

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017

Agency - Fair Work Commission

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ16-000800

Senator Williams asked on 06 May 2016 on proof Hansard page 72

Question

FWC - RSRT - Video conferencing arrangements at hearing

Senator WILLIAMS: Right. What options were given for establishing video links in regional cities, given that many of those submitters do not live in capital cities?

Ms O'Neill: I will take it on notice. All of the videoconferencing arrangements were held in our offices, which are only in capital cities. We would not have been able to offer videoconferencing arrangements in the usual way outside of capital cities.

Senator WILLIAMS: Were the witnesses who gave evidence by phone advised by the tribunal before answering questions that their evidence would be broadcast across capital city registries and recorded?

Ms O'Neill: I would have to take that on notice.

Senator WILLIAMS: Please do.

Answer

The hearings conducted by the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal (the RSRT) over the Easter period were limited to the receipt of witness evidence.

Fair Work Commission staff informed witnesses who gave evidence by telephone that proceedings were being conducted by video link to numerous registry locations across Australia and that the people in those locations would be able to hear them. Staff also informed witnesses that the proceedings were being recorded.

The President of the RSRT also informed witnesses who gave evidence via telephone that the proceedings were being recorded.

An excerpt from the Transcript of proceedings on Saturday 26 March 2016 is below:

'PN1599

PRESIDENT ACTON: It's the President of the Road Safety Remuneration here. We're sitting as a full bench. I have Senior Deputy President Drake and Professor Williamson with me. These proceedings are being recorded.

Mr Bengston, you have forwarded to the tribunal a submission.'