

## **Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment**

### **QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016**

#### **Agency - Workplace Gender Equality Agency**

**Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ15-000242**

**Senator Ludwig provided in writing.**

#### **Question**

##### **WGEA - 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. The Workplace Gender Equality Agency's dispute resolution procedures are outlined in the current Enterprise Agreement. It is recognised that disagreements concerning workplace matters may arise and it is agreed to work cooperatively to resolve any such disagreements as far as is practicable at the work-site level by promptly addressing those disagreements as they arise, discussing those agreements in an open and honest way and seeking to resolve those disagreements wherever possible without recourse to third parties.
2. The Agency does not specifically contract outside firms for the purpose of dispute resolution. Mediation services can be accessed under the terms of our Employee Assistance Program contract as an additional service if required.