

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

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2011-2012**

Agency – Fair Work Australia

DEEWR Question No.EW0308_12

Senator Abetz asked on 30/05/2011, Hansard page 114.

Question

Wage Rates And Transitional Provisions

Senator Chris Evans: On most of the key indicators things seem to be progressing very well. I am very pleased that the award simplification process seems to have gone very well. The massive reduction in the number of awards to 122 modern awards has gone exceptionally well, and I think Fair Work Australia did a fantastic job in that regard. So we have a much less complex system with a lot less— Senator ABETZ: Can you tell me how many wage rates and transitional provisions there are? Senator Chris Evans: I can certainly get that answer for you, Senator. But, as you know, the policy option was to move to the new rates immediately or provide some support for employers by phasing in those rates, and it was generally supported by the community and the employers that we ought to phase those rates in. So, yes, there are transitional rates, but we have also supported the industry associations to work with their members to have a proper understanding of that. If you look at the normal indicators regarding industrial disputes and the number of agreements being registered, all those factors seem to provide a very positive picture of how the legislation is working out in practice.

Answer

Fair Work Australia has provided the following response.

There are approximately 2,230 adult classifications and related wage rates in the 122 modern awards. Seventy-three modern awards contain rates for juniors and 53 modern awards contain rates for apprentices. Rates for juniors and apprentices are usually expressed as a percentage of the relevant adult rate. One hundred and one modern awards also contain the national training wage schedule that sets out 104 rates for full-time and part-time trainees.

One hundred and sixteen modern awards contain transitional provisions that phase in differences between rates in the modern awards and the previous instruments that applied.