

**SENATE EMPLOYMENT, WORKPLACE RELATIONS AND EDUCATION  
LEGISLATION COMMITTEE**

**2006-2007 SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET SENATE ESTIMATES HEARING  
2<sup>ND</sup> NOVEMBER 2006  
EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**OFFICE OF WORKPLACE SERVICES**

**Outcome 1 : The rights and obligations of workers and employers under the  
*Workplace Relations Act 1996* are understood and enforced fairly**

**Output Group 1.1 : Education and Compliance Services**

**Question Number: W374-07**

**Question:**

Senator Marshall asked in writing:

How many complaints has OWS received in the last year regarding the underpayment or non-payment of wages? Please provide a breakdown of these complaints by, gender, age, occupation, industry, size of business, location (by state) and employment status (full-time, part-time, casual or independent contractor). Of these complaints, how many involved unpaid monies of (a) less than \$1000, (b) between \$1000 and \$5000, (c) between \$5000 and \$10000, and (d) over \$10000. Of these complaints, how many resulted in prosecutions against employers by the OWS?

**Answer:**

Between 27 March 2006 and 28 February 2007, OWS recovered money for 3,308 claims including:

- (a) 1,761 claims that involved less than \$1,000;
- (b) 1,269 claims that involved between \$1,000 and less than \$5,000;
- (c) 187 claims that involved between \$5,000 and less than \$10,000;
- (d) 91 claims that involved \$10,000 or more.

Further breakdown of this information is not readily ascertainable (ie by gender, age, occupation, industry, size of business, location and employment status), and to provide the requested answers in that format would require an unreasonable diversion of office resources.

At 1 November 2006, OWS has initiated 21 prosecutions against employers. Of those prosecutions, 15 involved underpayment of wages and entitlements for 267 employees for amounts totalling \$289,689.03.

Until the matter has been determined by the relevant Court, it is not possible to accurately identify the number of breaches involved.

**Estimated Cost:** To prepare this answer has taken approximately 5.85 hours at a cost of \$105.25