

Senate Standing Committee on Economics
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio
Additional Estimates Hearing 2011-12
28 and 29 May 2012

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

TOPIC: Personal Leave

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Bushby

QUESTION No.: BI-174

1. Did the Human Resources Branch in Corporate Division commence a project on personal leave within the Department at some time in 2009 or 2010? If so, what was the nature of the project; and what were the results of it?
2. In total, how many days of personal leave were taken by employees for each of the years 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12?

ANSWER

1. An unplanned absence strategy was introduced by the department in 2009. The strategy is designed to support a reduction in levels of unscheduled absence through improved communication, policy reviews and support for managers. The department, however, acknowledges and will continue to support those employees who are managing chronic illness.

As part of the absence strategy, unplanned absence metrics reports are provided to divisions annually for the period 1 April to 31 March. In addition high leave user reports are provided to divisions for employees who have taken unplanned absence of greater than 10 days without evidence and greater than 18 days in total. Accompanying these reports is a discussion guide to assist with the management of employees who are high users.

Absence rates across the department have stabilized as can be seen from the following table in the response to question 2.

2.

Financial Year	Average Number of Days per Employee
2007-08	11.75
2008-09	11.64
2009-10	11.09
2010-11	11.63
2011-12 (FYTD as at 31 March 2012)	8.2
2011-12 (projection)*	10.9

* Please note that absence data does not include employees who recently moved to the department as a result of the Machinery of Government Changes.