

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

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

Agency - Comcare

Department of Employment Question No. EM0127_14

Senator Tillem asked on 21 November 2013, Hansard page 101

Question

Comcare - Average time for dispute resolution under the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988*

Senator TILLEM: Thank you. Moving on to workplace compensation payments, can the department advise what the average time was for resolving disputes under the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act in the last period?

Ms Parker: That is a question for Comcare, the agency that actually administers the Oc. Health and Safety Act and the SRC Act. The department is not able to answer that question.

Senator Abetz: But you can put these questions on notice. You have already read it into the Hansard, and the Hansard will disclose that we asked that that question go to Comcare, and it will.

Senator TILLEM: Yes, I will put it on notice. I might just quickly, then, because clearly we have them in the wrong section, so I do apologise—

Senator Abetz: If you have got them written out, you can in fact provide them to the secretariat.

Senator TILLEM: I will provide them to the secretariat to put them on notice.

Answer

Comcare has provided the following response.

The *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* has a two tier dispute resolution process.

The first step is internal review by an Independent Review Officer. The average duration for this process for reviews that were completed in 2012–13 for the Comcare scheme is 29.1 days from when a determining authority receives (a compliant) request.

The second possible step is review by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. The average duration for this process for reviews that were completed in 2012–13 for the Comcare scheme is 313.7 days from when a request is registered with the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.