

**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. EM0460\_14**

**Senator Lines provided in writing.**

**Question**

**Lifting of moratorium**

1. The Government has lifted the moratorium and recently signed a declaration allowing DHL Supply Chain to apply for a licence. Over the last twelve months Comcare has cut the number of Inspectors. If the Government floods the scheme with new entrants, how can Comcare licensees and premium payers comply with their legal obligations when the number of Inspectors has been reduced?

**Answer**

From 2010–11 until the present, the number of Comcare inspector positions was consistent at 44.

Regulatory operations of Comcare are based on a user-pay system. Licensees under the Comcare scheme pay fees which cover, among other things, the cost of regulating their work health and safety performance.

As new licensees join the scheme, Comcare will adjust its regulatory workforce as required.

**Ballot of Employees**

2. Will the Government arrange for the Australian Electoral Commission to conduct a ballot of workers to ascertain their views, similar to a secret ballot required to authorise the taking of protected industrial action?

**Answer**

No.

The *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* requires that, in order for the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission to be satisfied that it is appropriate to grant an applicant the licence sought, the Commission must be satisfied, among other things, that the grant of the licence will not be contrary to the interests of the employees of the potential licensee.

Regulations require that licence applicants must provide, among other things, evidence of employee consultation about the applicant's intention to apply for a licence.