

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2014-2015

Outcome 2 - Workplace Relations & Economic Strategy

Department of Employment Question No. EM0878_15

Senator Lines asked on 3 June 2014 on proof Hansard page 99

Question

Meetings with Building Services Contractors Australia

Senator LINES: Let us skip through this. Ms Parker said there were ongoing discussions with United Voice during the establishment and implementation of the guidelines. Ms Parker: At the start. Senator LINES: At the start. So, at the start, did you have contact with the Building Services Contractors Association? Mr Kibble: Not as much as with United Voice. Senator LINES: So you had consultations with the Building Services Contractors Association. Ms Parker: We might take that on notice because we did not— Senator LINES: Come on, people. Ms Parker: Sorry, none of us were here at the time. Mr Kibble: The guidelines were introduced in 2010, Senator. Senator LINES: Is it not interesting that you can clearly state that you had discussions with United Voice and their view was well known, but when it comes to the Building Services Contractors Association, you are now saying, 'Yes, we met with them during the implementation stage but we're not sure and now we've got to take that on notice.' But you do not need to take on notice the consultation with United Voice. Come on. I was not born yesterday. Ms Parker: Well, it was United Voice that pushed the program. We know that. It was not the Building Services Contractors Association who were proposing it. Senator LINES: But you had discussions with them during the implementation stage? Mr Kibble has just said yes to that. Mr Kibble: We had discussions with them. But the crucial point is that—this comes back to your original question—we— Senator LINES: They are separate questions. I am merely trying to establish that during the implementation stage you met with United Voice, which you are very clear about, and you met with the Building Services Contractors Association, and you now said yes you did. Mr Kibble: Yes. We can take that on notice in terms of the details of that.

Answer

The Explanatory Statement for the introduction of the *Commonwealth Cleaning Services Guidelines* (the Guidelines) states “key industry and union stakeholders along with Australian Government agencies were consulted during the development of the Commonwealth Cleaning Services Guidelines”.

The then Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) had discussions with United Voice about implementation details prior to the commencement of the Guidelines, but there is no record of discussions between DEEWR and the Building Services Contractors Association. Since then, DEEWR and the Department of Employment have consulted with United Voice and the Building Services Contractors Association of Australia on operational issues arising since implementation (such as changes to pay rates over time).