

STATEMENT – SENATE ESTIMATES

The Shadow Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations has issued a statement today that makes a number of false claims in relation to a Group Manager in my Department and his group tasked with re-establishing the Australian Building and Construction Commission.

The Department specifically confirmed that the policy taskforce has 3 officers working to a Group Manager and are only policy officers working on the drafting of the legislation now before the Parliament and liaising with stakeholders.

Let me be very clear – the ABCC has not been re-established within the Department and the department has no regulatory functions in this regard whatsoever.

The Department earlier today confirmed that a similar policy taskforce was established within the department by the former government to establish the Fair Work Act.

I can also advise the Committee that Mr Kibble who is the Group Manager was earlier this year working as a General Manager of a Taskforce to establish the Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency under the former Government and then Minister Shorten.

These officers are of the highest calibre and eminently professional and I commend them on their work over a long period including most recently to then Minister Shorten.

Mr Shorten should defend his former Departmental officials and call on Mr O'Connor to apologise.