



Senate Education and Employment Legislation Committee
Budget Estimates 2024-25
Monday 3 June 2024
Daily summary

The committee met from 9.02am until 10.00pm

The committee called:

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

Corporate and Enabling Services, Cross-portfolio and general matters

- Update on resolving the underpayment of staff at the department - increased number of staff identified as underpaid, legal advice received, use of consultants, engagement with the Fair Work Ombudsman;
- Impact of Future Made in Australia policy on the department;
- Use of labour hire in the department;
- Right to Disconnect impact on the department;
- Estimates Manual for answering Senate Estimates questions; and
- Implementing the workplace delegates rights changes since the passing of the Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Closing Loopholes No.2) Bill 2023 [Provisions].

Outcome 3: Workplace Relations

- Fair Work Commission annual wage review;
- Allocation of funding for the Productivity Education and Training fund;
- Working Women's Centres - update on funding agreements;
- Changes to the union demerger provisions introduced from the Closing Loopholes Bill;
- Casual workers - changes to definition under the *Fair Work Act 2009*, guidance from the Fair Work Ombudsman, casual conversion;
- Right to Disconnect - impact analysis on small businesses, drafting of the amendment, guidance for employers;
- Statutory review into the Secure Jobs, Better Pay provisions;
- Review into the *Fair Work Amendment (Paid Family and Domestic Violence Leave Act 2022)*;
- Investigation into wage theft in the coal mining industry; and
- Right of entry permits - criteria for revoking a permit.

Outcome 1: Employment

- National Agreement on Closing the Gap targets 7 and 8 - update on progress in meeting the targets;
- Pacific Australian Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme - changes to minimum hours worked in a week, breaches of the new deed, historical data discrepancy, accommodation for workers;
- Workforce Australia - performance ratings of service providers;
- Number of people impacted from changes to mutual obligations delivered in the 2024-25 Budget;
- Suspension of welfare payments;

- Recommendations from The House of Representatives Select Committee on Workforce Australia Employment Services report on: Rebuilding Employment Services;
- ParentsNext program - extension of the old program, commencement of the new program, qualifications of staff in successful providers, changes in the new program, engagement support vouchers and participants in the online system;
- Job service providers requesting payslips of jobseekers;
- Digital Services Contact Centre measures in the 2024-25 Budget;
- Workforce Australia Online service improvement trials; and
- Timeline for Government Response to report from the Select Committee on Workforce Australia Employment Services.

The committee will next meet at 9.00am on Tuesday, 4 June 2024 in Committee Room 2S3, for further examination of the Employment and Workplace Relations Portfolio.