

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016

Agency - Fair Work Building and Construction

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ16-000104

Senator Cameron asked on 12 February 2016 on proof Hansard page 8

Question

FWBC - Bullying and harassment report - process adopted

Senator CAMERON: Were the agency's harassment contact officers asked to provide information in relation to the report?

Mr Hadgkiss: I am not sure. I do not know.

Senator CAMERON: Does anyone know how this process was undertaken?

Mr Hadgkiss: I can take that on notice.

Senator CAMERON: Does anyone in the agency know how this process was undertaken?

Ms Cato: I was not at the agency at the time.

Mr Hadgkiss: We will take that on notice—the process adopted.

Answer

1. Yes. Each Harassment Contact Officer was spoken to by DBM Independent Consultants as part of the review.
2. The review flowed on from an examination of the results of the 2013 Employee Engagement survey which pointed to some staff concerns with regard to bullying and harassment, either as victims or of having witnessed same.

Due to the nature of the survey, a clear and in-depth understanding of the problem was not possible. As such DBM Independent Consultants were engaged to gain greater clarity about staff personal experience and observation with regard to bullying and harassment.

The process adopted to achieve this was to meet with staff at each location as part of a group discussion and then also privately as a one-on-one if they chose.

The purpose of the group session (generally a maximum of 12 participants at a time) was to establish staff understanding of the problem, the policies and generally their knowledge about the issue of bullying and harassment.

Prior to attending each location an email was sent to each staff member to determine whether following the group sessions they wish to meet privately off-site to discuss their experiences or observations with regard to bullying and harassment.

Through these group sessions and then one-on-one meetings, a much better understanding of staff awareness and experience with regard to the issue as well as greater clarity about the type of events that are occurring or being observed.

The final group interviewed were the Harassment Contact Officers who were in a unique position to provide first-hand evidence about the on the ground experience with regard to bullying and harassment and the response of the agency.

Staff could also make written submissions. Any written submission was treated in confidence and where any material was reflected in the final report, the author not be identified.

Following the research and investigation stage, a recommendation report was submitted to the Agency with the findings. Subsequently, the Bullying and Harassment Action Plan was developed and implemented.