



Legislative Council Economy and Infrastructure Committee

Inquiry: Inquiry into the Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Amendment (WorkCover Scheme Modernisation) Bill 2023

Hearing Date: 12 December 2023

Question[s] taken on notice

Directed to: Victorian Allied Health Professionals Association, Vivek Rajan

Received Date: 5 January 2024

1. David DAVIS, Page 48

Question asked:

Vivek RAJAN: Yes. Certainly. So we did have the Swinburne and RMIT survey into workplace health and safety, and we found that there was a deterioration between 2021 and when the survey was last conducted in October 2022, on all major metrics.

David DAVIS: You might want to leave that detail of that witness, if that is –

Vivek RAJAN: Yes. I will have to provide that. I do not have the full report, just some carve-outs.

David DAVIS: You can take it on notice. What is the understanding for both of you about Return to Work and its functions? How will it encourage Victorians to return to work?

Response: [See Full report attached](#)

2. Evan MULHOLLAND, Page 52

Question asked:

Vivek RAJAN: It would be a very small percentage. I would not know off the top of my head, and again, people will be at various stages. With the vast majority of members that I have supported, most of them come off WorkCover. They will be on it for as long as they need, and then they will get a clearance certificate from their GP and usually return to work, if they are able to slot back into their pre-injury employment.

Evan MULHOLLAND: And of that – you might want to take it on notice – I am just wondering the proportion of mental health claims that come from those employed in the public sector versus the private sector.

Vivek RAJAN: Yes, I will definitely need to take that on notice. Thank you.

Response: [Unfortunately, we do not currently have data on the proportion of mental injury claims between the private and public sector. In terms of numbers, the majority of our members are employed in the public sector, so we see a greater volume of mental injury claims from the public sector.](#)

3. Renee HEATH, Page 57

Question asked:

Renee HEATH: If this Bill were to pass, would it negatively impact the government's commitment to delivering on the recommendations of the royal commission into mental health?

The CHAIR: You can take that on notice if you would like. Yes?

Vivek RAJAN: Yes. I think we will take it on notice.

Response: I believe it will. The Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System identified shortfalls across most professional groups providing mental health services. There are workforce shortages affecting social workers, occupational therapists, and psychologists. VAHPA represents social workers and occupational therapists, and my colleague's Union represents psychologists. The Royal Commission cited excessive, unsustainable or increasingly complex workloads, and burnout as being notable factors in retaining experienced and skilled health professionals. Limiting access to WorkCover will only exacerbate the problem, and this will have a detrimental impact on the ability of individuals in Victoria to seek timely and effective mental health support.