

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. EMSQ15-000391

Senator Lines provided in writing.

Question

Building Code Amendment Instrument 2015 - Fitness for Work Policy

I can't see any reference in the regulation to rehabilitation or education of workers having to be included in the Fitness for Work Policy. Is that the case?

Answer

The amendments to the Building Code 2013 require all building contractors covered by the Building Code to ensure that their management of drugs and alcohol in the workplace is reflected in their work health and safety and rehabilitation management system.

The Building Code requires that, on Commonwealth-funded building projects that meet the financial threshold, principal contractors must have a fitness for work policy to manage alcohol and other drugs in the workplace which includes drug and alcohol testing.

The Building Code does not provide the drug and alcohol policy that is to apply at a workplace. Rather, the Building Code sets the minimum requirements for each workplace policy. How the requirements for the Building Code are implemented at a certain workplace, and other practical matters, are matters for each workplace.

The fitness for work policy must address certain matters, including how workers who attend for work affected by alcohol or other drugs will be counselled or assisted. This can include matters of rehabilitation and education.