



Matt O'Sullivan
SENATOR FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Ms Natalie James
Secretary
Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
Via email:

Dear Secretary,

I write on behalf of the Opposition Senators ahead of the 2023-2024 Senate Budget Estimates hearings which will take place on Tuesday 30 May to Wednesday 31 May 2023 to request that certain information is provided to the Committee in advance of these hearings.

Providing Opposition Senators with information ahead of Senate Estimates as requested not only assists Senators in their important role scrutinising Government expenditure but also the Department by ensuring that relevant information is on hand during the Senate Estimates process.

I request that the Department provides the follow specific information to the Education and Employment Legislation Committee by **5pm on Friday 26 May 2023**:

1. The number and levels of staff currently employed by the Department of Employment and Workplace relations (DEWR) and all independent agencies within the portfolio including organisational structures;
2. Detailed breakdown of DEWR's Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and management. Please include how many staff are responsible in progressing FOIs, the average days to process, the median days to process, how many have been received, and their status -whether approved in-full, in-part, refused;

3. A current list of all boards, commissions, statutory appointments within the portfolio including date of appointment and cessation. Please include any vacant positions, the reason for the vacancy, when it became vacant and for how long it is expected to be vacant;
4. A list of all ministerial submissions that have been created after 1 February 2023, including the area of the Department that prepared the submission, dates submitted to the Attorney, requested signature dates, actual signature dates, and whether the Attorney disagreed with any recommendations, as per the table below:

Submission number and title	Prepared by (Branch & Section)	Date submitted to MO	Date by which signature requested	Date signed	Did the Minister not agree with any recommendations (however phrased)?
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1.	[eg: MSXXX, Proposed amendments to Fair Entitlements Guarantee]	[eg: Employment Conditions section]	[eg: 1 February 2023]	[eg: 22 February 2023]	[eg: 22 February 2023]	[eg: No.]
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5. All documents, including the NPP relating to the decision to cut funding from the Fair Work Ombudsman in the 2023-2024 Budget;
6. The criteria that will be used for appointment to the National Construction Industry Forum members, and any documents relating how to apply to be appointed;
7. A list of all meetings between DEWR and the Australian Council of Trade Unions and/or officials of their affiliated unions, including the file notes of any meeting and the purpose of the meeting between 1 March 2023 and 19 May 2023;

8. A list of all meetings the Department has undertaken with external stakeholders, which were at the request of the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations and/or his office, since 1 January 2023;
9. Details of the consultation and development of the “employee-like forms of Work”;
10. How many compliance notices have been issued under the new Workforce Australia system;
11. The latest workforce Australia caseload, how many are in each stream, how long they have been in the stream, when they first became a participant;
12. Number of long term and very long term jobseekers in the caseload broken down by how many years they have been in the system;
13. Documents on the announcement by the government to remove the mutual obligations requirement for the ParentsNext Program;
14. Latest estimates or data on the VET-FEE HELP Scheme Redress payments, broken down by State, age, average amount paid to each applicant, median amount per applicant, lowest amount paid, highest amount paid, average days to progress payment of redress, median days from application for redress to payment;
15. Most up to date data on the number of in training apprentices and trainees, broken down by gender, age, state, and electorate;
16. Provide answers to any outstanding Questions on Notice.

Please note that this list of topics is not exhaustive, and Opposition Senators will likely have a number of other questions referring to expenditure across the Employment and Workplace Relations portfolio.

Yours sincerely,

Matt O’Sullivan

Senator for Western Australia

22 May 2023