

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

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Estimates 2012-2013**

Agency - Fair Work Australia

DEEWR Question No. EW590_13

Senator Abetz on 17 October 2012, Hansard page 7.

Question

Senator ABETZ: Just extra cost to the taxpayer. Are you in a position to tell us what the anticipated costs are of prosecuting the Thomson matter?

Ms O'Neill: I am not. I could take that on notice and attempt to do so. I have been given some estimates, but the way these things play out

Senator ABETZ: I accept that this is a bit like asking you how long a piece of string is.

Answer

Fair Work Commission has provided the following response.

The cost of the civil proceedings specifically against Mr Thomson to 31 January 2013 is \$258,190.63. However, a further \$338,400.73 has been spent in relation to the litigation and the investigation involving the HSU National Office. This involves the costs relating to all various persons identified as being potentially in breach of civil penalty provisions, as well as the entity itself. A proportion of these costs are associated with the litigation involving Mr Thomson, as there is some overlap between the matters.

It is difficult to provide estimates about the likely total cost of the litigation against Mr Thomson. Factors which would impact upon the costs include:

- The extent of overlap between the criminal proceedings and the action being conducted by the General Manager;
- Whether the civil proceedings are stayed in whole or in part pending the resolution of the criminal charges;
- The outcome of any criminal proceedings involving Mr Thomson.

In the event that the matter proceeded to trial an estimate of a further \$500,000 in costs has been provided.