

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio
Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing 2012-13
17 October 2012

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION (CSIRO)

TOPIC: Comcare report – workplace bullying

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Bushby

QUESTION No.: SI-74

At the Estimates hearing of 28 May 2012, Dr Clark said that she made sure she had the “right expertise” and the “right team” overseeing the organisation’s approach to workplace bullying.

1. How many people make up the team Dr Clark was referring to?
2. What qualifications do these individuals hold, to qualify them to deal with workplace bullying?
3. In light of Comcare’s report, will this team receive any additional training to deal with workplace bullying?
4. In light of Comcare’s report, does Dr Clark now concede that her team’s strategy may not have been the best method of dealing with workplace bullying?

ANSWER

1. The key team overseeing the organisation’s approach to workplace bullying (which includes policy setting, training and development, workplace relations advice, health and safety matters, and legal) includes:

- General Manager, Workplace Relations and Policy
- General Manager, HR Strategy and Organisational Development
- General Manager, HR Business Services
- General Manager, Health and Safety
- General Manager, Legal

The team reports to a sub-committee of the Executive Team currently comprising the CEO and two Deputy Chief Executives.

Individual teams of appropriate expertise are formed to address particular bullying and harassment related matters as and when they arise.

2. These General Managers have qualifications and extensive experience across the areas of human resources, workplace relations, health and safety, and organisational development.

3. These senior managers regularly update their skills and knowledge through a range of external short courses, seminars and conferences on relevant matters. In addition the CSIRO provides access to an independent employee and leader assistance program, and customised senior leadership development programs.

4. The Comcare report and improvement notice identified additions to the CSIRO procedures that are not yet commonly in use in other organisations to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, we are providing and maintaining safe systems of work. These are set out in detail in SI-79 and cover a number of areas, including improvements to procedures for documenting bullying and harassment incidents; bullying and harassment awareness training; and undertaking regular hazard and risk assessments of psycho-social risk factors.