

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

Question Taken on Notice

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From: Mr Chansey Paech

To: Hon Marie-Clare Boothby

Portfolio: Attorney-General

Agency: Attorney-General's Department

Subject: Number of individuals not provided legal representation

QUESTION:

Can you provide the committee with data on individuals who have been through the court system in the last reporting period who have not had legal representation?

ANSWER:

There are a number of reasons a person may be recorded as not having representation, including that the person chose not to be represented, or that the matter is minor and defendants routinely self-represent.

Of the 10 679 cases finalised during the reporting period, 576 cases were either self-represented involving 547 distinct individuals or not represented.

It is important to note that the data quality for legal representation in IJIS is not optimal. "Null" value in the legal representation field in IJIS has been counted as no legal representation. As such, the number stated above should be considered as maximum.

Representation data is collected at first mention, and representation may change throughout a matter. The number of unrepresented people will include some people who have chosen not to be represented and intend to self-represent, or who would not be entitled to legal aid based on the matter type or criteria to be granted legal assistance, such as traffic offences (426 out of 547) which make up 74 per cent of unrepresented cases finalised during the reporting period.