

**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.EW1156_12

Senator Abetz asked on 15 February 2012, Hansard page 128

Question

Government's response to union's influence

Senator ABETZ: Parliamentary Secretary, the unions allegedly are pushing for the Gillard government to make greater use of its purchasing power to drive pay and condition improvements outside of the enterprise bargaining system. What is the government's response to that?

Senator Jacinta Collins: I will take that on notice.

Answer

While value for money is the core principle underpinning decisions on government procurement, the Australian Government is committed to ensuring that government procurement decisions promote fair, cooperative and productive workplaces in which employees are treated fairly and with respect for freedom of association and their right to be represented at work. For example, the Fair Work Principles and Commonwealth Cleaning Services Guidelines seek to address the history of underpayment, exploitation and unsafe work practices in the cleaning industry.