



Senate Education and Employment Legislation Committee
Budget Estimates 2022-23
Wednesday, 6 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 6.43pm.

The committee called:

- Australian Building and Construction Commission;
- Registered Organisations Commission;
- Safe Work Australia;
- Comcare;
- Fair Work Commission;
- Fair Work Ombudsman;
- Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership;
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency;
- Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority; and
- Australian Research Council.

Topics discussed by the committee included:

Australian Building and Construction Commission

- enforcement of clause 13-2 J of the building code relating to the banning of union material on building sites;
- prosecution process of shame contracting;
- recovered funds for underpaid wages;
- response to a political advertising campaign by the Master Builders Association; and
- details regarding the treatment of women by the Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union (CFMMEU) and court action taken against the union.

Registered Organisations Commission

- details of an investigation regarding the donations by the Australian Workers' Union to GetUp and breaches of the Registered Organisations Act;
- value of unlawful political donations; and
- Commissioner's re-appointment and length of appointment at the agency.

Safe Work Australia

- agency's activities in work health and safety laws regarding psychological injury and the review of the model WHS Laws (Boland Review);
- progress on the implementation of recommendations to address psychological injury, bullying and harassment; and
- data for silicosis cases and measures in place to manage the exposure to materials that contribute to silicosis.

Comcare

- viability of Seacare scheme in the future;
- issues surrounding the Seacare scheme obtaining insurance and current uninsured entities; and
- prevalence of psychological injury across members in the Comcare scheme.

Fair Work Commission

- training provided to Commissioners to assist in their assessments;
- enforced vaccination policies and their impact on individuals to undertake and maintain employment;
- trends in the termination of enterprise agreements; and
- changes to hearings and conferences by members and the increase in individual claims.

Fair Work Ombudsman

- details regarding the prosecution of the fertility clinic Pagoda Tree;
- decrease in funding for the agency in the 2022-23 budget; and
- increased resource allocation for investigating wage underpayments and wage theft.

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership

- Quality Initial Teacher Education Review and recommendations implemented by the agency;
- update on the implementation of the highly accomplished lead teachers initiative and participating jurisdictions; and
- progress on initiatives to increase the supply of qualified teachers.

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency

- findings from the National Students Safety Survey and the agency's view addressing sexual assault and sexual harassment on campuses;
- regulatory activities the agency is undertaking to prevent and reduce sexual assault and sexual harassment; and
- update for work on wage theft in the university sector.

Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority

- Australian Research Council;
- process for implementing the Australian Curriculum Review;
- support provided to schools to assist with the rollout of the curriculum; and
- discussion of NAPLAN results by socioeconomic status.

Australian Research Council

- consideration of the recommendations arising from the Australian Research Council Amendment (Ensuring Research Independence) Bill 2018 inquiry; and
- measures in place for supporting timely announcements of grant outcomes.