

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016

Outcome 2 - Workplace Relations and Economic Strategy

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ15-000206

Senator Lines provided in writing.

Question

National Workplace Relations Consultative Council

Can you just explain to us what the National Workplace Relations Consultative Council is?
What does it do?

Who is on that body?

Does it discuss proposed Government legislation?

Did it/does it discuss the PC Review of IR?

Were the Terms of Reference presented to that body?

Answer

Can you just explain to us what the National Workplace Relations Consultative Council is?
What does it do?

The National Workplace Relations Consultative Council was established under the *National Workplace Relations Consultative Council Act 2002*.

According to the *National Workplace Relations Consultative Council Act 2002*:

- meetings of the Council shall be conducted on a non-political basis
- the Council is to meet twice a year: at least once between 1 January and 30 June and at least once between 1 July and 31 December
- the Council will not interfere with the performance of industrial tribunals
- the views expressed at meetings will be kept confidential
- committees may be created.

Who is on that body?

The *National Workplace Relations Consultative Council Act 2002* provides that the Council shall consist of 15 members:

- The Minister for Workplace Relations (the Minister), Chair
- Seven members nominated by the Australian Council of Trade Unions
- Three members nominated by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- One member nominated by the Business Council of Australia
- One member nominated by the Australian Industry Group
- One member nominated by the National Farmers' Federation
- One member nominated by Master Builders Australia.

Does it discuss proposed Government legislation?

Yes. Members discuss Government workplace relations policy and legislation during the National Workplace Relations Consultative Council meetings. There is also a sub-committee

to the National Workplace Relations Consultative Council called the Committee on Industrial Legislation that provides a mechanism for consultation with the peak employer and union organisations on draft workplace relations legislation.

Did it/does it discuss the PC Review of IR?

Yes. National Workplace Relations Consultative Council Members had discussions on the Productivity Commission review at meetings during 2013 and 2014.

Were the Terms of Reference presented to that body?

Yes. Members were consulted on the draft terms of reference and provided feedback on their structure and content, some of which was adopted by Government. Members were also encouraged to make submissions to the review.