

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016

Outcome 2 - Workplace Relations and Economic Strategy

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ15-000325

Senator O'Neill asked on 22 October 2015 on proof Hansard page 134

Question

APS-wide strategy to improve safety and assist workers to return to work

Senator O'NEILL: Before we go to Ms Parker, there are no reports or any documentation around that that you can provide us with at this point in time?

Ms Leon: We can probably provide you with initiatives that are being trialled, but we do not have evaluations of those yet. Do you have those with you, Ms Parker, or should I take that on notice?

Ms Parker: No, we do not have them with us.

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Senator O'NEILL: When do you expect to have some of these results, and in what form will they be made available?

Ms Parker: We mentioned we are doing an evaluation through the APSC. We did not bring that information with us, so would you mind if we take it on notice?

Senator O'NEILL: You can take it on notice and give us as much information as you can about how it is going.

Ms Parker: Absolutely.

Answer

A number of Commonwealth agencies are trialling projects to better prevent workplace injuries and improve recovery and return to work for injured workers.

The projects include:

- Educating and motivating staff to prevent injury and intervene early if an injury occurs;
- Better managing or selecting rehabilitation providers to improve rehabilitation and return to work outcomes;
- Maximising the effectiveness of work health and safety case managers through better recruitment and training;
- Using existing information to identify likely injury hotspots in an agency and adopting a suite of actions to reduce the risk;
- Reducing the time between an employee being assessed as fit to return to work and their actual return to suitable duties;
- Reducing the impact of musculoskeletal conditions in workplaces by improving the early detection and reporting of these conditions and intervening early in order to reduce their severity; and
- Improving return to work and rehabilitation outcomes for people with long term workers' compensation claims or long term absences.

These projects commenced at various dates in early 2015 and most will run for about 12 months. They will be formally evaluated by the Australian Public Service Commission, with the evaluation expected to commence in the first half of 2016.