

**SENATE EMPLOYMENT, WORKPLACE RELATIONS AND EDUCATION  
LEGISLATION COMMITTEE**

**2005-2006 BUDGET SENATE ESTIMATES HEARING  
30, 31 MAY and 3 JUNE 2005**

**EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Outcome 2: Higher productivity, higher pay workplaces**

**Output Group 2.2: Workplace relations implementation**

**Output 2.2.4: Workplace relations services**

**Question Number: W343-06**

**Question:**

Senator Marshall asked in writing:

Has the Department compiled statistics on the number of telephone inquiries and internet hits received by the states regarding industrial relations issues?

Please provide details of the strategy, budget and resources that the Department has developed or been allocated to handle these enquiries if a unitary system is established.

**Answer:**

Since 1999, the Department's Office of Workplace Services has coordinated, under the auspices of the Workplace Relations Ministers' Council (WRMC), an annual report for the WRMC titled the *Benchmarking of Commonwealth and State Workplace Relations Inquiry and Compliance Services*. This publication contains statistics on the number of telephone and written inquiries handled by the federal and state jurisdictions.

As the workplace relations reform package represents fundamental changes to the existing workplace relations system, it will be essential to develop widespread community understanding of the new measures. A comprehensive communication and education programme will accompany the workplace relations reform package.

As part of the programme, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) and the Office of the Employment Advocate will provide education and assistance to both employees and employers via online and telephone inquiry services to ensure they understand and comply with their obligations under the new workplace relations system.