

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2013-2014**

Agency - Comcare

DEEWR Question No. EW0102_14

Senator Abetz asked on 3 June 2013, Hansard page 64

Question

Bullying claims - number of employees in each area

Senator ABETZ: Would it be fair to say there are more complaints from the private sector than from the public sector? Mr O'Connor: I would separate two things: the number of complaints that might come through to us as the work health and safety regulator is at one level; the number of claims that would be received in the Comcare system would be at a slightly different level. In the financial year to the end of March 2013, there have been 114 accepted claims for workers compensation. In the same period we have received about 130 complaints of bullying from across all employers covered by Comcare's regulatory focus. Senator ABETZ: From all of them—so you cannot divide them up for us at this stage? Mr O'Connor: We can certainly give you that split on notice. That might be the most time effective way of dealing with it. Senator ABETZ: That is fine, if you would do that. Then, so I do not misinform myself, are you able to tell us the number of employees covered by the private sector and the number of employees covered by the public sector so we can compare their percentages? Mr O'Connor: We can do that, and you can then see the incident rate. Senator ABETZ: If you could, I would be much obliged. Mr O'Connor: To save putting it on notice, I think I have discovered the right part. If I look at the number of claims received by Comcare on behalf of Australian government premium payers—and we can provide these numbers across a five-year period—in the last five years we have received 1,283 from the Australian government premium payers, 175 from the ACT government, whatever the maths is on that combined, and compared to licensees over the same period, there were only 409. Senator ABETZ: And the number of employees in each area? Mr O'Connor: I would have to come back to you on that. Senator ABETZ: Thank you very much. I am much obliged that you found that.

Answer

Comcare has provided the following response.

The average number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employees that worked over the period 1 July 2008 to 31 March 2013 is as follows:

Australian Government premium payers	195 700 FTE
ACT Government	19 400 FTE
Self-insured Licensees	164 350 FTE

For the period 1 July 2008 to 31 March 2013, the incidence rate of claims received for 'Work related harassment and/or workplace bullying' is as follows:

Australian Government premium payers	1.4 claims per 1000 FTE employees
ACT Government	1.9 claims per 1000 FTE employees
Self-insured Licensees	0.5 claims per 1000 FTE employees