

ESTIMATES 2007

Question on Notice

Industrial Relations

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Workers Compensation Scheme

DR FOSKEY: To ask the Minister for Industrial Relations:

In relation to the review of the Workers Compensation Scheme:

1. Why is the review of the Workers Compensation Scheme, which was listed as an achievement the 2006-07 budget documents, identified as a project in the 2007-08 budget papers?
2. Can the Minister reaffirm the Government's commitment to Common Law rights for workers?
3. Can the Minister outline what the reported figures from Insurance companies say about the scheme?
4. Can the Minister outline the Government's position on the protection of workers travelling to and from work?

Mr Barr: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

1. In the 2006-07 budget, funds were allocated over three years to undertake a review of the ACT Workers' Compensation Scheme. The first stage during 2006-07 has now concluded with a final consultant's report due by the end of the month. The second stage will involve a consideration of the report and is likely to include further consultation and an actuarial assessment. This will occur during 2007-08.
2. Current Government policy allows injured workers recourse to common law should statutory compensation prove insufficient. The terms of reference for the review include this aspect of the scheme.
3. The figures provided to the Office of Regulatory Services indicate that the scheme is operating effectively while being comparatively expensive. The terms of reference for the review include this aspect of the scheme.
4. Current Government policy provides protection for workers travelling to and from work under section 36 of the *Workers' Compensation Act 1951*. The terms of reference for the review include this aspect of the scheme.

Staffing profile

Mr Mulcahy: To ask the Minister for Industrial Relations, in relation to Budget 2007-08 Paper 4, page 38:

What is the staffing profile for each of the staff and independent contractors working on Output Class 1.3 of the Chief Minister's Department (Industrial Relations) (please indicate if any of these staff also work in other output classes)?

Mr Barr: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

There are 14 permanent employee positions allocated under Output Class 1.3. None of these staff work in other output classes.

In terms of independent contractors, an actuary is engaged each year to calculate the appropriate devolution of the workers' compensation premium to ACT Government agencies.

There is currently a consortium - led by Australian Health and Safety Services Pty Ltd, along with partners, Canberra based law firm Dibbs Abbot Stillman and Melbourne based actuarial specialist Cumpston Sarjeant Pty Ltd - engaged to conduct the review of the ACT workers' compensation arrangements.

ACT long service authority – confidentiality

Richard Mulcahy MLA to ask the **MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**, in relation to Budget 2007-08 Paper 4, page 38:

- (1) What are the current protocols of the ACT Long Service Authority regarding confidentiality and proper use of information by boards members (referred to in estimates hearings on 2 July 2007)?
- (2) What are the terms of the Code of Conduct that is signed by board members of the ACT Long Service Authority (referred to in estimates hearings on 2 July 2007)?
- (3) What prompted the assurances of Ms Lyndal Ryan to the ACT Long Service Leave Authority regarding her compliance with the rules of confidentiality and proper use of information by board members of the Authority (referred to by Mr Geoff Roberts in estimates hearings on 2 July 2007)? Who solicited these assurances and why?
- (4) Were similar assurances also given by other Board members at that time?

Mr Barr: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. Both Boards are cogniscent of their responsibilities to maintain confidentiality of all and any information to which they are privy by reason of their board roles. There is a Code of Conduct. Also, any conflicts of interest in relation to particular issues are identified or clarified before the commencement of each meeting.
2. The clause in the Code of Conduct that relates to confidentiality is as follows: *"A Member shall not use information obtained in the course of official duties to gain direct or indirect pecuniary advantage for himself or herself or for any other person."*
3. The subject of confidentiality of information available to board members was raised in general terms some time ago at a meeting of the National Forum of LSL Authorities. The Registrar of the ACT Boards informally raised the subject as part of routine discussions on general governance issues at the last ACT Board meeting.
4. Yes.

ACT long service authority - cleaning industry

Richard Mulcahy MLA to ask the **MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**, in relation to Budget 2007-08 Paper 4, page 38:

- (1) How much money is currently held by the ACT Long Service Authority for long service leave payments for the cleaning industry? How much of this amount is expected to be required for payments and how much is expected to be excess?
- (2) How much money is currently held by the ACT Long Service Authority for long service leave payments for the building and construction industry? How much of this amount is expected to be required for payments and how much is expected to be excess?

Mr Barr: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

1. \$2.84m at 30/6/07.
 Actuarial liability for LSL payments for 30/6/07 is \$2.71m.
 Excess is approximately \$130,000.
2. Approximately \$72m at 30/6/07.
 Actuarial liability for 30/6/07 is \$40.1m.
 Excess is approximately \$30m.

ACT long service leave authority - staff profile

Richard Mulcahy MLA to ask the **MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**, in relation to Budget 2007-08 Paper 4, page 38:

- (1) What is the staffing profile for each of the staff and independent contractors working at the ACT Long Service Leave Authority?

Mr Barr: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

The ACT Long Service Leave Authority had 10 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) at 30 June 2007 and it is expected that there will be 10 FTE at 30 June 2008.

The Authority retains the services of two IT consultants who provide all programming, IT software and hardware service and maintenance for the Authority. They are engaged on an annually reviewable contractual hourly rate.

Long service leave authority

Richard Mulcahy MLA to ask the **MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**, in relation to Budget 2007-08 Paper 4, page 38:

- (1) Is there any provision in the rules of the ACT Long Service Leave Authority for a maximum term for board members?
- (2) How long have each of the current board members currently served?

Mr Barr: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

1. No.
2. The terms of appointment of current Board members on both Boards are as follows:
 - a. Construction
 - i. Sarah Schoonwater (Chair) - appointed 1/2007 to 12/2009.
 - ii. Brian O'Reilly (Employee member) - first appointed in 10/1981. Current term expires 9/2007.
 - iii. John Haskins (Employer member) - first appointed as alternate member 9/1998. Appointed as member 9/2001. Current term expires 9/2007.
 - iv. John Hailey (alternate employer member) - first appointed 9/2001. Current term expires 9/2007.
 - v. George Wason (alternate employee member) - first appointed 9/1990. Current term expires 9/2007.
 - b. Cleaning
 - i. Glenys Roper (Chair) - appointed 3/2007 to 12/2009.
 - ii. Rodney Barnes (Employer member) - first appointed 11/2000. Current term expires 12/2009.
 - iii. Lyndal Ryan (Employee member) - first appointed 6/2000. Current term expires 12/2009.
 - iv. Christine Wagland (alternate employee member) - first appointed 6/2000. Current term expires 12/2009.
 - v. Sue Price (alternate employer member) - first appointed 11/2000. Current term expires 12/2009.