

## Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

### ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates Hearing – May 2010

Finance and Deregulation Portfolio

#### Outcome 2, Program 2.1.5

#### Topic: Protected Action Ballots/Industrial Elections

Question reference number: F109

Type of Question Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 9 July 2010

Number of Pages: 2

Senator Ryan asked:

In Answer to Question on Notice F40a-b (Additional Estimates 2009-10) said that “The final amount for protected action ballots (PABs) in 2008-09 was \$466,809. PABs activity has increased in 2009-10 with \$772,270 invoiced to 31 January 2010. Based on this trend AEC is now forecasting a total amount of \$1.148m for the 2009-10 financial year.”

“The total number of industrial elections conducted in 2008-09 was 347. The number of PABs conducted was 230. The AEC conducted 125 non-union industrial elections in 2008-09, representing 36% of the total industrial elections conducted in that year.”

- a) What is the current expected cost of PABs in 2009-10?
- b) Why has there been a substantial increase in the cost of PABs from 2008-09 to 2009-10?
- c) How many industrial elections will the AEC conduct in 2009-10?
- d) How many of these industrial elections are for unions in 2009-10?
- e) How many of these industrial elections are for non-unions in 2009-10?
- f) What was the total cost of industrial elections for unions in 2009-10?
- g) What was the total cost of industrial elections for non-unions in 2009-10?
- h) What was the total cost of industrial elections for unions in 2008-09?
- i) What was the total cost of industrial elections for non-unions in 2008-09?
- j) What is the average number of eligible participants in a union election in 2009-10?
- k) What is the average number of eligible participants in a non-union election in 2009-10?

#### Answer:

- a) \$1.06 million.
- b) There has been a significant increase in the number of PABs this financial year, from 230 in 2008-09 to 608 year to date in 2009-10 (to end May).

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- c) 267
- d) 181
- e) 86
- f) This breakdown is not available.
- g) This breakdown is not available.
- h) This breakdown is not available.
- i) This breakdown is not available.
- j) The breakdown of these figures is not readily available. Australian Electoral Commission records do not distinguish between union and non-union elections. For the total number of industrial elections, the average number of eligible participants is 1,357 - 22 per cent of whom actually vote in the elections.
- k) The breakdown of these figures is not readily available. Australian Electoral Commission records do not distinguish between union and non-union elections. For the total number of industrial elections, the average number of eligible participants is 1,357 - 22 per cent of whom actually vote in the elections.