

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee

Inquiry into the Victorian Government's Budget Estimates 2020–21

Ambulance Services portfolio: 4 December 2020

**Witnesses:**

- Martin Foley MP, Minister for Ambulance Services
- Professor Euan Wallace, Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services
- Mr Terry Symonds, Deputy Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services
- Mr Greg Stenton, Deputy Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services
- Mr Chris Hotham, Deputy Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services
- Associate Professor Tony Walker, CEO, Ambulance Victoria

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**QUESTION 1**

**Terminations due to illicit substance use**

Mr D O'BRIEN: Has anyone been stood down as a result of testing positive [*to drugs*]?

Assoc. Prof. WALKER: People are stood down where there is a positive drug test until the outcomes of that test investigation are completed.

Mr D O'BRIEN: Has anyone lost their job as a result?

Assoc. Prof. WALKER: To the best of my knowledge no-one has been terminated for those, but I would have to take that on notice and confirm with you.

**Source:** [Unverified Transcript for Ambulance Services \(p. 7\)](#)

**RESPONSE**

**Answer:** There has been one termination of an AV employee's employment due to illicit substance use.

**QUESTION 2****Bullying**

Mr D O'BRIEN: ...In relation to the People Matter wellbeing check for 2020, what proportion of AV staff said they had experienced bullying in the past 12 months, and how does that compare to the 2019 results?

Assoc. Prof. WALKER: Look, I am sorry, I actually do not have that with me today, but I am happy to take that on notice.

**Source:** Unverified Transcript for Ambulance Services (p. 7)

**RESPONSE****Answer:****2020 People Matter Survey – Wellbeing check**

- The 2020 People Matter Survey – Wellbeing Check is a modified survey focusing on wellbeing and the impact of COVID.
- At the time of the hearing, 2020 data for comparison was not available.

**2019 People Matter Survey Data**

In 2019 AV observed continued reduction in experience of bullying – an observable trend over the previous 5 years of survey data.

Question	% response	Variance from 2018
During the last 12 months in your current organisation, have you personally experienced bullying at work	4% - Yes, and currently experiencing it	Reduced 1 percentage point
	12% - Yes, but not currently experiencing it	Reduced 5 percentage points

**QUESTION 3****Sexual Harassment**

Mr D O'BRIEN: ... likewise the proportion of AV staff who said they had experienced sexual harassment, and likewise how many staff have taken stress leave in this financial year. Are you able to provide that information?

Assoc. Prof. WALKER: Yes. I should be able to. I will take that on notice.

**Source:** Unverified Transcript for Ambulance Services (p. 7)

**RESPONSE****2019 Data**

In 2019 AV observed continued reduction in experience of sexual harassment.

Question	% response	Variance from 2018
Personally experienced sexual harassment at work in the last 12 months	12% - Yes, and currently experiencing it	Reduced 3 percentage point

AV reports on personal leave taken by employees. Leave is reported as family leave or sick leave, it is however not identified whether the leave relates to stress leave.

## QUESTION 4

### Workplace bullying and harassment

Mr D O'BRIEN: And again, this may also be an on-notice question, but how many incidents of workplace bullying and harassment were reported in 2018, 2019, and 2020 to date?

Assoc. Prof. WALKER: The data I gave you before I think is the most current, up-to-date data, but I am happy to take that on notice.

Mr D O'BRIEN: That data was in relation to investigations.

Assoc. Prof. WALKER: Yes.

Mr D O'BRIEN: So there may be a distinction between investigations—

Assoc. Prof. WALKER: I will confirm that and come back.

**Source:** [Unverified Transcript for Ambulance Services \(p. 7\)](#)

## RESPONSE

**Answer:** Ambulance Victoria uses a Health Safety and Claims System (HSCS) platform to document the notification of incidents, hazards or near misses on standardised electronic forms. Employees have access to this system for reporting of incidents and AV utilises this platform for the management of incidents.

The number of incidents of workplace bullying/harassment that were reported in the HSCS within Financial Year (FY) 2017/18, FY2018/19, FY2019/20 and FY2020/21 year to date (YTD) under the mechanism of incident code "2. 6 PSY - Workplace Bullying / Harassment" as selected by the employee (reporter) are as follows:

- During FY 2017/18 28 incidents were reported
- During FY 2018/19 29 incidents were reported
- During FY 2019/20 46 incidents were reported
- YTD FY 2020/21 28 incidents have been reported

## QUESTION 5

### WorkCover Claims

Mr D O'BRIEN: Okay. And can I ask also how many employees have lodged WorkCover claims of any sort in 2019 and 2020?

Assoc. Prof. WALKER: Yes. I should have that information with me. Just one second. I do not have the actual numbers of people who have lodged claims. I have just got the number of people that have put notices in our system of workplace matters. I am happy to take that on notice and provide it.:

**Source:** Unverified Transcript for Ambulance Services (p. 7)

### RESPONSE

**Answer:** The number of all WorkCover claims (minor and Standard) for FY2018/19, FY2019/20 and FY2020/21 YTD based on claim maturation are as follows:

- During FY 2018/19 AV reported 547 minor and Standard claims
- During FY 2019/20 AV reported 599 minor and Standard claims
- YTD 2020/21 AV has reported a total of 307 minor and Standard claims