to look at the SSAT website as there is a lot of information there that can be used.</p>	
<p>5. s 22</p>	
<p>s 22 introduced s 22 who outlined the following points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o CSA has a very difficult job and for this reason there are no real winners. o Invited s 22 to join the CSA and s 22 to review CSA operating practices. o The Richmond report has not been received yet. When it has it will be made public. It's anticipated that some recommendations will be implemented immediately while others will take much longer to implement because of Government requirements. 	

- There may be a need to ask Cabinet for more money to implement some of the recommendations.
- Broadly it is anticipated they will have something to say about service delivery as part of DHS so it suits the individual better, more automation and simplification of processes. Also the CSA will have to be efficient in Service Delivery around all the issues that CSA encounter e.g. fraud and non compliance and there will be an opportunity for stakeholder involvement in this process.

The Minister then took questions and comments from the floor

s 22 commended s 22 for appointing s 22 to review CSA operating practices.

s 22 – Can the formula be reviewed as it has adversely affected some of NCSMC clients. s 22 advised he couldn't change as it is a policy matter not service delivery.

s 22 – has been told by some MPs there are a lot more CSA complaints occurring. s 22 was aware of this and told members these MPs are being visited by CSA staff to discuss the issues that might be occurring.

s 22 –Do you think Income quarantining for Single Parent Pensioners by Centrelink will be possible.
s 22 was unable to comment on specifics but believed that Centrelink had the resources to implement the changes to the policy.

s 22 - 4000 kids talked about Child Support issues and the new CSA website is a good thing but it was important to remember the children not just the parents the main issue is the child. s 22 advised he would to engage with Kidsline/Boystown as he is a patron of Lifeline.

s 22 – Endorsed the appointment of s 22 and commended his ability to get across so many issues and hoped that any recommendations would be followed through for CSA. s 22 stated that it was important that the CSA work well. However the Legislation is very complicated and has implementation consequences. That particular part of the CSA is under too much pressure and should have more resources to assist CSA officers????

s 22 – Interested in your comments that the CSA has two customers or is the client really just the Child?
s 22 advised there are two clients. Services need to be delivered in certain ways, some clients get Child Care Rebate, others have complex needs and interact with CSA and Centrelink and that is where you need to JOIN UP services. The third group is those you deal with over the phone. Need to deliver services in the most efficient way possible.

s 22 – What is the appropriate role of Government in the compliance space. What is the limit you can go to when children are involved? s 22 advised that If you try and make something simple people abuse the system and to address this service delivery reform should help, being more streamlined and digitised should take pressure off the system

<p>s 22 – Are you expecting the Henry report will impact on Child Support? s 22 advised it is too early to comment.</p> <p>s 22 - Issues can arise with joined up services as there can be increases in demand and services are then overloaded. This results in providers not promoting services because they're already overloaded. How do you fix this problem. s 22 told the group that you just continue to work together to alleviate the issues.</p> <p>s 22 –The pace of legislative change seems to be very slow why does this happen and can't you fast track the process. s 22 advised the Legislative agenda is extremely slow because there are limited resources in drafting the legislation within the Parliamentary Council who write for the Government, you just have to accept it. It is then prioritised which also affects the timeframe and then it can be referred to committee and finally the Senate can do what they like with it. Ultimately the whole process can be very prolonged.</p> <p>s 22 –What is your perspective and how do you see this group and our role supporting you? s 22 said it was useful because it meant that when the Government hears something across all groups they know its correct. It is also good thing for you all to hear what each other has been saying especially in this sort of group/forum. Information flow across the room is very important.</p> <p>The group then discussed generally the issue of domestic violence and s 22 mentioned there was a move away from this term as FaHCSIA had recently sought submissions for “Respectful Relationships” and Telephone help line.</p> <p>s 22 asked if all the money that CSA gets from late payment penalties could be put that into TV ads or some form of communication for separated parents rather than Consolidated Revenue. s 22 advised he could consider that idea.</p> <p>s 22 finished with advising the group that he would keep CSNSEG informed on what is happening in Child Support space.</p>	
<p>6. Quality decision-making under the Child Support Scheme - Decision making case study</p>	
<p>This session was cancelled as the agenda was changed on the day.</p>	
<p>7. Child Support Program Service Delivery Update & FaHCSIA Policy Update</p>	
<p>Child Support Program – s 22 Child Support Service Delivery update – s 22 tabled CSA report</p>	<p>Action Item 7.1 CSA to provide their update</p>

<p>s 22 spoke to her update</p> <p>Credit Card payments query on how it is done? Group advised that credit card payments are done via Ezi pay</p> <p>s 22 tabled a question on notice; <i>If someone went and got some new credit cards and paid off all their debt and then declared themselves bankrupt is the debt honoured? Written off ?</i> CSA and FaHCSIA took question on notice</p>	<p>electronically to members.</p> <p>Action Item 7.2 CSA will provide members with details on how customers can use their credit card to pay for child support.</p> <p>Action Item 7.3 CSA & FaHCSIA to advise what the policy/procedures are for the following: <i>If someone went and got some new credit cards and paid off all their debt and then declared themselves bankrupt is the debt honoured? Written off ?</i></p>
<p>FaHCSIA Policy – s 22 (FaHCSIA) FaHCSIA provided a short update on the major child support policy initiatives underway. These included;</p> <p>Alignment of Care initiative – work is progressing on the alignment of care in the Family Assistance and Child Support systems. The policy has been largely settled and FaHCSIA is working to progress the legislative amendments. FaHCSIA expects a bill to be introduced in Autumn 2010 and the measure will be implemented 1 July 2010.</p> <p>Income Estimates backlog – Government recently considered long term arrangements to simplify and improve the arrangements for income estimates. Previously, the complex policy/delivery arrangements lead to a significant backlog of unreconciled income estimates in the child support system. Government has agreed to policy changes that will be</p>	

<p>implemented on 1 July 2010. FaHCSIA is working with Child Support Agency to settle the policy and legislation will be developed following this.</p> <p>Funding arrangements for Advocacy Groups –CSNSEG members were advised that the process was still under consideration and that no further advice on outcomes could be provided until the delegate (s 22) has made a decision.</p>	
<p><u>Anglicare WA and Commonwealth Ombudsman’s Office</u> Member updates were tabled at the meeting.</p> <p><u>ANU Update</u> s 22 provided members with an update on the Child Support Scheme Reforms Study. The ANU should have 5000 responses by December 2009 which will give a real feel of changes and impacts. It’s a random sample of CSA caseload. Should be able to report back by March or April.</p> <p><u>SPCS, LFAA and Sole Parent’s Union</u> all provided verbal updates</p>	
<p>Meeting Closed at 4:10pm</p>	

Outstanding Emerging Issues

Issue	Date Received	Raised by	Issue Description	Agency Contact	Progress/Action
65	August 2009	National Council of Single Mothers and their Children	Dispute between payee and payer regarding shared care and proposal for a change to policy.	FaHCSIA/CSA	

**SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS
CSNSEG MEETING OF 16 September 2009**

Agenda item / Action Items arising	Responsibility	Due Date	Status	Comments
Agenda Item 5				
5.1 FaHCSIA to work with CSA and Centrelink to examine existing communication products around the effect of lump sum child support payments on FTB		Ongoing		
5.2 Emerging Issue 65 – Disputed care and proposal for a change to policy	FaHCSIA/CSA	13/11/09		FaHCSIA to send out written response once finalised.
5.3 FaHCSIA to provide additional information formula rationale for families with more than three children.	FaHCSIA	13/11/09		FaHCSIA to provide additional information on the rationale for the formula determining costs of children in families with 3 or more children.
5.4 The CSA to investigate service delivery practices re: out of business hours phone contact in the Hunter region.	Child Support Agency	13/11/09		CSA to investigate why there appears to be a higher number of calls to customers of the Hunter Region outside normal business hours.
5.5 CSA undertook to provide detailed information regarding the amount of late payment penalties applied, remitted and paid.	Child Support Agency	13/11/09		CSA to provide detailed information re: late payment penalties case studies before next meeting. – Scheduled as an agenda item for the 2 December meeting.
5.6 Members to receive all emerging issues as they are received	FaHCSIA/CSA	13/11/09		FaHCSIA and CSA to provide Emerging Issues to all members as they are received.

Agenda item / Action Items arising	Responsibility	Due Date	Status	Comments
				To enable sufficient time for members to receive and respond to emerging issues (including potentially canvassing members of their organisations for views on that emerging) prior to 2 December meeting, FaHCSIA and CSA request that all emerging issues for the next meeting are received by 13 November.

Action Item 8				
8.1 Litigation costs around s 47E per case. CSA was asked to breakdown this figure and whether, after court costs have been decided. there is still an outstanding amount of s 47E .	Child Support Agency	13/11/09		CSA to provide breakdown of litigation costs and what the average cost is incurred when litigating a case.
8.2 How many company directors has the CSA pursued to bankruptcy in the last 12 months?	Child Support Agency	13/11/09		CSA to report back on answers to these questions.
Action Item 10				
10.1 Agenda Workplan Terms of Reference	FaHCSIA/CSA	9/10/09		Proposed balanced agenda, work plan and terms of reference to be revised and sent to members for endorsement.

<p>Welcome, introductions and apologies</p> <p>1. s 22 [redacted] First Assistant Secretary, Quality & Planning, Child Support Program.</p>	
<p>Welcome to Country</p> <p>Brief introduction and general housekeeping</p> <p>Welcome to s 22 [redacted] newly appointed Deputy Secretary, Child Support and s 22 [redacted] from Relationships Australia.</p>	
<p>2. s 22 [redacted] Presentation</p> <p>Delivery Quality Outcomes review of the Child Support Program</p>	
<p>s 22 [redacted] attended the meeting to inform members of his review. He advised members that he would be conducting an independent review of Child Support to obtain assurance that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the design and implementation of current decision-making processes and quality assurance arrangements are appropriate, and the CSA represented better practice in service delivery in the Australian Government context. <p>s 22 [redacted] briefly outlined the Terms of Reference for his review and discussed his approach to stakeholder consultation and the submission process. s 22 [redacted] also provided an overview of his background and experience before taking questions from members.</p> <p><u>Questions from members included:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>concern over the short timeframe allowed for the review given the complexity of child support service delivery;</u> <u>whether or not the report would be available to the public; and</u> <u>the need for the interests of children to be at the forefront of any review.</u> <p>Closing date for submissions is 23 October 2009 to:</p> <p>DeliveringQualityOutcomes@csa.gov.au or Delivering Quality Outcomes Review Attention: s 22 [redacted] GPO Box 1903 Canberra City 2601</p>	
<p>3. General Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes 23 June 2009 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Items 	
<p>Minutes were accepted without change. s 22 and s 22 have been briefed and the chair advised that CSA has established a working group to look at providing human services information to grandparents in a more coordinated way. CSA will keep the members informed of the outcomes of this work.</p> <p>All outstanding action items from 23 June 2009 meeting were completed.</p>	
<p>4. Emerging Issues (23 June 2009) - Closed</p>	
<p>Emerging issues 58, 59 & 60 – written responses provided in folders.</p>	
<p>5. New Emerging Issues</p>	
<p>Eight new emerging issues were received from members for this meeting. Seven of these were answered and members provided with written responses.</p> <p>Emerging Issue 61 – s 22 CSA’s role in supporting customers to manage any lump sum child support payments. s 22 noted that many customers don’t understand the policy.. s 22 noted that FaHCSIA response to the emerging issue indicated further work would be done to consider whether communication products could be improved, or whether a new product or information is required to support customers understanding of the policy and service delivery framework.</p> <p>Emerging Issue 62 – s 22 sought clarification on how customers receive their money back when they have made an overpayment. The Chair noted payment options and advised members to raise particular customer issue with CSA .</p> <p>Emerging Issue 63 – s 22 is concerned that mothers are not pursued for overdue child support payments in the same way as men. It was noted that CSA’s approach was not gender specific and there was no specific targeting of fathers.</p> <p>Emerging Issue 64 – s 22 was satisfied with the response given.</p> <p>Emerging Issue 65 – Chair noted this emerging issue was not complete and will be distributed once finalised.</p> <p>Emerging Issue 66 – s 22 advised that there needs to be a change in the current formula to help families with more than three children and that equal treatment of income is inappropriate due to lost career opportunity costs. s 22 advised that she can take s 22 through this issue if required. The chair advised that all concerns stakeholders raise are actioned by the CSA and FaHCSIA and are taken to respective Ministers for consideration. A number of other members were interested in the rationale for the current formula application to families with more than 3 children. FaHCSIA to provide additional information.</p>	<p>Action Item 5.1 FaHCSIA to work with CSA and Centrelink to examine existing communication products around the effect of lump sum child support payments on FTB</p> <p>Action Item 5.2 FaHCSIA to send out written response once finalised.</p> <p>Action Item 5.3 FaHCSIA to provide additional information formula rationale for families with more than three children.</p> <p>Action Item 5.4 CSA</p>

<p>Emerging Issue 67 - s 22 raised a case where a customer was called by the CSA on a weekend. The CSA advised that in the majority of cases CSOs will ask a customer “Is this a convenient time to speak?” at the outset of the call. Both s 22 and s 22 stated this does not always happen particularly in the Hunter region.</p> <p>Emerging Issue 68 – s 22 spoke about enforcement and appropriateness of CSA pursuing Late Payment Penalties through litigation. s 22 advised that there needs to be a general awareness as current administrative practices meant penalties were being pursued where this may not be appropriate. s 22 advised that each case is reviewed individually and the CSA can look at cases if s 22 provides details. s 22 stated the CSA is in a difficult position when it comes to compliance and enforcement, on one hand in pursuing payments while ensuring actions are appropriate in the circumstances.</p> <p>Members all agreed that it would be useful to receive Emerging Issues in advance of meetings to allow sufficient time to consider before meetings.</p>	<p>to investigate the Hunter Region for customer calls.</p> <p>Action Item 5.5 CSA undertook to provide detailed information regarding the amount of late payment penalties applied, remitted and paid.</p> <p>Action Item 5.6 FaHCSIA and CSA to provide Emerging Issues to all members as they arise.</p>
<p>6. Member Updates</p>	
<p>Members provided brief updates on key activities and developments for their organisations.</p>	
<p>7. Child Support Program Service Delivery Update & FaHCSIA Policy Update</p>	
<p>Child Support Program – s 22</p> <p>Child Support Program written update provided to members. s 22 spoke specifically about the Disputed Care pilot and of the new payment choice for customers who can now make use of credit care payment facilities. The update was followed by discussion on the appropriateness of CSA advising customers to seek FRC services. s 22 advised the group that further updates would be provided as the pilot progresses.</p>	
<p>FaHCSIA Policy – s 22 (FaHCSIA)</p> <p>The Open Selection Process to select organisations to provide ongoing feedback on the effect of child support policy and input to the development of policy will be advertised in major metropolitan newspapers on Saturday 19 September 2009. FaHCSIA will email members Friday 18 October 2009 with a link to selection criteria.</p> <p>Due to probity reasons all questions must be directed to the email address provided and responses will be published</p>	

<p>on the FaHCSIA website. FaHCSIA or CSA staff will be unable to answer any personal questions relating to the tender process. The selection process will proceed over a 4 week period and s 22 will make the final decision on the process.</p> <p>It was noted that the next 10 de-identified SSAT decisions had been published on the Austlii website.</p>	
<p>8. Presentations</p>	
<p>Debt Reduction Strategy – s 22 (CSA) – See PowerPoint Presentation</p> <p>Child Support Debt & Compliance – s 22 (CSA) – See PowerPoint Presentation</p> <p>Members were given the opportunity to ask questions at the conclusion of the presentations. There were a number of questions which generally sought to clarify the CSA’s collection and enforcement strategies. Specific questions were raised in relation to the CSA’s case selection process particularly those cases subject to litigation, litigation costs and late payment penalties.</p> <p>Some questions were noted as action items and will be responded to out of session</p> <p>The Chair advised if there were any further question regarding debt and compliance they can be emailed to s 22 or s 22 CSA will update on this regularly.</p>	<p>Action Item 8.1 CSA to provide breakdown s 47E figure and whether after court costs have been decided there is still an outstanding amount of s 47E .</p> <p>8.2 How many company directors has the CSA pursued to bankruptcy in the last 12 months?</p>
<p>9. Presentations</p>	
<p>Child Support Scheme Reforms – s 22 (FaHCSIA) spoke to the presentation</p> <p>s 22 took questions from members at the conclusion of his presentation. Questions primarily focused on the impact of the reforms on low income families particularly those customers who have lost \$60 or more a week. There was general concern for the children of these families especially where there may be other issues such as children with disabilities.</p> <p>s 22 advised members that other branches within FaHCSIA were working on child related policy and urged members to read the Child Protection Framework.</p>	
<p>10. 2009/10 CSNSEG Workplan – s 22 (FaHCSIA) & s 22 (CSA)</p>	
<p>Feedback from One-on-One Consultations</p> <p>s 22 – thanked all member organisations for their time with the One-on-One consultations.</p>	

<p>As a result of one-on-ones there is no change proposed to existing membership. Some feedback was provided about various groups who are not represented, however on balance it was considered appropriate to bring in specialist expertise on a case-by-case basis. It was noted that many shared the view that it is important to have the voice of children remain a focus of the CSNSEG’s considerations.</p> <p><u>Work Plan</u></p> <p>s 22 – indicated that members had provided positive input to the forward work plan and a draft work plan had been tabled with meeting papers for discussion. s 22 noted that some important child support related topics had been identified and the group should focus on the child support aspects of these topics. s 22 noted a number of topics raised earlier in the day that should be considered in the context of the forward work plan.</p>	
<p><u>Review of Terms of Reference</u> – Members were asked to consider the Group’s Terms of Reference with a view to establishing if it was still reflective of the Group’s purpose.</p> <p>Members worked in small groups at tables to consider.</p> <p>Member feedback to be incorporated in updated draft which will be circulated with minutes for member’s endorsement.</p> <p><u>Workplan</u></p> <p>Members were asked to consider a draft work plan based on their earlier feedback.</p> <p>Members again worked in small groups at tables to consider.</p> <p>Additional input from members to be reflected in draft and circulated with minutes for member endorsement.</p>	
<p><u>Specific Proposals</u> - s 22</p> <p>Balance Agenda will try to get this information into the next agenda and will send with minutes.</p> <p>Action: members to provide input on the drafts we put to them</p> <p>s 22 would like a full day on legislation (maybe the day before or after a CSNSEG meeting) CSA is looking into this, as noted earlier in the meeting. State Stakeholder groups have raised this issue too.</p> <p><u>Meeting closed 4:10pm</u></p>	<p>Action Item 10.1</p> <p>Proposed balanced agenda, work plan and terms of reference to be revised and sent to members for endorsement.</p>

Centraplaza Boardroom – 16 Bowes Place Woden

Attendees

Advocacy Groups	
s 22	Shared Parenting Council of Australia
s 22	National Council of Single Mothers and their Children
s 22	Dads in Distress
s 22	Sole Parents Union
s 22	Lone Fathers Association Australia
Researchers	
s 22	Australian National University
s 22	Institute of Child Protection
Community Service Providers	
s 22	Relationships Australia
s 22	Crisis Support Services
s 22	Australian Council of Social Services
s 22	Catholic Social Services
s 22	Family Relationships Services Australia
s 22	Kids Helpline/Boystown
Legal	
s 22	Federal Magistrates Court
s 22	Legal Aid
s 22	Law Council of Australia
Government	
s 22	Commonwealth Ombudsman's Office
s 22	Centrelink
s 22	Child Support Program
s 22	Child Support Program
s 22	Child Support Program
s 22	Child Support Program
s 22	FaHCSIA
s 22	FaHCSIA
Presenters	
s 22	Child Support Program
s 22	FaHCSIA
s 22	University of Sydney
s 22	Child Support Program
Apologies	
s 22	Family Law Court
s 22	AIFS
s 22	Anglicare Western Australia
s 22	FaHCSIA
s 22	Law Council of Australia
s 22	AIFS

Secretariat

s 22
s 22
s 22

FaHCSIA
FaHCSIA
Child Support Agency

Outstanding Emerging Issues

Issue	Date Received	Raised by	Issue Description	Agency Contact	Progress/Action
65	August 2009	National Council of Single Mothers and their Children	Dispute between payee and payer regarding shared care and proposal for a change to policy.	FaHCSIA/CSA	

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Emerging Issues

Outstanding Emerging Issues from 23 June 2009 meeting

- **Emerging Issue 58** – Disputed Care
Shared Parenting Council of Australia
FaHCSIA to respond
- **Emerging Issue 59** – FTB A Indexed only by Inflation.
National Council of Single Mothers and their Children
FaHCSIA to respond
- **Emerging Issue 60** – Evidence based Evaluations of the reforms. (National Council of Single Mothers and their Children
FaHCSIA – presentation at 16 September meeting

New Emerging Issues

New Emerging Issues received since 23 June 2009.

Completed emerging issue responses have been distributed to all members of the Group.

- **Emerging Issue 61** – Collection of overdue child support created FTB debts.
National Council of Single Mothers and their Children
FaHCSIA - Not finalised as at 14/09/09
- **Emerging Issue 62** – Non-refund of overpayments
Lone Fathers Association of Australia
CSA - Completed
- **Emerging Issue 63** – Is there a gender bias to the CSA investigations of parents who are not declaring their income?
Lone Fathers Association of Australia
CSA - Completed
- **Emerging Issue 64** – Capacity to Earn decisions made through Change of Assessment
Lone Fathers Association of Australia
CSA - Completed

To be distributed on the day of meeting

- **Emerging Issue 65** – Disputes between payee and payer regarding shared care
National Council of Single Mothers and their Children
FaHCSIA - Not finalised at time of printing.
- **Emerging Issue 66** – Formula Penalty for residence parents with four or more children. Australian Council of Social Services
FaHCSIA - Completed
- **Emerging Issue 67** – CSA Case officer calling customers outside business hours
Dads in Distress
CSA – Completed by 15/9
- **Emerging Issue 68** – Penalties are no longer waived as readily as they once were
National Legal Aid
CSA – Completed by 15/9

**SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS
CSNSEG MEETING OF 23 September 2009**

Agenda item / Action Items arising	Responsibility	Due Date	Status	Comments									
Agenda Item 5													
5.1 FaHCSIA to work with CSA and Centrelink to examine existing communication products around the effect of lump sum child support payments on FTB	FaHCSIA/CSA	Ongoing	Closed	The existing communications products available on the CSA website address this issue									
5.2 Emerging Issue 65 – Disputed care and proposal for a change to policy	FaHCSIA/CSA	13/11/09	Closed	FaHCSIA forwarded response in 2 December packs									
5.3 FaHCSIA to provide additional information formula rationale for families with more than three children.	FaHCSIA	13/11/09	Closed	FaHCSIA has provided additional information on the rationale for the formula determining costs of children in families with 3 or more children.									
5.4 The CSA to investigate service delivery practices re: out of business hours phone contact in the Hunter region.	Child Support Agency	13/11/09	Awaiting Data	CSA to investigate why there appears to be a higher number of calls to customers of the Hunter Region outside normal business hours.									
<p>5.5 CSA undertook to provide detailed information regarding the amount of late payment penalties applied, remitted and paid.</p> <p><u>Response</u></p> <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Financial year</th> </tr> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">07/08</th> <th style="text-align: center;">08/09</th> <th style="text-align: center;">09/10 to 31Oct09</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: left; vertical-align: top;">s 47E</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Financial year			07/08	08/09	09/10 to 31Oct09	s 47E			Child Support Agency	13/11/09	Closed	CSA to provide detailed information re: late payment penalties case studies before next meeting. – Scheduled as an agenda item for the 2 December meeting.
Financial year													
07/08	08/09	09/10 to 31Oct09											
s 47E													

Agenda item / Action Items arising	Responsibility	Due Date	Status	Comments
5.6 Members to receive all emerging issues as they are received	FaHCSIA/CSA	23/2/10	Ongoing	<p>FaHCSIA and CSA to provide Emerging Issues to all members as they are received.</p> <p>To enable sufficient time for members to receive and respond to emerging issues (including potentially canvassing members of their organisations for views on that emerging) prior to 2 December meeting, FaHCSIA and CSA request that all emerging issues for the next meeting are received by 23 February 2010.</p>
Action Item 8				
8.1 Litigation costs around ^{s 47E} per case. CSA was asked to breakdown this figure and whether, after court costs have been decided, there is still an outstanding amount of ^{s 47E} .	Child Support Agency	13/11/09	Closed	<p>CSA to provide breakdown of litigation costs and what the average cost is incurred when litigating a case.</p> <p>Response:</p> <p>Litigation costs around ^{s 47E} per case. CSA was asked to breakdown this figure and whether, after court costs have been decided, there is still an outstanding amount of ^{s 47E} (After costs actually collected this figure is approximately^{s 47E}</p>
8.2 How many company directors has the CSA pursued to bankruptcy in the last 12 months?	Child Support Agency	13/11/09	Closed	CSA to report back on answers to these questions.

Agenda item / Action Items arising	Responsibility	Due Date	Status	Comments
Action Item 10				
10.1 Agenda Workplan Terms of Reference	FaHCSIA/CSA	9/10/09	Closed	Proposed balanced agenda, work plan and terms of reference to be revised and sent to members for endorsement. No changes made to documents

From: s 22
To: s 22
Subject: FW: CSNSEG Minutes 2 December 2009 meeting [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]
Date: Wednesday, 6 January 2010 11:15:55 AM
Attachments: [Action Response to Action Item 7.2 - Dec 09 CSNSEG Meeting SECUNCLASSIFIED.msg](#)
[MINUTES FaHCSIA comments V31.DOC.DOC](#)

s 22

Child Support Program Management and Implementation
Child Support Policy Branch

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

s 22

From: s 22
Sent: Wednesday, 23 December 2009 2:39 PM
To: s 22

Subject: CSNSEG Minutes 2 December 2009 meeting [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Good afternoon everyone

Please find attached the minutes from our last meeting and a response to Action Item 7.2.

I am just confirming that Meeting dates for 2010 will be – 16 March, 23 June, 6 October and 17 November

Hope you all have a very Merry Christmas

Regards

s 22

Child Support Program Management and Implementation
Child Support Policy Branch

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

s 22

- Broad proposals for agenda items
- Timing of themed meetings subject to agreement

Meeting	Child Support Service Delivery and Policy	Emerging Themes with child support implications
	<p>Quality decision-making under the Child Support Scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change of Assessment process - Objections process - Social Security Appeals Tribunal – approach and outcomes 	<p>Social inclusion agenda and its impact and implications for child support policy and service delivery (inc impacts of drug addiction, mental illness within separated families)</p>
	<p>Care issues impacting on child support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - care disputes - Interim care decisions - outcomes of specialist care teams - agreements - alignment of care between CSA and Centrelink 	<p>Shared parenting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - law review - contact centres – how they work - parenting plans - role of FRCs <p>Latest research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Family Law Reform evaluation research - Child-centred research – impacts of care disputes on children
	<p>Improving support for families and children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - referrals from child support to support services – now & future interventions - balancing support and collection aims 	<p>Key issues raised by members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing child poverty • opportunity to hear from external reps re: homelessness • emergency relief & other disadvantaged groups.
	<p>Compliance and enforcement update</p> <p>Child support reform - update</p>	

Old Parliament House
Canberra

Attendees

Advocacy Groups	
s 22	Shared Parenting Council of Australia
s 22	National Council of Single Mothers and their Children
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s 22	Child Support Program
s 22	Child Support Program
s 22	Child Support Program
s 22	Child Support Program
s 22	FaHCSIA
s 22	FaHCSIA
Presenters	
s 22	Child Support Program
s 22	Child Support Program
s 22	SSAT
Guests	
s 22	Minister for Human Services
s 22	Ministerial Adviser
s 22	CSA Departmental Liaison Officer
s 22	Centrelink
Apologies	
s 22	Australian Council of Social Services
s 22	Institute of Child Protection
s 22	AIFS

Secretariat

s 22

s 22

FaHCSIA
Child Support Agency

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS
CSNSEG MEETING OF 2 December 2009

Agenda item / Action Items arising	Responsibility	Due Date	Status	Comments
Action Item 1.1 Responses to all action items to be provided out of session.	FaHCSIA /CSA	Ongoing		Responses will be provided to all members
Action Item 2				
Action Item 2.1 CSA to provide an analysis of CSA's penalty strategy and how these penalties are collected.	CSA	23/2/10		
Action Item 2.2 FaHCSIA and CSA to provide the policy for members.	FaHCSIA/CSA	23/2/10		
Action Item 2.3 FaHCSIA to provide how the legislative process works and CSA will provide administrative process by next meeting.	FaHCSIA/CSA	23/2/10		
Action Item 2.4 CSA to liaise with Legal Aid and provide specific information to Legal Aid re litigation costs.	CSA	23/2/10		
Action Item 2.5 FaHCSIA and CSA to liaise with AGD to see if they can provide the information on costs associated with legal expenses.	FaHCSIA/CSA	23/2/10		
Action Item 4				
Action Item 4.1 CSA to provide an update on the Pilot into Dispute Resolution Referrals.	CSA	23/2/10		
Action Item 4.2 CSA to provide the project plan or executive summary from s 22 work.	CSA	23/2/10		
Action Item 7				

Agenda item / Action Items arising	Responsibility	Due Date	Status	Comments
Action Item 7.1 CSA to provide their update electronically to members.	CSA	23/2/10		
Action Item 7.2 CSA will provide members with details on how customers can use their credit card to pay for child support.	CSA	23/2/10		
Action Item 7.3 CSA & FaHCSIA to advise what the policy/procedures are for the following: <i>If someone went and got some new credit cards and paid off all their debt and then declared themselves bankrupt is the debt honoured? Written off?</i>	FaHCSIA/CSA	23/2/10		

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**SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS
CSNSEG MEETING OF 16 September 2009**

Agenda item / Action Items arising	Responsibility	Due Date	Status	Comments
<p>5.1 FaHCSIA to work with CSA and Centrelink to examine existing communication products around the effect of lump sum child support payments on FTB</p>	FaHCSIA/CSA	Ongoing	Completed	The existing communications products available on the CSA, FaHCSIA and FOA website address this issue. Links provided
<p>5.2 Emerging Issue 65 – Disputed care and proposal for a change to policy</p>	FaHCSIA/CSA	13/11/09	Completed	FaHCSIA forwarded response in 2 December meeting folders.
<p>5.3 FaHCSIA to provide additional information formula rationale for families with more than three children.</p>	FaHCSIA	13/11/09	Completed	FaHCSIA has provided additional information on the rationale for the formula determining costs of children in families with 3 or more children. See Attachment A
<p>5.4 The CSA to investigate service delivery practices re: out of business hours phone contact in the Hunter region.</p>	Child Support Agency	13/11/09	Awaiting Data	CSA to investigate why there appears to be a higher number of calls to customers of the Hunter Region outside normal business hours.
<p>5.5 CSA undertook to provide detailed information regarding the amount of late payment penalties applied, remitted and paid.</p> <p>Response</p> <p>Financial year</p> <p style="text-align: center;">07/08 08/09 09/10 to 31Oct09</p> <p style="text-align: center;">s 47E</p>	Child Support Agency	13/11/09	Ongoing	CSA to provide detailed information re: late payment penalties case studies before next meeting. – Scheduled as an agenda item for the 2 December meeting. More issues were raised at the 2 December meeting and CSA will come back to the group with additional information, which is outlined in the minutes see Action Item 2.1

Agenda item / Action Items arising	Responsibility	Due Date	Status	Comments
<p style="text-align: center;">S 4 7 E</p>				
<p>5.6 Members to receive all emerging issues as they are received</p>	FaHCSIA/CSA	23/2/10	Ongoing	<p>FaHCSIA and CSA to provide Emerging Issues to all members as they are received.</p> <p>To enable sufficient time for members to receive and respond to emerging issues (including potentially canvassing members of their organisations for views on that emerging) prior to 2 December meeting, FaHCSIA and CSA request that all emerging issues for the next meeting are received by 23 February 2010.</p>
<p>Action Item 8</p>				
<p>8.1 Litigation costs around s 47E per case. CSA was asked to breakdown this figure and whether, after court costs have been decided, there is still an outstanding amount of s 47E .</p>	Child Support Agency	13/11/09	Completed	<p>CSA to provide breakdown of litigation costs and what the average cost is incurred when litigating a case.</p> <p>Response:</p> <p>Litigation costs around s 47E per case. CSA was asked to breakdown this figure and whether, after court costs have been decided, there is still an outstanding amount of s 47E . (After costs actually</p>

Agenda item / Action Items arising	Responsibility	Due Date	Status	Comments
				<p>collected this figure is approximately^{s 47E} More questions raised in the meeting see Action Item 2.4</p>
<p>8.2 How many company directors has the CSA pursued to bankruptcy in the last 12 months?</p>	<p>Child Support Agency</p>	<p>2/12/09</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>CSA advised the answer is zero.</p>
<p>Action Item 10</p>				
<p>10.1 Agenda Workplan Terms of Reference</p>	<p>FaHCSIA/CSA</p>	<p>9/10/09</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Proposed balanced agenda, work plan and terms of reference were revised and sent to members in October and were for accepted with no changes.</p>

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Australian Government
Child Support Agency



Australian Government
Department of Families, Housing,
Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

CHILD SUPPORT NATIONAL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT GROUP Response to Emerging Issue 66 and Action Item 5.3

Raised by	s 22
Title	
Dept/Group	Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS)

Issue : Formula Penalty for residence parents – particularly for families of four or more children.

The child support formula only recognises the need to support three children. The child support formula does not recognise the higher costs of providing a permanent residence for the children.

Residence parent households are penalised. Large families are penalised.

Issues explored

A number of policy issues are raised in the scenario supplied by ACOSS. In regards to the treatment of parental income the following policy issues are briefly discussed:

- equal treatment of income; and
- rationale for setting self support amounts.

The following policy issues are covered in relation to questions raised on the amount of child support paid:

- increased taxpayer support for separated and intact families;
- recognition of care as a contribution towards the cost of raising children; and
- the economies of scale recognised in the formula.

Equal Treatment of Income

The reforms moved from a position of primarily calculating child support on the payer's income to assessing it on combined income. The parent's proportion of this combined income and the care they provide are considered in determining the amount of child support transferred between the parents. This is more consistent with the objective of the Scheme that parents share in the cost of supporting their children according to their capacity.

Rationale for setting the new self support amounts

Under the previous formula the exempt amounts were different for resident and non-resident parents. The reason for disregarding \$15,378 of non-resident parent's income in 2008 was to ensure the payer was able to meet their own basic needs. Resident parents had a higher disregard of \$45,505, to recognise the significant and direct costs of caring for children in their day-to-day care. Under the new formula the cost of care is explicitly treated as a contribution to the costs of raising children. Therefore, the rationale for maintaining a high disregard for receiving parents is inconsistent with the fundamental basis of the new formula.

Support provided to separate and intact families by taxpayers

The Taskforce reported that in the ten years from 1993-94 to 2003-04 family payments increased by about 115 per cent in real terms. They found the increased support has resulted in a reduction to the net costs of raising children incurred by parents in both intact and separated families. Consequently, child support obligations were adjusted to recognise the increased taxpayer support for families.

Care and infrastructure costs

As both parents now receive the same self support amount, care is explicitly recognised in the new formula. When night time care of children is shared the infrastructure costs are greater, as the children are being raised across two households rather than one. The provision of regular care (14-35 per cent) by the paying parent is now recognised as a contribution towards the costs of raising the children. To partially offset this reduction in child support, receiving parents now receive 100 per cent of the Family Tax Benefit (FTB).

Economies of Scale

Previous formula

The previous formula acknowledged there were economies of scale prior to significant increases in FTB. The previous formula was set at 18 per cent of income for the first child and increased by 9 per cent for the second child, 5 per cent for the third child, 2 per cent for the fourth child and 2 per cent for five or more children.

New formula

The available research considered by the Taskforce suggests that there are economies of scale. They found the same proportion of income is spent on four children or more children as is spent on three children. This occurs due to the amount of FTB Part A being paid on a per child basis (which has significantly increased in real terms). FTB does not take into account the economies of scale that are possible for larger families. This is why the formula is calculated on a maximum of three children under 18.

Examples

Child support is calculated based on the income resources available to parents and the contribution their provision of care makes towards the costs of raising their children. In the formula this is called the child support percentage. This is the difference between the cost percentage (proportion of cost incurred based on overnight care) and the income percentage (individual's income as a proportion of combined parental income after deducting amounts for self support and for other relevant children).

When a parent has a negative child support percentage this means child support should be transferred from the other parent and when it is positive they are required to pay child support to the other parent. The exception to this is when there is regular overnight care, in this situation the parent who has more than regular care is not required to provide child support to the parent providing regular care.

To illustrate how the child support percentage varies based on both parents incomes the following examples are supplied. All examples are based on cases with five children with at least one teenager and one parent providing regular overnight care. This approach was chosen as the scenario supplied indicates the receiving parent is either a high income earner or continues to receive significant amounts of child support (as little extra FTB was paid).

Example one – parent one is a high income earner and is not entitled to above base rate of FTB
Based on the income test with five children (three under 13 and two 13-15) no additional FTB is payable on an income above \$126,090. For income above this amount FTB is calculated based on the comparison of method 1 and method 2 (see http://www.facsia.gov.au/Guides_Acts/fag/faguide-3/faguide-3.1/faguide-3.1.8/faguide-3.1.8.10.html). Please note that due to the contribution made through FTB and economies of scale, child support is only calculated on three children. In a situation where a parent has regular overnight care when there are three or more mixed age children the maximum amount of child support payable is \$28,090.

Example one: Parent one's income is \$127,000 and Parent two has overnight regular care

Outcomes for Parent Two					
Income	Child support payable	Care %	Cost %	Income %	Child Support %
\$27,800	\$0	14%	24%	8%	-16%
\$52,600	\$0	14%	24%	24%	0%

\$77,400	\$4,150	14%	24%	35%	11%
\$102,200	\$7,230	14%	24%	44%	20%
\$127,000	\$9,610	14%	24%	50%	26%
\$151,800	\$11,500	14%	24%	55%	31%

Example two – parent one earns \$65,000 and may be entitled to some additional FTB

Income between \$44,165 and \$126,090 entitles an individual to an amount of additional FTB – prior to the application of maintenance income test. The examples below are based on Parent 1 having an income of \$65,000.

Example two: Parent one's income is \$65,000 and Parent two has overnight regular care

Outcomes for Parent Two					
Income	Child support payable	Care %	Cost %	Income %	Child Support %
\$27,800	\$0	14%	24%	16%	-8%
\$52,600	\$4,250	14%	24%	42%	18%
\$77,400	\$9,475	14%	24%	56%	32%
\$102,200	\$14,075	14%	24%	64%	40%
\$127,000	\$16,980	14%	24%	70%	46%
\$151,800	\$18,505	14%	24%	74%	50%

Example three – parent one earns below the FTB Income Free Area of \$44165

Income below \$44,165 entitles an individual to the maximum rate of FTB – prior to the application of maintenance income test. The examples below are based on Parent 1 having an income of \$44,000.

Example three: Parent one's income is \$44,000 and Parent two has overnight regular care

Outcomes for Parent Two					
Income	Child support payable	Care %	Cost %	Income %	Child Support %
\$27,800	\$315	14%	24%	26%	2%
\$52,600	\$5,760	14%	24%	57%	33%
\$77,400	11,050	14%	24%	70%	46%
\$102,200	16,160	14%	24%	77%	53%
\$127,000	\$20,305	14%	24%	81%	57%
\$151,800	\$22,115	14%	24%	84%	60%

Example four – parent one earns less than \$18,252 as their only income is an Income Support

Payment (less than self support amount)

Income below \$44,165 entitles an individual to the maximum rate of FTB – prior to the application of maintenance income test. The examples below are based on Parent 1 having an income below \$18,252.

Example four: Parent one's income is <\$18,252 and Parent two has overnight regular care

Outcomes for Parent Two					
Income	Child support payable	Care %	Cost %	Income %	Child Support %
\$27,800	\$2,140	14%	24%	100%	76%
\$52,600	\$7,655	14%	24%	100%	76%
\$77,400	\$13,005	14%	24%	100%	76%
\$102,200	\$18,185	14%	24%	100%	76%
\$127,000	\$23,190	14%	24%	100%	76%
\$151,800	\$27,005	14%	24%	100%	76%

Child Support National Stakeholder Engagement Group Meeting Agenda for the 14th Meeting

Centraplaza Boardroom –
16 Bowes Street Woden

8:30 am – 8:45 am	Coffee and Catch up
8:45 am – 8:50 am	Welcome – s 22 (FaHCSIA)
8:50 am – 9:00 am	Introductions, apologies and outline for the day
9:00 am – 9.45 am	<p>General Business from 2 December 2009 Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes • Action Items summary of responses • New Emerging Issues • Late Payment Penalties
9.45 am – 10.15 am	Alignment of Care and Income Estimates Update - FaHCSIA
<i>10:15 am – 10:30 am</i>	<i>Morning Tea</i>
10:30 am – 11.00 am	Compliance and Enforcement Policy Paper – FaHCSIA - Members formal responses to paper
11.00 am – 11.30 am	Whole group policy discussion – included will be specific questions for consideration
11.30 am – 11.45 am	Summary of Outcomes – s 22
11.45 am – 12.45 pm	s 22
<i>12:45 pm – 1:30 pm</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
1.30 pm – 2.00 pm	COA Review update – s 22

2.00 pm – 3.30 pm	Update on Richmond recommendations - s 22
3.30 pm – 3.50 pm	<i>Afternoon Tea</i>
3.50 pm – 4.30 pm	Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member updates – Written & Verbal • Child Support Operations update – s 22 • FaHCSIA Policy update – s 22
4.30 pm - 4.45 pm	Wrap up

INDEX

Tuesday 16 March 2010
Centraplaza Woden

Meeting Papers	
Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction• Apologies• Outline
1. Session One	General Business <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3 December 2009 CSNSEG Minutes 1.0• Workplan and Terms of Reference 1.1• Action Items - Summary of Responses 1.2• New Emerging Issues 1.3• Late Payment Penalties• Alignment of Care and Income Estimates Update
2. Session Two	Compliance and Enforcement Policy Paper <ul style="list-style-type: none">• FaHCSIA presentation 2.1• Notes 2.2
2. Session Two	Minister for Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs the s 22
3. Session Three	COA Review update Richmond Review
4. Session Four	Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Member Updates - Written and Verbal 4.1• Child Support Service Delivery Update 4.2• FaHCSIA Policy Update 4.3
5 Information	Administration Arrangements

From: s 22
To: s 22
Cc: s 22
Subject: Alignment of Care and Income Estimates paper [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]
Date: Thursday, 18 March 2010 3:16:13 PM
Attachments: [National Stakeholder Engagement Group Meeting Alignment of Care and Income Estimate Presentation 9_3.PPT](#)

Hi s 22

Attached is s 22 's presentation you requested

Regards

s 22

Child Support Program Management and Implementation
Child Support Policy Branch

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

s 22



Australian Government

Department of Families, Housing,
Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

Alignment of Care and Income Estimate for Child Support and Family Tax Benefit Purposes - An Overview

Introduction

Legislation is due to be introduced to implement the 2009-10 Alignment of Care budget measure and income estimate changes.

These changes will:

- lead to greater consistency,
- simplify administration processes,
- remove unnecessary duplication, and
- provide timely and accurate outcomes for separated families.

Alignment of Care

What is Alignment of Care?

Subject to the passage of the legislation, new rules will be introduced from 1 July 2010 to align the assessment made by Child Support Agency (CSA) and the Family Assistance Office (FAO) in relation to the level of care separated parents provide for their children.

Alignment of Care

What will happen from 1 July 2010?

The rules regarding care assessment will be aligned in order to remove inconsistencies between child support and FTB to prevent duplication of effort across the CSA and FAO.

The rules regarding care will be aligned from 1 July 2010 so that a single assessment of care is made for both child support and FTB purposes.

Alignment of Care

What will happen after the policy change?

Where a parent needs to report a change to their care arrangements they can contact either the CSA or FAO to report that change.

That agency will consider the care assessment according to the aligned rules and send the new assessment to the other agency.

Alignment of Care

What are the benefits of the New Approach?

- The new aligned approach will be simpler and easier for parents as they will only have to go through one agency.
- The new aligned approach will streamline service delivery for the CSA and FAO.
- The aligned rules are also expected to result in fewer objections and fewer appeals to the SSAT.

Income estimate

What is an Income Estimate?

Where a child support parent's income varies significantly from that used in their current child support assessment (last financial years taxable income), the parent may have their income assessed on an estimate of their future income in some circumstances.

An income estimate is an estimate of adjusted taxable income lodged with the CSA where income has reduced by 15% or more.

Current Process – Taking An Income Estimate

The current process for estimating income for child support purposes is complex, administratively intensive and difficult for customers to understand.

This is due to the fact that estimate periods can be for up to 15 months (the child support period) and can therefore cross over up to three financial years.

Issues

The complexities of the current process have led to issues for customers such as:

- a high level of dissatisfaction;
- lengthy delays in reconciling estimates; and
- uncertainty about decisions of the CSA.

What will happen?

The new policy aims to simplify administrative processes and result in more responsive, timely and accurate outcomes for child support customers who chose to estimate their income.

Benefits Of The New Process

- The changes will benefit up to 80,000 customers through simplified processes so that it is easier for them to estimate their income accurately.
- The changes will also benefit the CSA where estimates will be reconciled using an automated system rather than manually, ensuring more efficient and accurate reconciling.
- With greater accuracy of child support assessments through the simplified estimate process, children will receive an appropriate level of financial support from their parents.

Summary

- Alignment of care assessments and changes to income estimates will:
 - create simple, long term sustainable arrangements;
 - prevent delays and inconsistencies in calculating child support and FTB payable; and
 - ensure children receive levels of support in line with their parents capacity to pay.

For more information

- More information will become available on the CSA, FaHCSIA, FAO and Centrelink websites:

www.csa.gov.au

www.fahcsia.gov.au

www.familyassist.gov.au

www.centrelink.gov.au



Australian Government

Child Support Agency

2009 CSNSEG One On One Consultations

What you told us...

About the membership:

- Most members were comfortable with the size of the Group although there was a sense that any increase in size could detract from the Group's effectiveness.
- Inviting special guests to participate in meetings was considered an effective way to cover a range of issues without expanding the membership.



What you told us...

About the Workplan for 2009/10:

- Workplan preferences indicated a clear focus on CSA's core business
- Areas of key interest included:
 - Objection process, Change of Assessment and SSAT
 - Compliance and enforcement
 - Referral processes
 - Care arrangements and child support
- Other topics of significance will continue to be addressed through our regular service delivery and policy updates



**Child Support National Stakeholder Engagement Group meeting
16 March 2010
Centraplaza**

Advocacy Groups	
s 22	National Council of Single Mothers and their Children
s 22	Lone Fathers Association Australia
s 22	Shared Parenting Council of Australia
s 22	Dads in Distress
s 22	Sole Parents Union
Researchers	
s 22	Australian Institute of Family Studies
s 22	Australian National University
Community Service Providers	
s 22	Anglicare Western Australia
s 22	Kids Helpline/Boystown
s 22	Family Relationship Services Australia
s 22	Catholic Social Services
s 22	Relationships Australia
s 22	ACOSS
Legal	
s 22	Federal Magistrates Court
s 22	National Legal Aid
Government	
s 22	Commonwealth Ombudsman's Office
s 22	Centrelink
s 22	Child Support Agency
s 22	Child Support Agency
s 22	Child Support Agency
s 22	FaHCSIA
s 22	FaHCSIA
s 22	FaHCSIA
s 22	FaHCSIA
Presenters	
s 22	Child Support Agency
s 22	Child Support Agency
s 22	Child Support Agency
Other attendees	
s 22	Minister Bowen's Advisor
s 22	Departmental Liaison Officer Human Services
s 22	Child Support Agency
s 22	FaHCSIA
Apologies	
s 22	Federal Magistrates Court
s 22	ACOSS
s 22	Commonwealth Ombudsman's Office
s 22	Australian Institute of Family Studies
s 22	National Legal Aid
s 22	Crisis Support Services
s 22	Centrelink

Secretariat

s 22

FaHCSIA

s 22

Child Support Agency

s 22

FaHCSIA

s 22

FaHCSIA

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS - CSNSEG MEETING OF 16 March 2010

All Action Items were answered by the CSA and FaHCSIA

Agenda item / Action Items arising	Responsibility	Due Date	Status	Comments
Action Item 2				
Action Item 2.1 CSA and FaHCSIA to provide policy underpinning the Late Payment Penalty (LPP) strategy and how they are applied. Does CSA apply LPPs for the purpose of recouping costs or are they used as a punitive measure?	FaHCSIA/CSA	23/2/10	Answered	Provided to members electronically and a hard copy provided at meeting
Action Item 2.2 FaHCSIA to provide advice on how the legislative process works and CSA will provide administrative implementation process by next meeting.	FaHCSIA/CSA	16/3/10	Answered	Provided to members electronically and a hard copy provided at meeting
Action Item 2.3 CSA to provide a breakdown of costs per case in the litigation process. E.g. the number of cases being litigated costs associated with litigation action >\$100,000? Also provide a breakdown of AGS costs when representing the CSA in litigation matters.	CSA	23/2/10	Answered	Provided to members electronically and a hard copy provided at meeting
Action Item 2.4 CSA to investigate possibility of providing/developing schedule of Court costs	CSA	16/3/10	Answered	Provided to members electronically and a hard copy provided at meeting
Action Item 4				
Action Item 4.1 CSA to provide an update on the Disputed care Pilot which is due to finish in December 09.	CSA	23/2/10	Answered	Provided to members electronically and a hard copy provided at meeting
Action Item 4.2 CSA to provide the project plan or executive summary from the Change of Assessment Reform project.	CSA	23/2/10	Open	David Sippel will speak to this at the 16/3/10 meeting

Action Item 7				
Action Item 7.1 CSA to provide the CSA update electronically to members for information about the Christmas shutdown hours.	CSA	ASAP	Closed 3/12/09	Circulated to members on 3/12/09
Action Item 7.2 CSA will provide members with details on how customers can use their credit card to pay for child support.	CSA	23/2/10	Answered	Circulated to members with Minutes on 23/12/2009
Action Item 7.3 CSA to provide a response to the following questions: What happens when a customer pays clears a child support debt by credit card? Does the trustee have the powers to claw back the payment if it is determined to be a preferential payment? If so, does this result in an overpayment for the receiving parent?	FaHCSIA/CSA	23/2/10	Answered	Provided to members electronically and a hard copy provided at meeting

<p>1. General Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes 2 December 2009 • Workplan and Terms of Reference • Action Items • Emerging Issues 	<p>Comments/ Action Items</p>
<p>Chair, s 22 Families Group Manager acknowledged the traditional owners of the land and welcomed members to the meeting.</p> <p>The chair noted apologies for those who could not attend as detailed in the attendance list. Members were also advised that s 22 would be attending later in the meeting and that s 22, Deputy Secretary Child Support Program would be chairing the meeting after lunch.</p> <p>The minutes were accepted without change. The chair advised that Action item 5.4 has now been closed off and Action item 4.2 was to be dealt with later in the meeting. All outstanding action items from the December meeting had been cleared from previous meetings and are now closed.</p> <p>Members were advised that three new emerging issues had been received from National Legal Aid and would be answered at the June meeting. There were no questions relating to late payment penalties so the issue was closed.</p> <p>The chair asked members if there were any other issues they would like to raise. s 22 asked whether there is any monitoring by the CSA on Credit card payments. The CSA advised it is still early to undertake any monitoring but will give an update on this issue in particular the actual take up rate at the next meeting</p> <p>s 22 voiced his dissatisfaction with the replies members received to action items and stated there needed to be more discussion around some of the answers received. Of particular concern was the response (Emerging Issue 73) given for Call Centre opening hours. s 22 questioned why calls on the east coast can't be answered by call centres on the west coast and visa versa, so to allow customers to call outside business hours. CSA advised some factors affecting this issue were daylight saving, the current industrial relations conditions within CSA prohibit extending working hours past 7:00am to 7:00pm. In an attempt to meet the needs in WA CSA asks for volunteers so that WA gets the same services as the rest of Australia they don't have the staff to cover WA if they don't use volunteers. If these volunteers are used to answer calls from the east coast of Australia then callers from WA would be disadvantaged and currently each State has operators answering calls between 7:00am and 7:00pm within their state.</p> <p>In the future all collective agreements will be streamlined so there could be more flexibility in working hours so CSA may be able to extend hours</p>	<p>Action Item 1.1 – CSA will give an update on Credit Card payments in particular the actual take up rate at the next meeting</p> <p>Action Item 1.2 – FaHCSIA to provide members with a PDF version of the Emerging Issues register</p>

<p>s 22 advised that customers should be able to have one service across Australia so that enquiries could be handled outside usual working hours. The chair advised that the next step would be for SPCA to raise the issue with the DHS Minister because the CSA were only able to work within the specifications of their Collective agreement. Another suggestion from the CSA was for customers to use the CSA on-line services.</p> <p>s 22 agreed with CSA advising they are struggling to meet the WA demands with the volunteers they have. s 22 said the CSA need to look at the time it takes to use alternative methods eg: web and email as they also take more time than a phone call.</p> <p>There was also discussion around the Emerging Issues register and FaHCSIA agreed to provide a PDF version of the register.. FaHCSIA would also look at capacity to cross reference issues for members.</p> <p>s 22 raised concerns over the way emerging issues are perceived by members and how FaHCSIA and CSA perceive them. Members feel an emerging issue is a way to engage with policy. Members often want to challenge the policy terrain but FaHCSIA/CSA consider if an answer is given the issue is closed. As advised in the December meeting emerging issues can re-emerge and be looked at again. s 22 told the meeting that it isn't always possible to please all members with the responses that are given but FaHCSIA /CSA would work on providing more helpful responses in future. It was agreed that future agendas would include extra time to discuss emerging issues especially in a policy context</p> <p>Members were advised that the issues raised at CSNSEG were always passed to respective Ministers for information. It was agreed that members would receive feedback on outcomes from previous meetings in future.</p>	<p>Action Item 1.3 – If possible FaHCSIA to cross reference issues for members.</p> <p>Action Item 1.4 – Future agendas will include emerging issues that require further discussion because of policy implications.</p> <p>Action Item 1.5 – Future agendas will include a section on outcomes from previous meeting.</p>
Alignment of care and Income Estimates measure	
<p><u>Alignment of care</u> s 22 spoke to the presentation which will be provided with minutes. Members were advised FaHCSIA will email everyone when the Bill has been passed and the offer was made to talk and walk through the provisions to assist them with their understanding of the issues if required. Members to contact s 22 should they wish to take up this offer.</p> <p><u>Income Estimates</u> s 22 spoke to the presentation which will be provided with minutes.</p>	
Compliance and Enforcement Policy Paper	
<p>This was sent to members on 2 March 2010.</p> <p>Written responses to compliance paper are welcome and should be submitted within two weeks.</p>	

<p>A paper summarising the outcome of the discussion will be circulated back to the group for comment and then submitted to the Minister.</p>	
<p>s 22</p>	
<p>s 22 Arrived at 11.20 and the DHS advisors arrived at 11.36 See speaking notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Minister spoke about the following: • Paid Parental Leave; • The impact of the child support reforms and the latest analysis; • Alignment of care and Income estimates measures due to be implemented later this year; • FaHCSIA will work with CSA on measures to improve the accuracy of income details so assessments are paid. <p>s 22 confirmed that the previous funding which advocacy groups received from FaHCSIA is now completed. But there is currently a transition period to return funding to a more sustainable level and that FaHCSIA must work within its existing budget which involves may other programs within FaHCSIA and there will be a transition to more sustainable funding. The Minister stressed that it is important to have the community sector voices heard and the work these organisations undertake is appreciated. Funding for these organisations has been allocated from within existing FaHCSIA programs.</p> <p>s 22 stated that an increase in child support debt was a concerning issue. The non-lodgement of tax returns was noted as a significant issue.</p>	
<p>Change of Assesment (COA) Reform Project-</p>	
<p>s 22 – PowerPoint presentation handed out to members.</p>	
<p>Richmond review update</p>	
<p>s 22 gave an update on the review for members. All members were sent a hard copy of the review prior to the meeting. Slides provided.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback received - most think it's a good summary of issues. It articulates the concerns people have been worried about for some time. • Grouped recommendations broadly – Internal operating recommendations – CSA's structures were confusing, who was accountable and not aligned for good customer experience – clarified service delivery model and then align organisation with that service model. • The first diagram shows what the experience should be for the customer and they should have a mainstream experience if at all possible, however some people divert from this experience if they're not compliant. Objective 	

<p>is to get people back to being compliant!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strategies and gateways people use are all very important in getting people back to being compliant. • Have re-organised the CSA as a result of this ideal to get compliant. Shifted to a nationally focused operation, theres an operations division which is aligned directly with Service delivery model. • Went through org chart for members • Lot of recommendations about IT and IT systems - this is challenging and can't eradicate the CUBA system just yet. • How does the CSA get visiblity, how do we deal with feedback and what is done with it. • Correspondence to customers is difficult to understand, which the CSA are aware of. CSA to investigate wording on correspondence. <p>s 22 from the CSA then took questions</p> <p>Members wanted to know if the recommendation relating to CSNSEG to have an Independent chair or facilitator was being explored. Members were advised that CSA hasn't pursued this with FaHCSIA as the report was referring to clarity from stakeholders and we are moving to particularly engaging with stakeholders not just have an information exchange. FaHCSIA and CSA agreed they would have this discussion.</p> <p>Discussion then moved to the Terms of Reference and the need for a collective understanding of what advisory means. Minutes to reflect all views of Members. Members were encouraged to read the draft minutes and provide feedback if there were any issues that may not have been included in minutes when they are sent out for comment. It was agreed that FaHCSIA and CSA would review the Terms of Reference so they could be finalised at the next meeting and articulate to the group where we are up to with an issue.</p> <p>Members were advised that CSNSEG is an advisory group to FaHCSIA and the Child Support Program not the Government.</p>	<p>Action Item 4.1 – FaHCSIA and CSA to meet to discuss recommendation 49.3 of the Richmond review</p> <p>Action Item 4.2 FaHCSIA and CSA to review the Terms of Reference and send out a revised draft for members comments</p>
<p>Member updates</p>	
<p>The ACOSS member update was tabled at the meeting. – Copy also included in Folders</p> <p>Anglicare, Commonwealth Ombudsman's office, DIDs, Federal Magistrates Court, Kids helpline, NCSMC, SPCA and Sole Parent's Union all provided verbal updates.</p>	
<p>Child Support Program Service Delivery Update & FaHCSIA Policy Update</p>	
<p><u>CSA</u> – s 22 spoke to the paper tabled at meeting. Members were asked to contact s 22 or s 22 if they were interested on joining the reference group</p> <p>s 22 spoke about the introduction of new telephone system</p>	<p>Action Item 5.1 – FaHCSIA will provide members with the National</p>

<p><u>FaHCSIA</u> – s 22 advised members that Families week will commence the week of 15 May and the theme is around children. FaHCSIA will send information out with minutes. FaHCSIA will also advise members when the Alignment of Care and Income Estimates legislation is introduced in Parliament.</p>	<p>Families Week information with the minutes</p>
<p>Next meeting 23 June</p>	
<p>Meeting Closed at 3.30pm</p>	

Action Items from 16 March 2010 meeting

Agenda item / Action Items arising	Responsibility	Due Date	Status	Comments
Action Item 1				
Action Item 1.1 – CSA will give an update on Credit Card payments in particular the actual take up rate at the next meeting	CSA	23/6/10		Time Slot on Agenda to be arranged for 23 June Meeting
Action Item 1.2 – FaHCSIA to provide members with a PDF version of the Emerging Issues register	FaHCSIA	23/3/10	Closed	Documents sent with the minutes
Action Item 1.3 – If possible FaHCSIA to cross reference issues for members	FaHCSIA	ASAP		
Action Item 1.4 – Future agendas will include emerging issues that require further discussion because of policy implications.	FaHCSIA/CSA		Closed	All future agendas will include this section
Action Item 1.5 – Future agendas will include a section on outcomes from previous meetings	FaHCSIA		Closed	All future agendas will include this section
Action Item 4.1 – FaHCSIA and CSA to meet to discuss recommendation 49.3 of the Richmond review	FaHCSIA/CSA			
Action Item 4.2 FaHCSIA and CSA to review the Terms of Reference and send out a revised draft for members comments	FaHCSIA/CSA			
Action Item 5.1 – FaHCSIA will provide members with up to date information about National Families Week	FaHCSIA		Ongoing until 15 May	Information sent with Minutes

From: s 22
To: s 22

Subject: CSNSEG March Meeting - Minutes [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]
Date: Wednesday, 21 April 2010 4:28:30 PM
Attachments: [Emerging Issue Register 2007.PDF](#)
[Emerging Issue Register 2008.PDF](#)
[Emerging Issue register 2009.PDF](#)
[Families Australia - National Families Week.mht](#)
[Emerging Issues Register 2010.PDF](#)
[Minutes - Final March 16 2010 V2.DOC.DOC](#)
[Domestic violence and child support references.DOC](#)
[Draft CSNSEG summary of discussion.DOC.DOC](#)

Good Afternoon members

Please find attached the following documents for your information/comment

1. CSNSEG Minutes for comment
2. Compliance Policy Paper overview of outcomes from the meeting for comment
3. Emerging Issues which includes cross referencing PDF
4. National Families Week (NFW) Information
5. Domestic violence and post separation references

If you have any comments would you please forward to **me by Friday 7 May 2010.**

Regards

s 22

Child Support Program Management and Implementation
Child Support Policy Branch

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

s 22

From: s 22

Subject: RE: Alignment of Care and Income Estimate measures [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]
Date: Wednesday, 26 May 2010 4:39:34 PM

Good afternoon everyone

I understand the link to the Bill was broken so here is the unbroken one;

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;adv=yes;db=group;holdingType=id;orderBy=priority,title;page=0;query=Id%3A%22legislation%2Fbillhome%2Fr4341%22;querytype=rec=9;resCount=>

Regards

s 22

Child Support Program Management and Implementation
Child Support Policy Branch

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

s 22

s 22

Subject: Alignment of Care and Income Estimate measures [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Dear CSNSEG Members,

The *Child Support and Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Budget and Other Measures) Bill 2010* that contains the Alignment of Care and Income Estimate Improvement amendments was introduced into Parliament this morning. As discussed at the March 2010 CSNSEG meeting subject to the passage of legislation these changes will be implemented from 1 July 2010.

Further information on the Alignment of Care and Income Estimates measures can be found on the [FaHCSIA website](#).

The FaHCSIA website also contains a link to a copy of the [Bill](#).

Thank you

s 22

Child Support Program Management and Implementation
Child Support Policy Branch

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

s 22

1. General Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes 23 March 2010 • Action Items • Member Updates • CSA update on the take up of credit card payments • CoA Update 	Comments/ Action Items
<p>Chair, s 22 Deputy Secretary, Child Support and Planning acknowledged the traditional owners and welcomed s 22 the new DIDS representative and s 22 the new Centrelink representative to the meeting. Minutes and action items from last meeting were accepted by members without change.</p> <p>Member Updates</p> <p>Anglicare - work has been focusing on changes in rules around present Legal referrals and FRCs were developing protocols for these legal referrals.</p> <p>Sole Parent's Union – work has been done on Income management, developing a research program with a number of other agencies and the new website has gone live.</p> <p>Catholic Social Services – 2011 is FaHCSIA's renewable funding date and currently speaking with FaHCSIA and community. Attended the Family Law Pathways (FLP) Network conference and maybe the two areas (FLP and CSNSEG) could combine. Privacy issues were raised and protocols needed in this area. Comment noted schedule as an emerging issue. Action s 22 will take as an action item and look at outside the forum.</p> <p>Shared Parenting Council of Australia – work has been undertaken on the sub-committee for COA changes, developing a workplan with FaHCSIA and preparing a fact sheet on self employed parties and how they deal with CSA,</p> <p>Institute of Child Protection Services have been working closely with FaHCSIA developing a model for Family Relationship Services and Child Protection and family support and how they work together, finalised a qualitative study of 80 families with Centerlink and service delivery focusing of families with complex issues. This study is on the FaHCSIA website. Work has commenced on young mothers/parents (someone under 25,) recruited through Centrelink. The study is asking participants what their aspirations, hopes and dreams for children, launching toolkit for service providers for child centred services Action – Family study on Complex issues update on next agenda</p> <p>Law Council of Australia – work was underway for their National Conference which is held every two years and all law practitioners attend.</p> <p>ANU - s 22 spoke about current research which has now added a new group of 1000 participants that haven't been exposed to the child support scheme. He will be presenting a paper at the upcoming AIFS conference on Bargaining. Note s 22 may be able to provide an update to the group on his research at the December meeting</p>	<p>Action Item 1.1 – CSA will look at Privacy issue outside CSNSEG.</p> <p>Action Item 1.2 - Family study on Complex issues update to be included in next agenda.</p>

<p>DIDS – working with FaHCSIA on issues and the also looking at the current internal structure of DIDS.</p> <p>Kids Helpline – working on a strategy for suicide mental health. Privacy issues are becoming more of an issue with clients as there is a big increase in requests for personal information from Government which can only given if a subpoena is issued. Continued work on face to face counselling with young mums in Kimberly and there are two bids with Commercial Research Centres on social inclusion and use of technology.</p> <p>The chair suggested that at the October meeting Freedom of Information could be an agenda item.</p> <p>National Legal Aid – have negotiated a national Partnership with Commonwealth which focuses on early intervention services. The meeting was advised that current services have expanded and there could be structural changes to Legal aid which acknowledged that this was a new theme and it is necessary to skill up all lawyers in child support. Work has also been focusing on running child support seminars for child support practitioners. There has also been a lot of work undertaken on Family violence</p> <p>LFAA – The LFAA national conference was held at Parliament House, 16-18 June 2010. Child support issues were discussed and a report will be produced and available to members later in the year</p> <p>AIFS – AIFS Conference will be held on 7-9 July. Work is continuing on the Family Law evaluation study. Details will be available to AGD and FaHCSIA in October</p> <p>NCSMC – Held their national conference 11 June 2010, key issues raised were safety, changes to Family Law and the fact that shared parenting has increased which has led to an increased exposure to violence and abuse, also poverty and paucity of income support for single parents was raised. Work is continuing on input to income management and AoC initiative.</p> <p>Commonwealth Ombudsman – Office is in transition as there is a focus on working more strategically, have commenced Community round tables with people who work with social security system, gathered data in light of AoC re FTB implications for customers, work on capacity to pay, challenging clients and ways CSA deals with recovering debts from overpayments to receiving parents.</p> <p>FRSA (s 22 provided this update) – discussed the significant budget cuts for Community services will impact on clients ability to access services, re focusing the importance of getting legal advice first before seeking FRC advice is a backward step which is not focusing on parenting and children. Choice now on which form of dispute resolution people can choose what direction parents can take and will have an impact on children, there is now only 1 hour of free FDR, probably only 10% will actually be paying so the financially disadvantaged customers are really disadvantaged by these funding cuts.</p>	
<p>Action Items - Update on take up of credit cards</p>	<p>Comments/ Action Items</p>
<p>The CSA provided a written update for members copy attached to minutes and s 22 spoke to the response s 22 asked if people are using credit cards as way to pay ongoing debt or whether they are just paying off debts and what effect does this have on payments. Action – CSA will look at customer payment trends and</p>	<p>Action Item 1.3 – CSA will look at customer payment</p>

customer profile and provide the information to members.	trends and customer profiles.
CoA Update – s 22	Comments/ Action Items
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHS and FaHCSIA are working together on options to streamline and simplify the COA process; • A proposal has been put to Ministers and we are awaiting feedback; • FaHCSIA will consult further with stakeholders as the approach is further developed. • No timelines have yet been fixed for commencement of any changes. 	
Alignment of Care Presentation s 22 – Centrelink and s 22	Comments/ Action Items
<p>The presenters spoke to the presentation members were given</p> <p>Questions</p> <p>SPCA -What activities will be undertaken to contact clients who have different levels of care and what have you done to align those levels of care – doing a targeted mail out so clients can align care. Timing issue at the moment it's up to individuals to make the changes or wait to the next review date. Only C/L writing to clients all CSA other info channels will be providing info.</p> <p>s 22 – At what point does one parent initiate a change? Families on FTB must advise changes within days, if you get more care you will want to let the relevant agency know about the changes in care levels as this will affect the payment you receive.</p> <p>AIFS – At what point is a change a real change? This change doesn't change underpinning rules around FTB and child support.</p> <p>SPCA – How may payees/payers will have assessments changed? FaHCSIA advised your existing determinations will flow through and people will have the opportunity to have a change made. Centrelink will be targeting 100,000 - 120,000 clients will be written to align care if they want a change implemented. But don't have an indication of numbers at the moment. Comment was also made on the very complex wording of the Legislation in particular part 2 and the harsh penalties. The chair advised that FaHCSIA can't tell the drafters how to draft the legislation as they have the final say in how it will look. All legislation drafting is done by a separate department who are charged with the drafting by the Policy department.</p> <p>NCSMC– asked what happens when there is a difference in the 35% care issue. CSA advised there will be anew care determination made which is applied to both agencies. Evidence will be gathered to determine what the actual care levels are and this issue will be systematically worked through so that a care level can be determined.</p> <p>ANU - are there likely to be differential impacts to align or not align? This improvement may become a wedge and fuel</p>	

<p>conflict which is unintended so how will you monitor CSA advised they will be monitoring from 1/7/10.</p>	
<p>Income Estimates – s 22 and s 22</p>	<p>Comments/ Action Items</p>
<p>The presenters spoke to the presentation members were given</p> <p>Questions SPCA – queried the penalties want to talk about them. s 22 keen for people to report income as penalties will be applied.</p> <p>FaHCSIA – advised there was no change to the penalty provisions they had just been included in the legislation.</p>	
<p>Alignment of Care – s 22</p>	<p>Comments/ Action Items</p>
<p>s 22 spoke to the presentation, members were provided in their packs.</p> <p>Questions SPCA - has quality decision making improved? CSA advised they didn't think there has been much change but will look into further. Anglicare WA – Will the CSA develop a referral process out to community organisations – Action – CSA took on notice s 22 did advise the first point of call is to Family Relationship Advice Line.</p> <p>The Chair was interested to know if the type of engagement CSA has tried to use in the CoA process is useful. Action – members to provide input to s 22 CSA so they can use for future initiatives.</p>	<p>Action Item 1.4 – CSA will advise whether quality decision making has improved.</p> <p>Action Item 1.5 – Will CSA develop a referral out to Community organisations.</p> <p>Action Item 1.6– CSNSEG members to provide input to s 22 on whether the type of engagement CSA has tried to use in the CoA process is useful.</p>
<p>New Emerging Issues</p>	<p>Comments/</p>

	Action Items
<p>National Legal Aid Issue 77 – The “Delivering Quality Outcomes” review recently completed by s 22 highlighted a deterioration in the Child Support Program’s ability to achieve its basic purpose of collecting debt</p> <p>CSA spoke to the response, members were provided at the meeting advising they are working with Ombudsman’s office on capacity to pay, and having a QA approach. CSA is constrained by Privacy issues and is working with the Ombudsman’s office and will look at their procedural Instructions to see if instructions are clear for staff.</p> <p>National Legal Aid Issue 78 - Legal Aid solicitors report seeing a number of payee clients who have either “discharged” arrears, or agreed to artificial “Non-Agency Payments (NAPs)” that effectively discharge child support arrears.</p> <p>CSA spoke to the response, members were provided at the meeting and confirmed they need to look at procedures on whether customers are aware there may be implications with their FTB. CSA and FaHCSIA to discuss the policy issue and report back at next meeting.</p> <p>National Legal Aid Issue 79 – Proof of paternity</p> <p>CSA spoke to the response members were provided at the meeting. CSA advised they would talk to Legal aid about the Procedural Instructions CSA use.</p> <p>LFAA Issue 80 and 81 –Complaints being received that when clients query their Case Officer’s decisions and have the opportunity to talk to other officers in the CSA they are given different advice to that provided by the Case Officer.</p> <p>CSA spoke to the responses, members were provided at the meeting.</p> <p>LFAA Issue 82 will be provided out of session and tabled at next meeting.</p>	<p>Action Item 1.7 – CSA to look at procedures on whether customers are aware there may be implications with their FTB.</p> <p>Action Item 1.8 – CSA and FaHCSIA to discuss the policy issue and report back at next meeting.</p> <p>Action Item 1.9 – CSA to liaise with Legal Aid to develop a new assessment practice and report back at next meeting.</p>
<p>Human Services delivery Reform Initiative – s 22</p>	<p>Comments/ Action Items</p>
<p>Members were provided with presentation on the day and an electronic version was emailed on 29 June 2010.</p> <p>There was general discussion on the initiative announced last year by s 22 in December and the direction of previous government’s initiatives. Discussion centred around ways customers are engaged and co location of services and the risks attached to genericizing and mainstreaming.</p>	
<p>Update on Delivering Quality Outcome Review key recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing CSP’s new quality assurance framework – s 22 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Group discussion ● New Service Delivery Model and what it means for customers - s 22 ● New Cuba front screen and blitz on Cuba Response backlog - s 22 ● New CSP Stakeholder engagement model, CSNSEG Terms of Reference – s 22 	
<p>Developing CSP's new quality assurance framework – s 22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Group discussion <p>s 22 - Going to run through approach to developing quality framework. Going to take time to do some workshopping with people in the room. Tasked with looking at intelligences sources across the Department and seeking to improve. Find that at the moment they are looking at things in a more siloed way. Wanting to look at it more holistically and identify systemic issues. The task is a direct result of the Quality Assurance review. Some of the finding of Richmond – with regard QA – currently model provides minimal support to customer services officer. - decisions not reviewed or monitored – absence of clear escalation model to deal with issues.</p> <p>s 22 - Decided to deal with all the issues as one body of work rather than treat each issue separately. Engaged E & Y to help work out what a quality assurance framework should look like for the CSA.</p> <p>s 22 – noted that it is early days in collecting information about quality performance.</p> <p>s 22 - CSA quality framework is more aimed at bringing down to customer service officer level. Getting it right the first time – will assist customer service officers in a proactive way to ensure that they get it right the first time. Where this doesn't happen a system in place through resolution process to deal with issues.</p> <p>s 22 - Have done a lot of work to identify what works in other agencies and organisations. Found that most agencies had just one or two major issues that they focussed on. Places examined really succeeded at those one or two issues and that contributed to achieving quality assurance.</p> <p>s 22 - Biggest challenges is defining - what does quality mean? Need to get the definition right from the beginning. Questions for tables – what would quality outcomes look like – what would the success factors be? Sharing best practice – how is quality managed within your organisations? Define the type of categories of issues that you might be raising.</p> <p>Tables looking at definitions of quality:</p> <p>s 22</p> <p>Looked at the characteristics of quality – starting with doing what you said you were going to do and in the way you said you were going to do it and have the definition supported by behaviour. Distinction made between excellent and good versus average a when talking about service quality. Also acknowledge of the tension between efficiency versus</p>	

effectiveness and the need to make the way we measure quality reflect the effectiveness of service. A real focus on ensuring the outcomes are measurable – introducing the idea of a results based accountability model. And finished off with a focus on ensuring that the quality definition and ways of measuring is linked with the key priority to improved collection. We also highlighted the need to actually test ..there are lots of steps before a decision is made and we need to test the process of leading up to the decision making (customer interaction element). Conversation around the need to listen to customers and understand their circumstances and clearly communicating – managing expectations. The other key characteristic was that staff are supported – supporting staff to deliver quality outcomes. And also the need to feedback to customers in terms of action taken and also when it's not possible to fix the issue and explanation of the action undertaken or the reason why it's not possible. Get back to people with a resolution. Quality is about providing an environment for staff that ensures staff investment, staff retention, enhanced capabilities etc.

Shouldn't take multiple escalations – trying to resolve the issue the first time the issue is presented – not necessarily in the first phone call.

Tables looking at escalation and resolution process:

s 22

We kicked off with the second questions about behaviour first. Good decision making involved consistency, transparency, Wisdom??, maybe on some things it is good to have a hierarchical approach. Spoke about the difference about procedural justice and X justice. CSA working hard to make sure people feel heard regarding the decisions about the process of fairness. Some of the space the CSA is in makes it hard for good decision making. Willingness to pay versus capacity to pay. When doing anything to assess human emotions it is difficult to set up good process but not impossible. Need to understand the nature of the issue that is at hand. People need to understand what was considered when making their decision. Predictability versus discretion – might sometimes be best to have a decision made by a group of people rather than one person. As a measure, there will be fewer complaints about how the case is handled – this is something that we can measure.

s 22 – getting some of that feedback from their website – suggested people can read about how people feel they are being treated through the system.

s 22 – problem with looking at complaints is that we don't identify that we are dealing with more complex issues. Need to assess the type of complaints rather than just the volume so that we interpret correctly.

s 22 – Happy to receive continuous feedback.

Q –s 22 – How does this fit in with other quality frameworks?

A –when developing the new quality framework, we want to underpin the principles of ISO900???

<p>New Service Delivery Model and what it means for customers - s 22 New Cuba front screen and blitz on Cuba Response backlog - s 22</p>	
<p>s 22 provided an update on aspects of the Richmond Review</p> <p>One of the key areas is transferring child support between parents and ensuring that people get the right interaction initially. The CSA model is about supporting the payer to pay the payee. A – s 22 – where there is capacity for the paying child to pay and they are not, it is a concern for CSA to ensure that the compliance model.</p> <p>s 22 - The word ‘parents’ versus the words payers is the issue – the payee doesn’t actually get any support until they get the money. (clarification of s 22 point)</p> <p>s 22 – Q – with CUBA, when there is a policy change, is there a note in the system so that you can make sense of the data over time?</p> <p>s 22 – Couple of things in play from data integrity perspective – changes are made to individual changes or if there is a global change there is an audit trail. In terms of documentation of more global legislation changes updating the procedural report – the system build happens in the background and works toward a ‘go live’ date.</p> <p>s 22 – clarification that s 22 is asking about changes to the data due to policy changes – not sure if there is a way to chart changes. s 22 – CSA sitting on great longitudinal data but anomalies don’t have an explanation. s 22 – the legacy system pre-CUBA had some problems with free field keying – Cuba more tightly controls that.</p> <p>s 22 – summary to wrap up – looks like this is all about CSa but the changes we are focussing on supporting customer service staff - makes sure info is more easily accessible, more comprehensive etc. Picked up on things that will have the most impact on customers.</p>	
<p>New CSP Stakeholder engagement model, CSNSEG Terms of Reference (ToR) – s 22</p>	<p>Comments/ Action Items</p>
<p>s 22 provided members with an update on the ToR Review. CSA anticipate they will be able to develop a proposal by early August. Emphasis in terms of the selection of the issues that we want to work on together.</p>	<p>Action Item 2.1 – CSA and FaHCSIA to report back to group on ToR review.</p>

Family Law reform evaluation – s 22	Comments/ Action Items
<p>s 22 spoke to a power point presentation which was based on information taken from the summary report and full Family Law Reform evaluation report which is available on line and provided summary for members if they wanted to take one</p>	
FaHCSIA Policy report and CSA Service Delivery update	Comments/ Action Items
<p>s 22 reiterated that the Legislation had been covered in the morning sessions and confirmed that FaHCSIA would seek input from the group over time. s 22 confirmed that the estimate penalties referred to in the Income Estimates and Alignment of Care sessions are not changing they were just included in legislation.</p> <p>s 22 spoke to the report CSA provided to members on the day Partnership with Brotherhood of St Laurence (BoStL) matched saver program, areas of social disadvantage ACTION can send more info out and will track number of CS customers who complete the program. Trying to connect with parents in need with financial counselling. Targeting men and women, details given to customers and they had to initiate contact with BoStL, have you thought about using FRSP and other services available.</p> <p>CSA outlined potential subjects for future agendas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child focused research s 22 and s 22 ; • Privacy matters FoI changes and how we look at this from a Government point of view; • Service delivery reform progress; • AoC measure and how it happens in reality; • Stepfamilies research – FaHCSIA; and • s 22 research – December 	
<p>Next meeting 6 October</p>	
<p>Meeting closed 3.40</p>	

Comment [FCSaIA1]: NOTE this is Issue FaHCSIA funds Brotherhood of St Laurence to do other stuff need to check this out