

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016

Agency - Fair Work Commission

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ15-000234

Senator Ludwig provided in writing.

Question

FWC - Departmental Dispute Resolution

1. How are disputes between departmental and/or agency staff mediated?
2. Are any outside firms contracted to assist with this process? If yes: please list them, please include:
 1. The structure of payments made to each firm (e.g. retainers, fees for each consultation etc).
 2. Amount paid to each firm since the last budget.
 3. When the contract with the firm commenced.
 4. When the contract with the firm will expire.
 5. Why the firm was selected to provide the service.
 6. Please provide a list of disputes referred to the firm, including a brief description of the dispute.

Answer

1. Disputes between Fair Work Commission staff are usually dealt with by the direct supervisor/manager. A disputes procedure under the enterprise agreement also provides a mechanism for the resolution of some disputes.
2. On some occasions disputes involving Fair Work Commission, external firms are engaged to assist. Since the last Budget (12 May 2015) there have not been any disputes which involved external firms providing mediation.