

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Additional Estimates

26 February 2014

Question: AET 1905-1906

Topic: Deregulation (ATO)

Written: 7 March 2014

Senator BUSHBY asked:

1905) What consultative mechanisms did you previously have in your portfolio* that gave feedback on red tape? Did any of these forums make a focussed effort or an overt role to get feedback on red or green tape?

1906) In the past year what was the extent of union involvement in consultative mechanisms within your portfolio* and how has the level of union input changed over the past decade?

*the ATO

Answer:

1905) The ATO's consultative mechanisms are designed to obtain feedback on all aspects of the tax and superannuation systems, including opportunities to reduce the regulatory burden. We have recently reviewed our external consultative arrangements and have rationalised from 68 committees to 8 key stewardship committees and 12 technical and special purpose working groups. Some of these have focused on reducing red tape:

- *National Tax Liaison Group*, the ATO's peak stewardship committee on tax matters, discussed cutting red tape at its 5 March 2014 meeting with members to consult and report back with options.
- *Superannuation Industry Advisory Group*, the ATO's peak stewardship committee on superannuation, discussed red tape reduction at its 3 December 2013 meeting resulting in a workshop that explored specific proposals.
- *GST (Indirect taxes) Advisory Group* discussed cutting red tape at its 12 February 2014 meeting with some proposals being addressed by projects in the ATO and across government.

The ATO is also establishing a 'small business consultation panel' comprising small business owners/operators willing to consult with the ATO. The panel will help pilot 'Fix-it Squads' to address small business red tape and other irritants.

The ATO is represented on an inter-departmental committee progressing the government's deregulation agenda, and has established an internal working group to address red tape reduction internally.

1906) As per the terms of our Enterprise Agreement 2011 we consult with the unions around prospective business decisions (and their implementation) that may significantly affect our employees.

Unions are not part of any formal consultative bodies/mechanisms that the ATO has established to consult on issues relating to the administration of the taxation and superannuation systems, including those focused on deregulation and reducing red tape.