

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017

Agency - Fair Work Commission

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ17-001472

Senator Paterson asked on 02 March 2017 on proof Hansard page 14

Question

FWC - Australian Workers union membership audit

Mr Enright: I have requested the AWU to audit their membership over the period that I have identified, between 2009 and 2015. I have advised the union that I will be engaging further with it in relation to the matter, so I cannot confirm whether they are actually doing that or not. I expect that it is being done. I have undertaken to re-engage with the union to ascertain that it has been done.

Senator PATERSON: When did you ask them to commence the audit?

Mr Enright: I do not have those materials in front me, but it was around the time of that article that you are referring to. This was a proactive measure by the commission. I have identified issues in relation to the membership of that particular union, so I wrote to them and I told them what those concerns were. The union responded to me advising me that they believed it to be an error. My response to that was that it is not sufficient simply for the union to acknowledge an error and that an audit was required. So that is what I expect is occurring; my expectation is that that is going on at present.

Senator PATERSON: Perhaps you can take on notice the exact date that you raised it with them. But, for our purposes today, is 'late last year' a fair way of referring to it?

Answer

The General Manager's delegate first raised the issue of a membership audit with The Australian Workers' Union by letter dated 15 November 2016.