

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2014-2015**

Outcome 1 - Employment

Department of Employment Question No. EM1570_15

Senator Canavan asked on 23 October 2014 on proof Hansard page 124

Question

WGE Instrument Consultation - survey results

Senator CANAVAN: Were those survey results consistent with what was projected in RIS?

Ms Wood: We would have to take that on notice.

Answer

A Regulation Impact Statement (RIS) was prepared in 2011 by the then Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs to outline the costs and benefits of reforms which then led to the development of the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012* and the current reporting arrangements.

The RIS estimated that reform of the reporting framework would, on average, reduce the annual compliance cost for businesses (from \$1,218 per year to \$432) due to efficiencies gained through the new online reporting system. However, the compliance costs were an estimate as the specific reporting elements were not determined until the Legislative Instrument was developed in 2013.

A direct comparison between the cost estimates in the 2011 RIS and the 2014 survey is not possible, as the RIS estimates were calculated on the assumption that each of the 13,000 businesses that employ more than 100 employees would submit a report. However, under current reporting arrangements, organisations may submit a report on behalf of their subsidiaries and the number of reporting organisations is much smaller (around 4,600). The survey responses were provided by reporting organisations, some of which reported on behalf of multiple subsidiaries.

The costs recorded in the 2014 survey were estimated by employers after they had reported, so they are based on employers' direct experience.