

## Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

### QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Additional Estimates 2013-2014

#### Outcome 2 - Workplace Relations & Economic Strategy

Department of Employment Question No. EM0180\_14

Senator Cameron asked on 27 February 2014, Hansard page 105

#### Question

##### Analysis of SPC enterprise agreements

Senator CAMERON: I am asking the department to provide me details of when it commenced doing analysis of the SPC enterprise agreements. What department was carrying it out? When did you come to conclusions about the agreement and were in a position to provide advice to the minister? I am not asking what advice you gave. When were you in a position to provide detailed advice after your analysis of the agreement? Ms Leon: I will see what we can do. I am not sure it will follow as neat a chronology as that but I will see. With these kinds of issues that are appearing on and off in the press over a period of time, it is not usually possible to say there was a particular point where we finished the analysis and then we reached our conclusions and it was over. It is more that whenever there is something reported, we might go and do some more work on it or some more thinking about it rather than take ourselves away for a week of quiet time and then come to some conclusions and it is all over. I certainly will respond to what I think you are trying to ask but I register that it may not reach a neat conclusion that says we did all this work between x date and y date and then we finished because we reached a conclusion. It kept on evolving, government was considering it, new claims were in the paper and our reaction to that probably was ongoing throughout that time. Senator CAMERON: Was your analysis and work done prior to the cabinet decision not to provide financial support to SPC? That is a legitimate question. It is not asking for anything other than a timeline. And it is entirely appropriate. Senator Abetz: No. Ms Leon: I think we said we started this work December, which clearly was before the government's announcement. Senator CAMERON: What I am asking you is: were you in a position to provide a concluded analysis? It could not be that difficult; it was an enterprise agreement after all. Did you provide any advice? I am not asking what the advice was. Did you provide advice to the government prior to the cabinet decision on SPC support? Ms Leon: I will take that on notice and see what we can provide.

#### Answer

The Department of Employment analyzed and provided advice about the content of the *SPC Ardmona Operations Shepparton/Mooroopna (Food Preservers) Enterprise Agreement 2012* from December 2013 onwards, prior to the Government's public announcement of its decision on assistance to the company.