

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
 Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio
 Budget Estimates Hearing 2012-13
 28 and 29 May 2012

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: AUSTRALIAN NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ORGANISATION (ANSTO)

TOPIC: Comcare Report – Action Plan

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard, Monday 28 May 2012, page 12)

QUESTION No.: BI-5

Dr Paterson:Comcare proposed a series of recommendations that ANSTO has accepted and has developed into an action plan agreed with both Comcare and the relevant union. The report made recommendations about ANSTO improving investigations, which have been accepted.

Senator LUDLAM: Could you table for the committee the action plan that you mentioned?

Dr Paterson: I would be prepared to take that on notice, but we can table it.

Senator LUDLAM: I do not know whether there would be privacy implications.

Dr Paterson: There may well be some privacy implications, but those will not be extensive. I think we would be very happy to share that action plan.

Senator LUDLAM: Take names out if you will, but that would be much appreciated.

ANSWER

In December 2011 Comcare issued a report which made a number of recommendations in relation to improving safety reporting, investigations and conflict resolution within one business unit of ANSTO. ANSTO notes that while this report made seven recommendations, ANSTO was not found to have breached the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2006*.

In keeping with ANSTO's commitment to continuous improvement of its safety culture and practices, all Comcare recommendations have now been either partially or fully implemented. The following table shows ANSTO's progress against each Comcare Recommendation.

	Comcare Recommendation	ANSTO Progress
(a)	Implement policy and guidance for reporting incidents of spills and personal contamination; ensure staff are familiar with the process to be followed, during business hours and after hours.	Implemented
(b)	Implement policy and guidance to determine who is the most appropriate Relevant Line Manager (RLM) to be appointed to conduct internal investigations. This policy and guidance should include procedures for the RLM to recommend to the General Manager, that an independent, qualified investigator be appointed to conduct internal complex matters.	Implemented
(c)	Implement policy and guidance for the management of version control of documents.	Implemented

		Comcare has been contacted to clarify this action item. ANSTO already has in place detailed systems for version control of documents – these systems were in place even at the time of the incidents which gave rise to this Comcare recommendation. The record management systems used across ANSTO are ISO9000 compliant.
(d)	Review the ANSTO Performance Management System and examine the process for managing allegations of unsatisfactory performance of duties. Further, all staff to be made aware of what constitutes inappropriate conduct and the potential penalties for inappropriate conduct.	Implemented
(e)	<p>a) Implement mandatory annual training for staff, covering the notification policy and processes regarding Site Operations Safety Supervisor (SOSS), if applicable, and after hours call-out of Health Physics Surveyors.</p> <p>b) Disseminate information to all ANSTO Health Staff, on the correct protocols for how and when to notify the appropriate personnel to deal with an incident outside of normal business hours and how to reduce risks in this area.</p>	Implemented
(f)	Consider engaging Comcare’s Workplace Relationship Resolution Team, to seek assistance to identify preventative strategies to deal with workplace conflict.	Implemented
(g)	Provide written advice to Comcare outlining the findings of any reviews undertaken by ANSTO, into the examination of the overall processes and systems for managing workplace conflict.	Partially implemented