

**SENATE EMPLOYMENT, WORKPLACE RELATIONS AND EDUCATION
LEGISLATION COMMITTEE**

**2004-2005 ADDITIONAL SENATE ESTIMATES HEARING
17 FEBRUARY 2005**

EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Office of the Employment Advocate

Question Number: W168-05

Question:

Senator Campbell asked at *Hansard* page 15:

Please provide the number of AWAs that have taken longer than a six month period for approval.

Answer:

The numbers of AWAs which have taken longer than six months to approve are provided for financial years 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05 YTD, in the table below.

In 2003-04, there was a jump in the number of AWAs taking longer than six months to approve. There were two main reasons for this. First, a 61% increase in lodgements in 2002-2003 placed considerable pressure on the OEA's processing systems and resulted in a substantial number of AWAs being carried forward into 2003-04, before they could be assessed and approved.

Secondly, AWA lodgements by Western Australian (WA) employers, migrating from State workplace agreements (WAWAs), grew by 292% in 2002-03. Many of these AWAs did not meet the no-disadvantage test (NDT) when first lodged, slowing further the assessment process. NDT deficiencies can be overcome by the OEA seeking changes to AWAs – 'undertakings' – from employers. However, the process is necessarily a resource intensive one.

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05 YTD
AWAs approved >6 mths	514	10,253	6,688
Total AWAs approved	102,479	151,021	131,767
% of total approvals	0.5%	6.8%	5.1%

Note: These figures include most AWAs approved by the AIRC, following referral by the OEA (approximately 1% of all AWAs approved).