

24 August 2018

Mr Stephen Palethorpe
Secretary
The Senate
Standing Committee on Education and Employment

By email: eec.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Mr Palethorpe,

Inquiry into cleaners working in retail chains

Further to the participation of Coles in the Senate Committee's hearing in Devonport on 25 July 2018, I provide the following answers to the questions taken on notice.

Senator Abetz:

All right. How many of your cleaners are casuals?

Approximately 20 per cent of cleaners directly employed by Coles are engaged on a casual basis.

Senator Bilyk:

So you would have some stats there about things like workplace injuries with cleaners et cetera? Are you able to tell me if there's been any increase in notifications or anything?

In accordance with Coles' Work, Health and Safety policy, a total of 80 workplace incidents were reported in FY18. The most commonly notified incidents were muscular stress and repetitive movement complaints. To date, in FY19, 10 incidents have been reported. In FY18 there were four less medically treated injuries compared to the previous year.

Senator Abetz:

I have one question arising from Senator Bilyk's questioning. You've only had in-house cleaners for the last three or four years. Is that as I understood you?

Coles began to directly employ cleaners in 2014.

Senator O'Neill:

What was the context in which this decision was made to shift from outsourcing to insourcing?

Coles moved decisively to ensure we have greater visibility over the conditions of employment of our cleaners.

Yours sincerely

Vicki Bon

Government and Industry Relations Manager