

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

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

**Outcome 4 – Workplace Relations and Economic Strategy**

**DEEWR Question No.** EW0680\_13

**Senator Abetz asked on 17 October 2012, Hansard page 119**

**Question**

**Relates to EW0306\_13 - Government amendments to new building inspectorate**

Senator ABETZ: In relation to EW0306, the new building inspectorate, and what was called 'the switch-off provision', you do not know where it came from and the department has told me, 'The department is not aware of where the idea for the government amendments originated.' Parliamentary Secretary, can you please tell us where did this idea emanate from? Clearly it was not the department, and when I asked at the Senate hearings the trade union movement said it was not their idea, the employers said it was not their idea, and it is not the department's idea. It seems to be an idea without— Senator Jacinta Collins: A sponsor? Senator ABETZ: Yes. It seems to be a bit of an orphan and I would just like to know exactly from where it emanated? Senator Jacinta Collins: I have not been directly involved in the ABCC processes, so I will take that on notice. Senator ABETZ: Did the department make any inquiries of the minister's office? We were told that the department was not aware where the idea for the government amendments originated. If you are not aware, the only other place that they could have come from is the minister's office, one would imagine, because the minister sponsored the amendments. Mr Kovacic: I will take that on notice. I imagine that we probably would have.

**Question:** I would like to know exactly from where it emanated?

**Answer:** The Government amendments emerged from the Government's consideration of issues raised by various stakeholders in consultation on the content of the Bill. Details of those consultations remain a matter between the Government and the stakeholders.

**Question:** Did the Department make any enquiries of the Minister's Office?

**Answer:** No, the Department did not make any enquiries with the Minister's Office as to the origin of the proposed amendment.

As advised in the response to EW0306\_13, the Department was asked to provide advice in relation to possible amendments to the Bill. In the context of drafting the amendment the Department sought clarification as to the intent and operation of the proposed amendment. However, as noted above, the clarification sought did not extend to the origins of the proposed amendment.