

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMICS

REVIEW OF THE FOUR MAJOR BANKS AND OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

NAB79QON

Dr LEIGH: Do you survey your staff on their experiences of sexual harassment?

Mr McEwan: We survey our staff on a quarterly basis and on harassment. We have a question within our surveys about how they are feeling about the organisation as well.

Dr LEIGH: Do you have the responses to those questions before you?

Mr McEwan: I haven't got them with me, no. One of the big questions we ask is: how do they feel about the ability to use the speak-up or whistleblowing in those circumstances? I do know that that particular rating has gone up to 85 per cent—feeling comfortable that they can. On sexual harassment itself, over the last 12 months we've been doing a lot of work internally as an organisation. Over the last two months, we have reissued our code of conduct, for every colleague, and made sure that they have signed that off and understood it. I've written recently to our colleagues on sexual harassment and said there is a zero tolerance in this organisation, and we've been speaking very openly about it, given what's been going on, quite publicly, over the last few months, and making our position very clear.

Dr LEIGH: Would you commit to sharing with the committee the share of NAB employees who say that they've experienced sexual harassment, as according to your survey?

Mr McEwan: Yes. I'm happy to give the committee the stats that we've had, and I'll just make sure that we get them over the right period of time. Right now, we've got two open sexual harassment cases, and in 2020 we had something like 20 complaints of sexual harassment investigated.

Dr LEIGH: But we know that those figures are going to be an underestimate of total experiences, because most sexual harassment isn't reported, so the figures from your survey I think would be very informative.

Answer

NAB surveys employees quarterly to assess and measure levels of employee engagement, as well as to understand employee sentiment towards a range of different workplace issues. In the October 2020 survey we invited colleagues to share the extent to which they agreed with two statements on sexual harassment. The statements did not seek to test the frequency of individual experiences of sexual harassment, rather they focussed on the culture and zero-tolerance approach NAB has for sexual harassment, and whether colleagues feel safe to speak up about issues of sexual harassment without repercussion. The survey was completed by 24,308 colleagues (72% of the population). These statements, and the score against them are as follows:

Statements	Overall favourable responses (strongly agree or agree)	Weighted average score (takes into account neutral or unfavourable responses)
NAB/BNZ makes it clear that sex-based harassment is not tolerated	96%	89
It is safe for me to raise issues of sexual harassment without fear of victimisation or negative career implications	89%	84