

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

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Budget Estimates 2011-2012**

**Outcome 5 - Workplace Relations**

**DEEWR Question No.** EW0054\_12

**Senator Abetz provided in writing.**

**Question**

***Equal Pay Australia***

"In relation to the Government's commitment to delivering equal pay across Australia:  
a. What will be the implications of the historic equal pay test case?"

**Answer**

Whilst Fair Work Australia (FWA) is yet to make a final determination in the equal pay test case currently before it, this case already represents a milestone in the principle of equal pay for equal work in Australia.

This is the first case brought before FWA on equal pay since the Government lifted the historical restriction of requiring a party to prove discrimination before an equal pay case can be successful. The Government intended that removing that restriction would help Australia's lowest paid women to achieve pay parity with men engaging in similar or comparable work, and it is pleased to note that the equal pay test case is a step in that direction.

The Government has established the Community Sector Wages Group (CSWG) to examine how to manage the potential implications of pay increases that may be determined by FWA in the case. The CSWG is comprised of representatives from the SACS sector, unions and federal, state and territory governments.