

Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace Relations

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

Outcome 4 – Workplace Relations and Economic Strategy

DEEWR Question No. EW0662_13

Senator Abetz asked on 17 October 2012, Hansard page 104

Question

Comparison of number of industrial disputes with other countries

Senator ABETZ: So we are agreed. How do we sit in comparison with other countries with whom we might be competing on world markets?

Answer

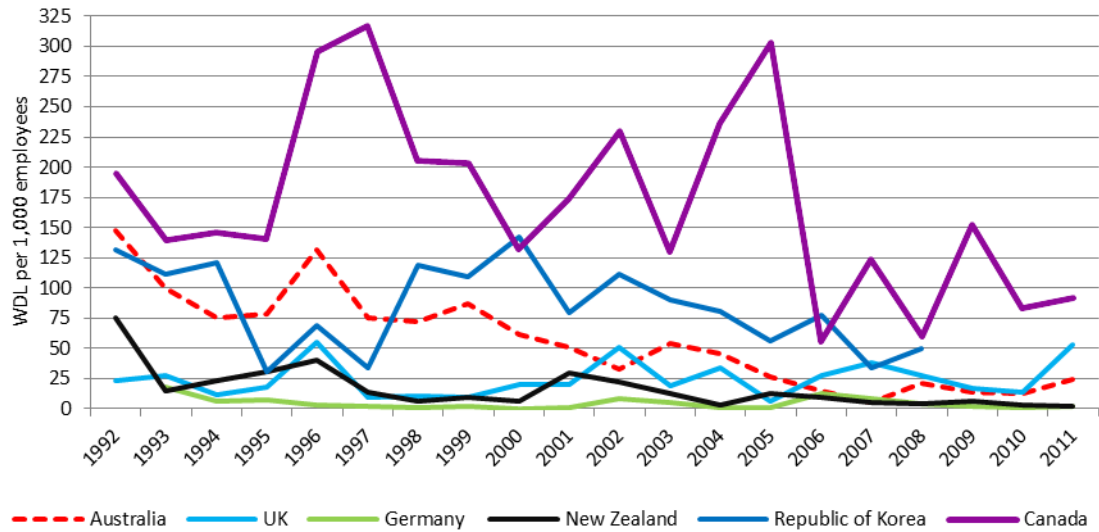
Data is very limited for international comparison on industrial disputes because the data collection methods vary considerably between countries.

Australia's rate of working days lost from industrial disputes is relatively moderate when compared to countries with whom Australia competes on world markets.

Latest available comparisons show that in 2011, Australia had fewer working days lost per thousand employees (23.9) than the United Kingdom (53.0) and significantly less than Canada (92.3). However, Australia had more working days lost per thousand employees than New Zealand (2.2) and Germany (1.9) in 2011.

Recent and comparable data are not available for the United States of America, France, and Japan.

Figure 1: Annual WDL from industrial disputes, Australia and other countries



Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Industrial Disputes* (Cat No. 6321.0.55.001), various years; Office for National Statistics, *Labour Disputes Annual Article 2011 - Table 2: Number of Stoppages and working days lost*; United Kingdom 1992-2011; European Industrial Relations Observatory on-line, *Industrial action on the rise in 2011 using statistics from Federal Office for Statistics (Statistisches Bundesamt, destatis)*; Federal Employment Agency (BA) (2009-2011); New Zealand Department of Labour, *Work stoppages: 2011 Calendar Year, Annual Report*; Statistics New Zealand, *Household Labour Force Survey, various years*; Statistics New Zealand, *Number of Stoppages, info-share, various years*; Laboursta Main statistics (annual): *strikes and lockouts, workers involved, days not worked, rates of days not worked by economic activity*; Statistics Canada, *Person-days not worked in Canada as a result of work stoppages, by industry based on the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)*; Statistics Canada, *Labour force survey estimates (LFS), by North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), sex Table 282-0008*; Statistics Canada, *CANSIM, table 282-0012 and Catalogue no. 89F0133XIE*; Sotuh African Department of Labour, *Annual Industrial Action Report, various years*. Note: Estimates for dispute rates for New Zealand (2007-2011) and Canada (2009-2011) are internal estimates calculated by DEEWR.