

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017

Agency - Fair Work Ombudsman

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ16-000874

Senator Cameron asked on 19 October 2016 on proof Hansard page 105

Question

FWO - Backpackers Subjected to Sexual Harassment

Senator CAMERON: These young backpackers who are coming in, as you indicated, felt they were being subjected to sexual harassment. How many actually indicated that they felt they were being sexually harassed?

Ms James: Again, that is an assertion that we heard from people during the course of our two-year inquiry.

Senator CAMERON: From how many?

Ms James: I will have to take that on notice. I do not have that.

Senator CAMERON: I hope you did take note because sexual harassment is just unacceptable. Did you just take note and forget about it? I hope not.

Ms James: It depends on how it is raised with us. Sometimes these reports might be incidental, as in they are not complaining to us; they are observing as part of their experiences, in the same way they might tell us about their accommodation and other things. They are talking about things that they have heard about, either with respect to themselves or, indeed, others.

Senator CAMERON: So a young Asian backpacker, a young German backpacker or a young Canadian backpacker says, 'I felt I was subjected to sexual harassment,' which is a breach of the law. Do you note that and then report it to the police?

CHAIR: You already covered this, Senator Cameron.

Senator CAMERON: I was not getting a clear answer.

Ms James: If it comes to us in the way you have described, then, yes, we would.

Senator CAMERON: So how many times did you do it?

Ms James: I would have to take that on notice.

Senator CAMERON: So you can provide that detail to us.

Answer

See EMSQ16-000869.