

Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates 2017 - 2018

Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities

Committee Question Number: 50

Departmental Question Number: SQ18-000037

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: Airservices Australia

Topic: Meetings with union

Proof Hansard Page: 87 (26 February 2018)

Senator Lee Rhiannon asked:

Senator RHIANNON: This is just so serious for people's lives: the uncertainty and the stress that it's causing, partly, being frank about it, because sometimes the departments aren't very forthcoming. I haven't got all the details of how you're undertaking this, but at all the levels of work on this contamination are you involving the union as members of the board? Partly why I'm asking that is that you've only given one example. It sounds like you've got one union rep on one board.

Ms Bennetts: That's not the case. We certainly fulfil all of our consultation obligations with the UFU. We meet, starting at my level and with their secretary, at least on a scheduled biannual basis. The latest one was just a week or two ago.

Senator RHIANNON: Biannual as in twice a year?

Ms Bennetts: It's a biannual scheduled meeting to talk through all issues associated with the relationship between ourselves and the union. Then we have a series of working groups—off the top of my head I think it's around five or six at this point in time—which the UFU are formally represented on, and there's much more correspondence than that between the two parties, as you'd expect.

Senator RHIANNON: Could you take on notice to detail what you've just set out—the names of those committees and how often they've been meeting, and, with the biannual meetings, when those biannual meetings started. You did use the word 'scheduled', which made me wonder if they are actually occurring, so could you provide dates on those please.

Ms Bennetts: Certainly.

Answer:

Airservices has met at least twice a year with the United Firefighters Union (UFU) since 2002. Those meetings (National Consultative Council [NCC] and Divisional Consultative Council [DCC]) address matters relating to the employment relationship. All unions with members working for Airservices (including the UFU) are able to participate in the NCC. The DCC is a meeting with the UFU to address matters of a technical or operational nature.

Recent NCC and DCC meetings were held on:

- 14 February 2018 (DCC)
- 15 August 2017 (DCC)
- 14 August 2017 (NCC)
- 29 August 2016 (NCC)
- 21 April 2016 (DCC)
- 15 September 2015 (NCC, DCC).

Additionally, the UFU was invited to the following six working groups which meet as required for each project:

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) replacement;
- Electric Rescue Unit (ERU);
- Hose and branch;
- Fire vehicle replacement;
- Hazmat and decontamination;
- Compressed Air Breathing Apparatus (CABA); and
- PFAS Health Study working group.

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Meetings that have occurred are detailed in the following table.

Project and working group consultations

Meeting	Date(s)	Union Representation
PPE replacement project	14/12/2015, 19/01/2016, 2-4/03/2016, 4-6/04/2016, 18-20/04/2016	UFU
Equipment evaluation assessment ERU	24-25/08/2016	UFU
Hose and branch group	7/3/2018, 28/3/2018*	UFU, *None
Compressed Air Breathing Apparatus (CABA) working group	20/09/2017, 10/10/2017, 08/11/2017, 21/11/2017, 31/01/2018, 01/03/2018, 26/3/2018, 10/4/2018	*None
Health study working group	01/02/2018, 21/02/2018	UFU
Fire vehicle replacement	1/5/2018	*None
Hazmat and decontamination group	12/4/2018	UFU

* UFU was invited to each of these meetings