

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES — CASEWORKERS

613. Hon NICK GOIRAN to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Child Protection:

I refer to the answers to the 2022–23 budget estimates additional questions 3 and 4 regarding volume 2 of budget paper No 2 and the revelation that during 2021–22, 185.7 new caseworkers had been employed but 165.1 caseworkers had left their role.

- (1) Were exit interviews conducted with the departing caseworkers?
- (2) If yes to (1), what questions were asked during the exit interview?
- (3) What were the three most prevalent reasons for departure?
- (4) What plans does the minister have to prevent this obvious churn and burn of departmental workers?
- (5) How many caseworkers currently have a case load over the recommended limit of 15?
- (6) How many caseworkers currently have a case load over the exceptional limit of 18?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1)–(2) An anonymous exit survey is made available to all departing employees. Due to the anonymity of the survey, the Department of Communities is unable to identify the person's role. Questions asked in this survey include about demographic data; length of employment; feedback on employment experience, including about the manager or supervisor and team; reasons for leaving Communities; plans after employment at Communities; workplace health and safety; organisational culture; and targeted feedback questions on workplace diversity and inclusions, including for employees who identify as Aboriginal or LGBTQI+ and employees with a disability.
- (3) In the past 12 months, the three most prevalent reasons for leaving the department have been seeking a better opportunity to advance their career, team morale is low and team culture is not improving, and feeling that their work contribution is not recognised or valued.
- (4) The premise of the question is rejected. Communities is undertaking a workload management project for child protection workers. This project has identified areas of focus for systems upgrades, more accurate information gathering, and opportunities for training and upskilling to support effective workload management. Employee assistance program supports are being expanded to extend the range of services for those working in the most high pressure scenarios.
- (5)–(6) On 1 July 2022, there were 75 caseworkers with a case load of more than 15 cases. Of these, seven caseworkers had a case load of more than 18 cases.