

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017

Outcome 2 - Workplace Relations and Economic Strategy

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ16-000877

Senator Cameron asked on 19 October 2016 on proof Hansard page 49

Question

Workplace Deaths - Alleged Discussion with the Deputy Prime Minister

Senator CAMERON: Minister, have you had any discussions about workplace safety or, in particular, workplace deaths with the Deputy Prime Minister at any time in the last six months?

Senator Cash: With the Deputy Prime Minister? I do not believe so.

Senator CAMERON: No? Are you aware that, on 16 April 2016 at a meeting in his office, the Deputy Prime Minister gave a commitment to the parents of three young people killed in industrial incidents that the government will establish a Senate inquiry into workplace deaths before the ABCC bills are reintroduced into parliament?

Senator Cash: I am aware of that particular allegation. I will need to seek further information from the Deputy Prime Minister's office, but my understanding is that was not the representation that was made. But I will seek further information from the Deputy Prime Minister's office.

Senator CAMERON: So you are saying that the Deputy Prime Minister did not make that commitment to Ms Kay Catanzariti, Ms Andrea Madeley and Michael Garrels? These are three people who lost their sons in accidents and their view is quite unequivocal that the Deputy Prime Minister had given them a commitment that that would be undertaken. Arising from that, they approached the shadow minister for workplace relations and he responded in writing to them.

Senator Cash: Again, I will need to speak with the Deputy Prime Minister's office in relation to what occurred at that meeting. I will take that on notice for you.

Senator CAMERON: You said that you have not spoken to him about these issues in the last six months. How did you become aware that he was denying the position put by these parents of these deceased young Australians?

Senator Cash: I believe it was a media query, but I will have to go back and check my record. But, again, I am happy to speak to the Deputy Prime Minister's office for you and seek further information.

Answer

Any enquiries regarding the details of discussions held or any undertakings made between the Deputy Prime Minister and Ms Catanzariti should be directed to the Deputy Prime Minister.