

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2012-2013**

Agency - Fair Work Australia

DEEWR Question No. EW0001_13

Senator Abetz provided in writing.

Question

FWA - Mr Nassios

In the Australian article I've circulated a spokesman for Fair Work Australia indicated that Mr Nassios would not be attending. Can someone ensure this article finds its way to Ms O'Neill and she responds on notice whether: a. She was aware of the article; b. Approved the comment; c. Stands by her comment that Mr Nassios could have been asked to appear; d. Was not aware that there were public calls for Mr Nassios to appear.

Answer

Fair Work Australia has provided the following response:

Ms O'Neill is aware of the article by Milanda Rout in The Australian on 19 May 2012 and approved the comment contained in that article by a FWA spokeswoman confirming that Mr Nassios was on leave and would not be attending the next Senate estimates hearing.

Ms O'Neill confirms that prior to the Budget Estimates hearings in May 2012 no request was made to FWA by the Committee for Mr Nassios to appear. Ms O'Neill did not consider the article to be such a request.

Ms O'Neill does not recall making any statement to the effect that she was not aware of any public calls for Mr Nassios to appear. During the Budget Estimates hearing on 28 May 2012 Ms O'Neill (Hansard page 9) said that "I am not aware of any request for him to attend." This was a reference to any request by the Senate Committee.

During the Budget Estimates hearing on 29 May 2012, Ms O'Neill noted that on the previous occasion a request made on behalf of a Member of the Senate Committee to FWA that additional FWA employees attend as witnesses, was acceded to. If a similar request was to be received for Mr Nassios to attend whilst he is on leave, the request would be forwarded to Mr Nassios asking him to consider making himself available.