

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

### **QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018**

#### **Agency - Fair Work Commission**

**Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ17-004100**

**Senator Abetz asked on 30 May 2017 on proof Hansard page 11**

#### **Question**

##### **FWC - Appointment of Ms Wells**

Senator ABETZ: I have a number of issues to raise. The first one is in relation to the matter that I raised last time about Nicole Wells and Kevin Harkins and the redundancy payment. I will just confirm the facts: in January 2017, a Federal Court judge made observations that these two people may have received unauthorised redundancy payments when they were officials of the CEPU. I understand that Ms Wells is currently a Fair Work Commissioner. That is correct?

Ms O'Neill: She is a dual appointee. Her appointment to the commission is contingent upon her appointment as a member of the Tasmanian Industrial Commission.

Senator ABETZ: So who appointed Ms Wells to the commission—or which minister?

Ms O'Neill: Ms Carruthers may be able to assist with that.

Ms Carruthers: I am sorry, Senator, I might have to take that on notice.

Senator ABETZ: What was the date of the appointment? That might assist us.

Ms Parker: I think it was Minister Shorten who appointed her. It was a government appointment at the time. You could probably Google it.

Senator ABETZ: So what was the date of the appointment?

Ms Carruthers: She was appointed on 5 August 2013.

Senator ABETZ: Minister, or anybody else at the table, can you help as to when the caretaker provisions cut in for the election?

Ms Parker: September that year, was it not?

Senator ABETZ: Yes, it was! Could I ask you to take on notice whether the date of the appointment was the day before the caretaker provisions cut in.

#### **Answer**

Ms Wells was appointed as a Deputy President of the Fair Work Commission on 5 August 2013. The Minister for Workplace Relations at that time was the Hon. Bill Shorten MP.

The 2013 caretaker period commenced after the dissolution of the House of Representatives on 5 August 2013.