SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 2009-10

Agency Comcare

DEEWR Question No. EW609_10

Senator Marshall asked on 21 October 2009, EEWR Hansard page 26.

Question

Calculation of Normal Weekly Earnings

CHAIR—If an agency advises you that this particular person's normal weekly earnings are now X plus a percentage increase that everyone got last year, is that the figure that you then use to make your calculations on or do you have discretion to simply use some other figure? Mr O'Connor—I believe the former is the case, but I will confirm that for you. CHAIR—All right; please confirm that for me. Thank you.

Answer

Comcare has provided the following response:

Changes to Normal Weekly Earnings (NWE).

- 1. During the course of a claim an employee's NWE may change as a result of any number of different factors including promotions, an increase in their base salary in accordance with their employer's collective agreement or annual indexation.
- 2. For current employees changes to NWE are usually notified in writing by the employer. Comcare determines the NWE based on the information supplied by the employer. If the employee advises Comcare of changes to their NWE the changes are confirmed with the employer before Comcare makes any changes to NWE.
- 3. NWE changes for ex-employees are based on specific occupation-related wage changes and/or through indexation. The Wage Prices Index (WPI), published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, is legislatively prescribed as the index to be used to calculate increases in the NWE.
- 4. Where an ex-employee has not received an increase to their NWE in a 12-month period, they are eligible to receive an increase in line with the WPI on 1 July of each relevant year. Comcare arranges a bulk-update of NWE for ex-employees on 1 July each year in accordance with the WPI.
- 5. Comcare then ensures that any current employee who has not received an increase in their NWE in the last twelve months receives an increase in their NWE.

- 6. An employee or employer may request a review of the NWE if they disagree with the figure determined by Comcare. Any request by the employee or employer must be made in writing and must state why they consider the NWE figure to be incorrect.
- 7. When Comcare receives a request for a review of NWE, Comcare will review the information provided by the requestor and will issue another decision, called a reconsideration, based on that review.