

Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings.

Portfolio:	Employment
Witness:	Tim Ada
Committee Member:	Nicholas McGowan
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**Relevant text:**

**Nicholas McGOWAN:** Thank you. Mr Ada, on page 13 of the department’s budget questionnaire you advise the department’s expenditure blew out from \$2.8 billion to \$4.3 billion, almost a \$1.5 billion blowout. How did you manage to blow out the budget so badly?

**Tim ADA:** Thanks for the question, Mr McGowan. The 2023–24 DJSIR total output cost is \$4.4 billion, which is \$1.28 billion higher than the 2022–23 DJPR output cost of \$3.125 billion. This is largely to do with the impact of machinery-of-government changes that have been progressively implemented over the last six months – specifically the fact that the training and skills and higher education portfolio has joined the department, with \$2.46 billion, and partly offset by a number of other portfolios that have left the department, principally agriculture at \$504 million. So the net effect is that we have had portfolios with greater output costs join the department than we have leave. That principally accounts for the difference.

**Nicholas McGOWAN:** Thank you, Mr Ada. Can you provide a list of all departmental programs and outputs that exceeded their budgets in the 2022–23 financial year?

**Tim ADA:** I would have to take that on notice, but I can, Mr McGowan, yes.

**Answer:**

- The 2022-23 financial year is not yet complete. Actual results will be reported after the end of the financial year in the Department’s 2022-23 Annual Financial Report.

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Relevant text:

**Nicholas McGOWAN:** Thank you. I would appreciate it. At page 20 of the questionnaire it states that the department has zero initiatives to create any revenue for government. Is that correct – that the department generates zero revenue for the government?

**Tim ADA:** There are some small fees and licence fees associated with a small number of portfolios and functions in the department, including for example a number of fees in the outdoor recreation portfolio related to fishing licences and those sorts of things. I could provide that information on notice. But relative to other departments this department collects a very small amount of revenue for those reasons.

**Answer:**

- In accordance with the response to question 4 of the PAEC questionnaire, DJSIR had no new revenue initiatives in the 2023-24 State Budget.
- Existing, unchanged revenue items for DJSIR include:
  - Recreational Fishing Licence Fees
  - Fees and penalties in accordance with the following regulations/acts:
    - *Professional Boxing and Combat Sports Regulations 2018*
    - *Melbourne Cricket Ground Act 2009*
    - *Professional Boxing and Combat Sports Act 1985*
    - *Major Events Act 2009*
    - *Shop Trading Reform Act 1996*
    - *ANZAC Day Act 1958*
    - *Retail Leases Act 2003*
  - Revenues collected and retained by DJSIR portfolio entities that contribute towards their operations.

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Relevant text:

**Nicholas McGOWAN:** Okay, thank you. On page 129 of the questionnaire, you state that staff wages will rise by at least 3.5 per cent when the new enterprise agreement is negotiated later this year. Can you advise how much in dollar terms this will cost the department in additional employee expenses?

**Tim ADA:** I would have to take that question specifically on notice. I do not have that here today.

Answer:

- If the new enterprise agreement negotiated later this year includes a 3.5% wage increase the cost to the department would be approximately \$10 million per annum. Consistent with wages policy any further additional costs must be offset with equivalent productivity improvements and efficiencies.

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Portfolio:	Employment
Witness:	Tim Ada, Secretary, Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions Laura Trengove, Executive Director, Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions
Committee Member:	Bev McArthur, Public Accounts and Estimates Committee
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**Relevant text:**

**Bev McARTHUR:** Ms Trengove, perhaps you can help us. Of the 121,000 claims that have been approved – nearly 180,000 days of sick pay – how many provided a medical certificate?

**Laura TRENGOVE:** I would have to take that on notice.

**Answer:**

In accordance with the Sick Pay Guarantee Program Guidelines, for claims of 15 hours or more, workers must show at least one of the documents below for the claim period:

- a medical certificate
- an Absence from Work Certificate
- a Carer’s Certificate (for carer’s pay claims), or
- a statutory declaration.

For claims of less than 15 hours, workers must attest they were unable to work during the claim period, but supporting evidence is not required. However, some workers have still chosen to submit supporting evidence.

In addition, randomised audits conducted by the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions may seek further evidence from workers to support their claim.

As of 7 June 2023, 34,888 approved claims had some form of evidence provided (27% of all approved claims). This includes 99.9% of the approved claims of 15 hours or more.