

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

Response to questions taken on notice at a public hearing on 18 June 2021

Response received 22 June 2021

RESPONSE:

The Chair of the Committee has asked CPSU to provide evidence of the positive steps taken by DPS to address poor workplace culture. Since the CPSU original submission was made in October 2020, the CPSU would like to note that DPS has:

- improved consultation with different areas within Parliamentary services
- reinstated the PSS open forum which is a positive move towards open dialogue
- returning to regular meetings with the CPSU
- provided the long requested census data and also provided the data for PSS separately as requested.
- provided data on the number of Code of Conduct complaints, investigations and resulting terminations that the CPSU requested.

In response to Senator Kitching's question over the length of time Code of Conduct investigations take, the CPSU can report that these usually take between 6 months and 10 months. However we are aware of cases that have taken longer to resolve and, as we presented to the Committee, a number of our members have resigned before Code of Conduct investigations have concluded because of the mental health impacts of unresolved matters impacting on job security. DPS would be in a better situation to provide evidence of Code of conduct number by area of DPS and the length of time these take to resolve.

In regard to the validity of statistics provided by CPSU. In the DPS internal census 16% of respondents indicated that they had either experienced or witnessed Bullying and harassment behaviour. According to the sample size of the survey that would equate to approx. 115 responses. Surely in an organisation with a Zero tolerance policy in regard to Bullying & Harassment that result would require further investigation. Also the current cohort size of PSS 1/2 officers is approx. 120 - 135 officers, The correct way to interpret the response data is to compare the percentage of responses from within Security branch to the size of the PSS 1/2 cohort.