

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS

**SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
2007-08 ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING**

Outcome 9

DEEWR Question No. EW118_08

Senator Parry asked on 21 February 2008, DEEWR Proof Hansard page 51.

Question

Secret Ballots

Do you have any data at all indicating anything since the introduction?

Could you indicate whether industrial disputation has decreased since that time in 2006?

Answer

According to data published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, industrial disputation (measured in terms of working days lost per thousand employees) has been declining since 2003 and has continued to decline since the introduction of secret ballots. The general decline in industrial disputation is consistent with international experience.

Further, the Government's *Forward with Fairness – Policy Implementation Plan* released in August 2007 explicitly states that the Government will keep tough restrictions on industrial action, including mandatory secret ballots to be conducted in workplaces before protected industrial action can occur.