

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

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

Outcome 5 - Workplace Relations

DEEWR Question No.EW0221_11

Senator Abetz asked on 31/05/2010, Hansard page 130.

Refers to previous DEEWR Question No [EW1059_10](#)

Question

HOW MANY APPLICANTS WERE THERE FOR FAIR WORK AUSTRALIA

Senator ABETZ—We know the make-up of those seven primary appointments because that is the first six plus Mr Simpson. How many applicants were there for Fair Work Australia? Mr Kovacic—Bear with me for a moment. I think it was 149. Senator ABETZ—One hundred and— Mr Kovacic—One hundred and forty-nine. Senator ABETZ—That is not too long a list. Could you provide us with a breakdown of that list in relation to the categorisations that you provided in EW1059_10 please? Senator ABETZ—Thank you for that. Could you also provide us with the state or territory from which they originate? Mr Kovacic—Certainly.

Answer

As indicated at the last estimate hearings, one hundred and forty nine expressions of interest for appointment as Fair Work Australia Commissioners were received. One person from a government background withdrew prior to the appointment process being completed. An examination of the remaining one hundred and forty eight expressions of interest indicates that the most recent work background and the state or territory where these persons live is as follows:

- 24 persons had a union background (11 of the persons lived in Victoria, 6 in Queensland, 4 in Western Australia, 2 in New South Wales and 1 in Tasmania);
- 45 persons had an employer/industry association or business background (23 of the persons lived in Victoria, 4 in Queensland, 3 in South Australia, 5 in Western Australia, 8 in New South Wales, 1 in Tasmania and 1 in the Northern Territory);
- 24 persons had a legal background, including State industrial tribunals (9 of the persons lived in Victoria, 5 in Queensland, 3 in South Australia, 4 in Western Australia, 2 in New South Wales and 1 in the Australian Capital Territory);
- 30 persons had a government background (12 of the persons lived in Victoria, 3 in Queensland, 5 in South Australia, 3 in Western Australia, 5 in New South Wales and 2 in the Australian Capital Territory);
- 25 applicants had a background categorised as 'other' which includes persons working as consultants and in universities as either academic or administrative

staff and persons for which it was not possible to accurately determine the nature of their work background (13 of the persons lived in Victoria, 4 in Queensland, 2 in South Australia, 3 in Western Australia, and 3 in New South Wales).

Of the 45 persons identified as having an employer/industry association or business background:

- 7 persons submitted expressions of interest which either did not address the selection criteria or were of a poor quality;
- a further 14 persons were, based on their expression of interest, assessed as having no or very limited workplace relations experience and/or knowledge;
- a further 13 persons were, based on their expression of interest, assessed as working in human resource roles where workplace relations was only one component of their overall responsibilities and/or they had not had been actively involved in workplace relations matters for some time; and
- the expressions of interest submitted by remaining 11 persons showed varying levels of workplace relations knowledge and experience, both in terms of the length and breadth of their experience.