

SELECT COMMITTEES ON ESTIMATES 2009-2010

Question on Notice

Minister for Industrial Relations

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Belconnen Bus Interchange Demolition

MR. COE : To ask the Minister for Industrial Relations

In relation to : demolition of the Belconnen Bus Interchange

- (1) How is the Minister ensuring that appropriate safety exclusion zones are enforced around the demolition site;
- (2) Has ACT Workcover inspected the demolition site, and if so what are their findings, and if not, why not;
- (3) Has the Government changed any procedures for demolition sites as a result of any findings made after inquiries by ACT Workcover and the Australian Federal Police into the accident during the Cameron Offices demolition in January 2008;
- (4) What consultation has the Government undertaken with interested parties in the lead up to the demolition of the Belconnen Bus Interchange?

MR CORBELL: As responsibility for this matter falls within my portfolio I will respond to the Members question, the answer to the Member's question is as follows:-

- (1) The person in control of a workplace is obligated under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 1989* to ensure that the workplace is safe for both employees and third parties. This requirement includes, where warranted, establishment of exclusion zones. The Office of Regulatory Services (ORS) WorkCover has been involved in the planning of the demolition.
- (2) No actual demolition has commenced as at 4 June 09. ORS plans to conduct on-going inspections during the demolition phase.
- (3) It has not been necessary to change procedures for demolition sites in response to the inquiries.
- (4) The Office of Regulatory Services attended at least one meeting along with several other agencies where the demolition of the interchange was the focus of discussion.

Industrial Relations Policy

VICKI DUNNE MLA : To ask the Minister for Industrial Relations

In relation to : **Chief Minister's Department**

Output Class 1.3 – Industrial Relations Policy

1. Staffing in the Output Class:
 - (a) How many staff will be employed on 1/7/2009 and 30/6/2010?
 - (b) What are the reasons for any changes in staff numbers?
 - (c) What proportions of the total budget and total staff numbers are used for service delivery (achieving outcomes) and administration (outputs)?
 - (d) What percentage of total expenditure and total staff can be attributed to:
 - i) initiatives in 2009-10; and
 - ii) existing/ongoing tasks?
2. What options are under active consideration in the Output Class for savings and efficiency measures in future budgets?
3. Service programs delivered in the Output Class during 2009-10:
 - (a) What is the name and description of each program?
 - (b) What government policy drives each program?
 - (c) How many staff are engaged in each program?
 - (d) What are the objectives for each program?
 - (e) What is the total budget for each program?
 - (f) When did/does each program start?

Fairbairn Pines

BRENDAN SMYTH: To ask the Minister for Industrial Relations:

In relation to the Fairbairn Pines sport and recreation precinct:

1. Are you aware of any concerns or complaints that have been lodged by Paintball Sports Pty Limited about noise from motor cycles being used on an adjoining lease.
2. If there have been complaints lodged, over what period have these complaints been made.
3. Have there been any other complaints lodged about any of the other sporting and recreational activities that are undertaken in this precinct.
4. (a) What action has been taken to establish the veracity of the complaints; (b) what remedial action has been taken or specified in response to these complaints; (c) what assessment has been undertaken to ensure that specified remedial action has been taken to remove the cause of the complaints.
5. Are there any occupational health and safety matters that have been identified for any of the activities that are being undertaken in this precinct.
6. (a) Of these occupational health and safety matters, was any action required of lessees before activities commenced; (b) if so, was the necessary action taken; (c) if the necessary action was not taken, why not.
7. (a) Of these occupational health and safety matters, was any action required of lessees during activities; (b) if so, was the necessary action taken; (c) if the necessary action was not taken, why not.
8. (a) Of these occupational health and safety matters, was any action required of lessees after activities had concluded; (b) if so, was the necessary action taken; (c) if the necessary action was not taken, why not.
9. (a) Are regular inspections made of this precinct; (b) if so, what matters have been identified and reported on following these inspections; (c) what action has been undertaken following those reports; (d) if no regular inspections are made, why not.

MR CORBELL: As responsibility for this matter falls within my portfolio I will respond to the Members question, the answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

1. I note that this question has been asked in other Estimates Questions on Notice. I refer Mr Smyth to those questions for a response.
2. I note that this question has been asked in other Estimates Questions on Notice. I refer Mr Smyth to those questions for a response.
3. I note that this question has been asked in other Estimates Questions on Notice. I refer Mr Smyth to those questions for a response.
4. I note that this question has been asked in other Estimates Questions on Notice. I refer Mr Smyth to those questions for a response.
5. No.
6. Not applicable.
7. Not applicable.
8. Not applicable.

9. a) No.

b & c) Not applicable.

d) This precinct has not been identified as a priority in the context of other workplace safety cases and there have been no complaints from the Paintball Centre.

Bullying in the workplace

Caroline Le Couteur MLA: To ask the Minister for Industrial Relations

In relation to: Bullying in the Workplace

1. What work has the Industrial Relations Unit done and implemented in regard to minimizing bullying in the ACT Public Service?
2. Has the ACT Government done anything to educate or prevent against bullying in the private sector?

MR HARGREAVES MLA—The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

Significant changes to ACT Public Service enterprise agreements were implemented through negotiations in 2007, including provision for the immediate investigation of allegations of bullying and harassment as an integral part of the discipline and appeals processes. These changes were made to highlight the fact that bullying in the workplace is not acceptable and ensure that all allegations of bullying were addressed as such immediately.

As part of the Commissioner for Public Administration's annual Agency Survey, departments are also required to report on the incidence of bullying and harassment in the workplace and the steps being taken to address these matters. Further support is provided through the ACTPS Workplace Health Strategic Plan developed by CMD, which clarifies executive responsibilities in respect to workplace health and safety matters, including bullying.

In 2007 12 out of 13 agencies reported that they had systems in place for employees to report bullying and harassment, with the remaining agency reporting that this system was in development. These systems included a mix of procedural and preventative measures such as:

- awareness raising with staff;
- procedures and policies to ensure confidentiality;
- access to additional support when making a complaint;
- the availability of identified contact persons for reporting matters;
- specialised training for contact staff;
- the inclusion of information on bullying and harassment in induction programs;
- the provision of information on agency intranets; and
- the use of a culture survey to identify specific areas of need.

The Shared Services Centre has also recently developed a "Dealing with Misconduct and Inappropriate Behaviour in the Workplace" training program for managers and is conducting 'gap' analysis of OHS performance for agencies. Particular program emphasis has been placed on the eradication of bullying and harassment.

With regard to the second part of your question, bullying is a real issue in this jurisdiction, as it is in all Australian OHS jurisdictions.

Recognition of the importance of this issue is not as strong in the private sector as it is in the public sector. The OHS Commissioner has published articles in local journals in an attempt to increase recognition of the issue in that sector and is available to assist any private sector organisation or business where bullying is an issue.

Additionally, the ACT OHS Commissioner has produced a publication, Preventing and Managing Harassment in the Workplace which addresses the issue and offers guidance for those suffering from, or working to prevent, bullying and harassment.

The OHS Commissioner has visited a number of ACTPS agencies, at the invitation of management, to talk to staff about bullying - what it is, what the law says about it, how to respond to it and what steps can be taken to prevent or minimise it.

The OHS Commissioner also works with the ACT Human Rights Commissioner's office to assist with training provided by that office in respect of this topic.