

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

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

Cross Portfolio

DEEWR Question No. EW0192_14

Senator Mason asked on 5 June 2013, Hansard page 6

Question

Staffing - absenteeism

Senator MASON: An interest. Okay. Absenteeism, Ms Paul: is that cross-portfolio?
Ms Paul: If you are talking about absenteeism in the department, yes. Senator
MASON: Let us start there then. Perhaps there is an officer who deals with the HR
system, human resources system, and the information available on that. Ms Paul:
What did you want to know, Senator? Senator MASON: I will ask a specific
question. Does the department's HR system have information—data, I suppose—that
can disaggregate absenteeism, particularly unscheduled absences but absenteeism
more broadly. Let me give you some examples, if I might: by age, job position and
classification, days of week that leave is taken and gender. There are other ones as
well. Do you have the capacity within the department to disaggregate that sort of
information? Ms Rundle: Senator, we do have quite a bit of that information with us
today. In terms of whether or not it is available today, I do not have with me today
data by age, which I think you asked about. I have it by type of leave. I believe I can
get it by classification. I can get it by gender. So I think most of the things that you
asked for I could give you on notice, except I could give you today by leave type.
Senator MASON: I do not need the specifics. I just want to know if you have the
capacity to do it. Ms Rundle: Yes. Senator MASON: How about days of week that
leave is taken? Ms Rundle: I am sorry? Senator MASON: Days of week—that is,
Monday, Tuesday et cetera? That is available as well? Ms Rundle: Yes, we can
give you that too. Senator MASON: That is interesting. And you said job
classification as well. Ms Rundle: That is correct. Senator MASON: And age? Ms
Rundle: I would need to check that for you. I am not sure. I think we may be able to.
Senator MASON: There is quite a bit of information available, isn't there, that can be
disaggregated across the department? That is very good news. Have you ever done
any analysis on what that data might mean? Ms Rundle: Yes, we have. Senator
MASON: What analysis have you done and what have you come up with? Ms
Rundle: I guess that depends on the question you are trying to answer. So, if you
could be a little bit clearer about that, I might be able to answer it. Senator MASON:
I will be very specific, if you like. Do unscheduled absences have anything to do with
age or gender? Ms Rundle: That is something that I would need to check absolutely
for you. I can tell you that there is a relationship between our engagement and age. I
can say that our engagement levels in the agency appear to drop off in the middle
years. They appear to increase again with people as they get older. Engagement,
also, is linked to unscheduled leave. So there is a general picture there. But in
answer to your question specifically, I would need to take it on notice.

Answer

1. The Department had an unscheduled absence rate of 12.63 days for the period 1 July 2012 to 31 May 2013.
2. The table below shows the unscheduled absence rate per employee by age group.

| Age in Years | Unscheduled Absence Rate (Average Number of Days) |
|---------------------|--|
| <20 | 11.50 |
| 20-24 | 11.27 |
| 25-29 | 10.87 |
| 30-34 | 10.92 |
| 35-39 | 12.66 |
| 40-44 | 14.22 |
| 45-49 | 12.87 |
| 50-54 | 13.50 |
| 55-59 | 14.37 |
| 60+ | 13.84 |
| Total | 12.63 |

3. The table below shows the unscheduled absence rate per employee by gender.

| Gender | Unscheduled Absence Rate (Average Number of Days) |
|---------------|--|
| Female | 13.34 |
| Male | 11.61 |
| Total | 12.63 |