

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

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2010-2011**

Outcome 5 - Workplace Relations

DEEWR Question No.EW0215_11

Senator Abetz asked on 31/05/2010, Hansard page 123.

Refers to previous DEEWR Question No [EW1052_10](#)

Question

LEGISLATION BEFORE THE PARLIAMENT ON 20 MARCH 2008

Senator ABETZ—Given that the Workplace Relations Amendment (Transition to Forward With Fairness) Bill was not before the parliament on 20 March because it had passed the parliament on 19 March, which I accept, can the department now tell us what legislation was before the parliament on 20 March? Was there any workplace relations legislation before the parliament on 20 March? **Mr Kovacic**—I would have to take that on notice. **Senator ABETZ**—Yes, pursuant to that legislation. The argument that the Prime Minister tried to put at the time was that he was only specifically referring to the legislation currently before the parliament. I thought it was that legislation. We now get an answer that in fact this bill was not the one before the parliament. Can you tell me if it was not this legislation? Minister, you might be able to take this on notice: what legislation was the Prime Minister actually referring to?

Senator Arbib—I think we have already taken that on notice. **Senator ABETZ**—Because if this legislation had already passed through the parliament and therefore it was not the one the Prime Minister was relying on for his statement, I would be very interested to know what bill or legislation was lying before the parliament to which the Prime Minister was referring, because there was none. But I might be wrong on that, so we will get the departmental advice on that. **Senator Arbib**—You may be wrong about that, so we will take it on notice. **Senator ABETZ**—I may well be. I suspect I will not be getting an answer to this one in a rush. But surprise me, Minister, surprise me. **Senator Arbib**—I will try.

Answer

There was no workplace relations legislation before the Parliament on 20 March 2008.