

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

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Budget Estimates 2013-2014**

**Cross Portfolio**

**DEEWR Question No. EW0193\_14**

**Senator Mason asked on 5 June 2013, Hansard page 7**

**Question**

**Staffing - absenteeism disaggregation**

Senator MASON: That is all right. We could be here all day doing this, because it is very, very complicated and very involved. But let me ask another question, which I know my colleagues would be interested in: when unscheduled absences are taken, is there a greater propensity for that leave to be sought on certain days of the week rather than other days of the week—specifically, Monday and Friday, for example?

Ms Rundle: We do have that information, but I would need to check whether I have it here. Indeed, I think with most of the days taken, there are more single days taken than multiple days—I do know that. I do not think necessarily that there are more days taken on a Monday or a Friday, for example; but, again I will check that for you.

Senator MASON: Can you check that? Ms Rundle: Yes. Senator MASON: At other places there are disproportionate, sometimes grossly disproportionate, days taken on Friday or a Monday. I cannot work out why. Senator Jacinta Collins: Can you not?

Senator MASON: No, Minister. I would not want to draw any conclusions. Senator Jacinta Collins: You should look at some of the HR material on that syndrome.

Senator MASON: I just want to ask the question. Can you take it on notice? I would like to know. The committee would like to know that. In terms of job position, or classification of the job as well, can you give leave in relation to that as well? Ms Rundle: Yes.

Senator MASON: This will sound like an interesting or perhaps more difficult question: the location of the employee. By that I mean this: if the employee is located in Canberra, as opposed to a regional office, do you have statistics on that as well? Ms Rundle: We do. Senator MASON: In relation to unscheduled absences, could the committee have that information as well? Ms Rundle: Yes.

Senator MASON: Have you ever done any calculations as to what it costs the department in unscheduled absences a year—both direct and indirect costs? Ms Rundle: We have done some analysis of that, Senator. I would need to take any further detailed questions on notice, though. I do not have it with me today.

**Answer**

1. The Department had an unscheduled absence rate of 12.63 days for the period 1 July 2012 to 31 May 2013.

2. The table below shows the unscheduled absence total days taken by day of the week for the period 1 July 2012 to 31 May 2013.

<b>Weekday</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Monday	19%
Tuesday	21%
Wednesday	21%
Thursday	20%
Friday	19%

3. The table below shows the unscheduled absence rate per employee by classification for the period 1 July 2012 to 31 May 2013.

<b>DEEWR Classification</b>	<b>Unscheduled Absence Rate (Average Number of Days per Employee)</b>
APS1	23.10
APS2	9.96
APS3	14.13
APS4	15.31
APS5	14.78
APS6	12.83
EXEC1	12.36
EXEC2	10.68
SEB1	8.89
SEB2	3.38
SEB3	2.05
Government Lawyer	8.00
Trainees	9.40
Graduates	9.90
Cadets	2.25
IAGD APS3	14.22

4. The table below shows the unscheduled absence rate per employee by location 1 July 2012 to 31 May 2013.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Unscheduled Absence Rate (Average Number of Days per Employee)</b>
Australian Capital Territory	12.50
New South Wales	13.57
Northern Territory	11.07
Queensland	11.24
South Australia	12.79
Tasmania	12.55
Victoria	16.90

5. The Department's Human Resource Information System did not provide reporting on the costs of unscheduled absences. However, earlier this year the Department made a point in time estimate of the annual cost of unscheduled absence based on average salaries of \$17 million.