

Senate Select Committee on COVID-19
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Australian Public Service Commission

Topic: Australian Public Service Staff in Tasmania

Senator: Katy Gallagher

Question reference number: 030

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 29 May 2020

Questions:

Australian public service

- a. Have any additional APS staff been recruited in or deployed to Tasmania since the beginning of the year?
- b. Have staff been transferred between agencies in Tasmania due to COVID-19, if so how many?
- c. Can the Department provide a breakdown of employment type for APS staff in Tasmania – e.g. permanent, fixed, labour hire or casual staff?
- d. Can the Department provide a breakdown of employment category for any additional APS staff in Tasmania from the beginning of the year?
- e. Have there been any additional labour hire staff contracted to work for the Commonwealth Government in Tasmania since January 1 2020?
- f. Does the Commonwealth Government have a position on what measures labour hire companies contracted to do work on behalf of the Commonwealth should have in place around sick leave entitlements for employees?
- g. If yes, is the Department aware of any cases where labour hire companies have refused to pay sick leave entitlements during the crisis?

Answer:

The following data is drawn from the Australian Public Service Employment Database (APSED) (current as of 31 March 2020) and the APS Workforce Management Taskforce.

- a) Between the period 1 January and 31 March 2020 there were 141 employees who commenced work in the APS in Tasmania. This includes 104 who were initially engaged in the Australian Public Service (APS) in 15 different agencies. It also includes 37 employees already working in the APS elsewhere in Australia, who moved to offices in Tasmania in 13 different agencies.
- b) The Commission is not able to identify if movements between agencies are related to a COVID-19 response.

- c) As at 31 March, of the total 3581 APS employees in Tasmania, 3126 were employed as ongoing, 242 non-ongoing and 213 casual.
- d) Of the 141 people who commenced work in Tasmania between the period 1 January and 31 March 2020, 98 work full time, 19 work part time and 24 work casual hours. Furthermore, of the 141 new employees, 77 are employed as ongoing, 40 non-ongoing and 24 casual.
- e) Responsibility for the engagement of labour hire staff under the Commonwealth Procurement Framework is devolved in nature. Information on the engagement of labour hire staff contracted to work for the Commonwealth in Tasmania would need to be sought from individual entities.
- f) Labour hire workers are not Australian Government employees and are generally the employees of labour hire companies. Leave and pay conditions remain a matter for the labour hire company. Agencies have been advised that they should, through the appropriate contract managers, consult with labour hire providers about their arrangements, and confirm that the provider has systems in place to ensure the potential for COVID-19 affected employees to present at workplaces is minimised. Labour hire providers are required to comply with Commonwealth and agency policies, guidelines and directions.
- g) The Australian Public Service Commission is not aware of any cases where labour hire companies have refused to pay sick leave entitlements during the crisis.