

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016

Agency - Fair Work Ombudsman

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ15-000396

Senator Lines provided in writing.

Question

FWO - Taskforce Cadena

In relation to Taskforce Cadena can you explain what the role of the Fair Work Ombudsman is?

How many times has this Taskforce met? What has the Taskforce done? Have there been any breaches identified, prosecutions etc? What have been the results of the Taskforce? What timeframes are in place? When will there be a report? Will it be made public?

Answer

Taskforce Cadena was established in June 2015 through a Joint Agency Agreement between the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, Australian Border Force and the Fair Work Ombudsman, who are the Agencies involved in the Taskforce.

The objectives of the Taskforce are to:

- Reduce visa fraud, illegal work and the exploitation of foreign workers in Australia;
- Utilise intelligence from a range of sources to identify and investigate major targets of interest; and
- Influence Australian businesses in order to enhance compliance with Australian workplace laws and regulations in relation to foreign worker rights and obligations.

As part of Taskforce Cadena, the Fair Work Ombudsman has undertaken various operational activities. A particular focus of FWO activities has been on enhanced gathering of intelligence for the Harvest Trail Inquiry, 417 Inquiry, investigations into labour hire intermediaries and the service of Caution and Infringement Notices.

The Joint Agency Agreement will be reviewed on a six monthly basis to ensure it is delivering its objectives.

There has not been a decision on whether there will be a report or whether any report will be made public. Involved agencies will communicate Taskforce Cadena efforts through media engagement and communication campaigns at appropriate times.