



Senate Education and Employment Legislation Committee
Budget Estimates 2022-23
Friday, 1 April 2022
Daily summary

Here is the summary of today's proceedings in the Education and Employment Legislation Committee estimates hearing.

The committee met from 9.01am to 10.32pm.

The committee called:

- Attorney General's Department (Industrial Relations only) including employment entitlements safeguards policy; safety and industry policy; industrial relations legal branch; employment conditions branch;
- Department of Education, Skills and Employment including Corporate and Enabling Services; Higher Education, Research and International; Early Childhood and Childcare; Schools and Youth; Skills and Training, Employment;
- Australian Skills and Quality Authority; and
- National Skills Commission.

Topics discussed by the committee included:

Attorney-General's Department

- details about the ROC's investigation into a former donation by the Australian Workers' Union to the activist group *Get Up*;
- resourcing and work associated with the development of a small business unit within the Fair Work Commission;
- latest figures regarding the current unemployment rate and future projections;
- ratification of the Forced Labour Protocol and its impact on employment domestically and for employers;
- payments made by the Fair Entitlements Guarantee and Coal LSL entitlements to employees no longer in the mining industry and were not members of the Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU);
- number of Fair Work Commissioners and government intentions to make appointments prior to the federal election;
- progress on legislating compassionate leave relating to miscarriage and stillborn babies;
- differences between the regulation and oversight of registered unions compared to unregistered unions;
- information about insecure work relating to youth, aged care workers, casual and part time workers; and
- factors underlying changes in funding allocated for the Fair Entitlement Guarantee.

Department of Education, Skills and Employment

- Corporate and Enabling Services;
 - arrangements for supporting the Acting Minister for Education and Youth
 - costs associated with marketing and branding of departmental programs
- Higher Education, Research and International;

- changes to the allocation of funding for the University Research Commercialisation Action program
- potential consequences of the public university research commercialisation action plan
- progress on government action to respond to sexual assault and harassment in universities
- Early Childhood and Childcare Services;
 - access to early childhood and childcare services across different regions
 - initiatives to address workforce shortages and progress on increasing the supply of early childhood workers
 - financial assistance given to childcare providers affected by floods in 2022 in Queensland and New South Wales
- Schools and Youth;
 - assumptions underlying the projected funding allocation to Program 1.3 – Government schools national programs support
 - national measures for teaching quality and supporting the status of the teaching profession
 - funding to implement the recommendations of the Quality Initial Teacher Education Review
- Skills and Training; and
 - progress on the development of the new National Skills Agreement
 - future of industry training hubs at the conclusion of their funding period
- Employment.
 - suspension of mutual obligations in flood affected areas
 - progress on audits relating to the quality of job plans
 - data on the youth unemployment rate
 - provision of services in regions where services have not been renewed

Australian Skills Quality Authority

- measures in place for the agency to take over the training product assurance function as of January 2023.

National Skills Commission

- Government's response and release date of the report to the Care Workforce Labour Market study.

The committee will next meet at 9.00am on Wednesday, 6 April in Committee Room 2S3, for examination of the Education, Skills and Employment, including Industrial Relations portfolio.