



THE SENATE
SENATE FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE
REFERENCES COMMITTEE

**Inquiry into the proposed Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for
Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP-11)
Public Hearing –Monday, 30 July 2018
Questions Taken on Notice
Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union**

1 HANSARD, p. 38

Senator MOORE: Mr Tegg, your union has always had a very high profile in these discussions around free trade. It's been something that your union individually has worked on. As an individual union separate to you as part of the ACTU getting a corporate response, have you had any response from the department that spells out answers to the issues that you've raised, which are very similar, about labour mobility, labour market testing, the effect of ISDS? You've not had any response to that?

Mr Tegg: To my knowledge, that is the case, but there are other people within the union who may have been the subject of those. I'll look into that and provide the answer to the committee.

Response:

The AMWU's view is that the consultation undertaken by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) in relation to TPP-11 has been desultory.

Under the former government, DFAT undertook regular consultations with unions and other stakeholders. The negotiators were available and would brief us over the course of the negotiations. The last of those meetings took place nearly 3 years ago, when a team led by [a DFAT official] led us through about 14 sets of negotiations in about 2 ½ hours. The TPP alone would have merited several days worth of detailed discussion.

These discussions were so fast as to be nearly entirely meaningless. Attendees were constantly told that we had nothing to worry about and that everything would be open and transparent. That this meeting was followed by 3 years of silence DFAT should not be lost on the Committee.

It is a cause of ongoing concern that DFAT can behave in this manner and then front Senate Estimates to say that they have fully consulted all relevant stakeholders. This secrecy undermines the public's confidence that international trade agreements are genuinely in the national interest and not simply for the benefit of narrow, politically connected sectors to the detriment of the rest of us.