

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Supplementary Budget Estimates 2014-2015

Outcome 2 - Workplace Relations & Economic Strategy

Department of Employment Question No. EM1589_15

Senator Cameron asked on 23 October 2014 on proof Hansard pages 20 and 21

Question

Number of approved agreements in 2013

Senator CAMERON: How many enterprise agreements were finalised by the commission in 2013?

Ms O'Neill: The calendar year or the financial year?

Senator CAMERON: What is the normal—

Ms O'Neill: It would be easier with the financial year.

Senator CAMERON: So that would be to 2012-13?

Senator Abetz: 30 June 2014.

Ms Clarke: I do not have the finalisation figures in front of me. In that period there were 6,754 applications lodged for approval.

Senator CAMERON: So that is financial year 2013-14?

Ms Clarke: Yes.

Senator CAMERON: So you cannot just break down the calendar year 2014?

Ms Clarke: We can, and I could take that on notice.

Senator CAMERON: Could you give me that, please?

Ms Clarke: Yes.

Senator CAMERON: Can you also give me the number of agreements finalised between 7 September last year and 2 September this year?

Ms Clarke: Yes.

Senator CAMERON: Do you have any idea how many workers were party to those agreements for the financial year?

Ms O'Neill: What do you mean by 'party to'?

Senator CAMERON: Covered by the agreement—sorry.

Ms Clarke: That is not data that we would easily be able to receive. The Department of Employment keeps more substantial data on enterprise agreements and have their workplace agreement database, which has a number of pieces of data that we provide them, and they compile that data.

Senator Abetz: Why don't we take that question on notice for the department and then, when people read through the Hansard, that will hopefully alert the department to answer that for you on notice.

Senator CAMERON: Ms O'Neill, do you also have a database of agreements?

Ms O'Neill: We do in the sense of we have all agreements that are approved by the tribunal available on our website.

Senator CAMERON: It has been some time since I have done it, but you used to have the number of workers covered in the agreement or submissions on the numbers.

Ms O'Neill: That is not my recollection. It is certainly not something that is collected in our database. I am not quite sure how that worked.

Senator CAMERON: I am happy for the department to take it on notice.

Answer

The Department of Employment manages a workplace agreements database which contains information on enterprise agreements approved by the Fair Work Commission. There were 6410 enterprise agreements approved in the 2013–14 financial year covering around 957,500 employees.

The department has not finalised the coding of agreements approved for the full period of 7 September 2013 to 2 September 2014. For the 2014 calendar year, the department has finalized the coding of agreements approved up to 30 June 2014. Over the six months to 30 June 2014, there were 2,549 agreements approved by the Fair Work Commission covering around 324,400 employees.