

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Additional Estimates

26 February 2014

Question: AET 1891-1895

Topic: Staff (ATO)

Written: 7 March 2014

Senator BUSHBY asked:

1892) Does your agency ever observe connection between performance management of staff and claims of stress leave or other forms of sick leave?

1893) What is the number of staff on stress leave or psychological injury claims at any one time in your agency? How many harassment claims are there at any one time? How many of these cases are connected to performance cases? Have you observed any instances of stress claims and harassment claims being a tactic used by staff which the agency tries to performance-manage?

1894) Looking at the length of time claimed for sick leave, are you seeing longer absences for people with physical injuries or people claiming to have psychological injuries? What's the degree of difference?

1895) How much would be saved from your workforce insurance costs if you did not have the current levels of stress-related claims and other psychological injury claims?

Answer:

1892) Yes.

1893) During the period 1 July 2013 to 28 February 2014, there were 63 psychological injury compensation claims lodged by ATO employees. Of these, 38 claims relate to allegations of bullying and harassment and 33 claims relate to attempts to manage under performance. There can be one or more contributing aspects to a psychological injury claim.

1894) People with accepted Comcare claims for psychological injuries typically have longer absences than people with accepted Comcare claims for physical injuries. The degree of difference can be up to double the rate.

1895) As Comcare determines the premium for each agency based on a number of factors, the ATO is unable to answer this question.