



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMY AND GENDER AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY
Ms Leanne Castley MLA (Chair), Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy Chair),
Mr Johnathan Davis MLA

Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2020-2021 **ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE** **24 February 2022**

Asked by ELIZABETH LEE MLA on 24 FEBRUARY 2022: DR DAMIAN WEST took on notice the following question(s):

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In relation to: Harassment Cases

THE CHAIR: Thank you. I have just a question while we are on harassment, just as a supplementary to Mr Davis' question. I notice that the reports of harassment has increased by 75 per cent since 2018 and 19, from 356 to 623. Can you just give us a bit of insight into why it has increased so dramatically since then?

Dr West: Thank you, Ms Castley. I think it is important to know, so the number of 623 is a combination of all of the possible reporting mechanisms. So one report could be reported multiple times. What I can tell you is that only 12 of those instances made their way through to a formal investigation, where they were referred to the Public Sector Standards Unit, as I said, for formal investigation. And the remaining of those were resolved within the directorates, and indicating to us that their local level responses in that process were ultimately quite timely and hopefully quite effective.

I think in the reporting year that we are talking about, there were only, of those 12, six of them referred to alleged sexual harassment, six investigations only, and I believe they are still ongoing. But I might seek clarification from Ms Thompson about that information.

MS LEE: Just before we proceed, Chair, can I ask a clarifying question. Just in the beginning of your answer, you said that, in response to the fact that the numbers have gone up to 623, that there could be some multiple. It is a direct comparison to the previous figure of 356. Was that the same indicator that was used? I just want to make sure we are comparing like for like and not comparing apples to oranges.

Dr West: I will need to take that one on notice, Ms Lee.

ANDREW BARR MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

The sources for the harassment reporting are consistent from 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. Due to the confidential nature of the reporting, we cannot ascertain from year to year the level of multiple reporting of harassment. Therefore, year to year comparisons are difficult.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Economy and Gender Equality

Signature: 

Date: 4.3.22

By the Chief Minister, Andrew Barr MLA