

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace  
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Additional Estimates 2011-2012**

**Outcome 5 - Workplace Relations & Economic Strategy**

**DEEWR Question No. EW1153\_12**

**Senator Abetz asked on 15 February 2012, Hansard page 126**

**Question**

***Building and Construction Industry Improvement Amendment (Transition to Fair Work) Bill 2011***

Can I go to the building and construction amendment bill and turn to the switch-off provisions. At the Senate committee's hearing on this bill we were told that the switch-off provision was not sought by the trade union movement, and was not supported by the trade union movement; was not sought by the employers, and was not wished for by the employers; and that it had not come up with departmental consultations during the development of this bill. So, Parliamentary Secretary, I think you or the minister's office must be the harbour of the reason why the switch-off provision was thought of and why it has found its way into the bill, when it seems to be a bit of an orphan. Neither the unions nor the employers want it, and it did not come up in departmental consultations. Senator Jacinta Collins: Senator Abetz, I cannot claim credit for it, so I will have to take that question on notice. Senator ABETZ: You are very generous to say 'claim credit for it'. I am not sure you would actually want to claim credit for it. It seems to be an orphan. Nobody knows how it came about, nobody wants it and one wonders what it is doing in there.

**Answer**

The switch-off provisions emerged from the Government's consideration of the content of the Bill which took into account consultations with various stakeholders. These provisions ensure that the coercive interrogation powers are focused where they are needed most and provide an opportunity to recognize those projects that demonstrate that the required lawful culture is in place.