



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMY AND GENDER  
AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY**

(Reference: [Inquiry into annual and financial reports 2020-2021](#))

**Members:**

**MS L CASTLEY (Chair)  
MS S ORR (Deputy Chair)  
MR J DAVIS**

**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE**

**CANBERRA**

**MONDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2022**

**Secretary to the committee:  
Dr L Kerr (Ph: 620 50136)**

**By authority of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory**

Submissions, answers to questions on notice and other documents, including requests for clarification of the transcript of evidence, relevant to this inquiry that have been authorised for publication by the committee may be obtained from the Legislative Assembly website.

## **APPEARANCES**

<b>Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>WorkSafe ACT.....</b>	<b>1</b>

## **Privilege statement**

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*Amended 20 May 2013*

## **The committee met at 1.49 pm.**

Appearances:

Gentleman, Mr Mick, Minister for Corrections, Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Police and Emergency Services

WorkSafe ACT

Agius, Ms Jacqueline, Work Health and Safety Commissioner and Labour Hire Licence Commissioner

Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate

West, Dr Damian, Deputy Director-General, Workplace Capability and Governance

**THE CHAIR:** Welcome to the first public hearing of the Standing Committee on Economy and Gender and Economic Equality on annual reports 2020-21. Before we begin, on behalf of the committee, I would like to acknowledge that we meet today on the land of the Ngunnawal people. We respect their continuing culture and the contribution that they make to the life of this city and region.

Witnesses, if you do take any questions on notice, please state that for the record; it helps the secretary when getting all of the paperwork together. The proceedings today are being recorded by Hansard and broadcast and webstreamed live.

In this first session we welcome Minister Gentleman, the Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety, and officials from CMTEDD, WorkSafe ACT and the ACT Long Service Leave Authority. I remind witnesses of the protections and obligations afforded by parliamentary privilege and draw your attention to the privilege statement. When you speak can you please confirm that you have read and understand the privilege implications.

I will kick off with the first question. I would like to ask about work health and safety regulation. On page 9 of the report you highlight that the 2018 independent review of the ACT's work safety compliance infrastructure, policies and procedures produced 27 recommendations. What were the five recommendations that you did not implement and why?

**Mr Gentleman:** I have read the privilege statement. I thank members for the opportunity to appear before you today. Yes, there were 27 recommendations. I am pleased that we have already reached agreement on 22 of those recommendations, with a further five to go. For the details of it, though, I will hand over to our WorkSafe commissioner, Jacqueline Agius, to give you that information.

**Ms Agius:** Thank you for your question. I confirm that I have read the privilege statement. The Nous review made 27 recommendations, and we have achieved 22 of those. All the ones we have achieved were in relation to governance, staffing structure and setting up an independent agency. The ones that we are yet to achieve but are

working on are all related to capability and building the capacity of our workforce. We intend to achieve those five this year.

Three of them are in relation to our capability framework, which we have drafted, that was finalised at the end of last year, and one was in relation to succession planning. We worked on the succession planning by offering some redundancies last year of some WCO6 positions and bringing in WCO5s so that we are training the WCO5s who will learn from the WCO 6s—I beg your pardon, that is, WorkCover officers under our enterprise agreement—and our WCO5s will have been mentored by our WCO6s. When I first came to the job, everyone was being paid and were brought in at WCO6 positions.

We also have a training program that is about to start in March, and that program is being run by CIT Solutions. That is quite an extensive training program, consistent with what other jurisdictions do in relation to training their inspectors.

**MS ORR:** As we are with the Office of the Work Health and Safety Commissioner, I might keep going with that one. Commissioner, just as we move through the COVID pandemic and the different stages that we find ourselves at, what sorts of considerations will we be looking at next for managing COVID in the workplace and making sure that people stay safe?

**Ms Agius:** Thank you for the question. In relation to future COVID—and I have been speaking quite widely with a number of stakeholders—as the health directions are reduced, the requirement is to ensure that work health and safety obligations still exist. At times the work health and safety obligations are even higher than the public health directions.

We recently put out a guidance note, which was an essential workers guidance note, which was around bringing back essential workers into the workplace when they were high-risk contacts. We are turning that guidance note into more general advice for PCBUs to ensure that they are assessing that risk and managing the risk of COVID. As long as we have COVID in our community we will be required to ensure that we risk-manage COVID in the workplace. We are doing an education piece on that; our inspectors are also doing a compliance piece on that.

**MS ORR:** As we continue to move through the different stages of the pandemic, and noting that COVID is probably not going to go away, what you are saying, if I have understood correctly, is that we will continue to see obligations for work health and safety and that these may be different to the broad-based public health measures at any given time; is that correct?

**Ms Agius:** Yes, that is right. They are separate. The WHS obligations are there whether or not there are health directions in place.

**MS ORR:** We will continue to see WHS directions for managing COVID in the workplace for the foreseeable future; is that correct?

**Ms Agius:** That is correct.

**Mr Gentleman:** If I can add to that, Safe Work Australia has been working on these directions too. We have, of course, put forward submissions to Safe Work Australia on how things should be operating in the ACT. There is a very distinct website which gives you a great deal of information on how you should keep your workplace safe during COVID and what precautions you need to put in place.

**MR DAVIS:** I have a question based on Ms Orr's PMB in the Assembly last year related to sexual harassment and Respect@Work. Can you give us an update on the People at Work online tool, how that is being implemented and what the uptake of that program is?

**Mr Gentleman:** I will pass over to the directorate to give you that detailed information.

**Ms Agius:** Thank you for the question. The People at Work assessment tool we launched in the Legislative Assembly last year is a tool where WorkSafe ACT have partnered with all the Australian WHS regulators to jointly fund the provision, free of charge, of an online risk assessment tool. The risk assessment tool assesses psychosocial hazards and risks in the workplace. It is fundamentally a survey and it is de-identified.

The survey is put out to all workers in the workplace and then the tool creates a report back to the employer and tells the employer where the hazards are in relation to psychosocial risks in their workplaces and assesses what level those hazards are at, and whether they are at a risk level that needs to be dealt with immediately—whether it is a medium risk or whether it is a low risk. In fact WorkSafe ACT have used the assessment in our own workplace. We have just conducted our second survey of our staff and we found it very useful.

The ACT has had quite a high uptake. I cannot give you the exact figure but I am happy to provide that on notice to you. It is partly because we have been out and about and speaking to stakeholders about the online assessment tool. Because we have found it so valuable in our workforce, we are promoting it quite widely in the ACT.

**MS ORR:** Chair, can I have a supplementary when Mr Davis is finished?

**THE CHAIR:** Yes.

**MR DAVIS:** That seems fair. I was talking about your motion, after all, Ms Orr, so take it away.

**MS ORR:** I did note that. I thought, "That's a bit cheeky of Mr Davis, but we will run with it."

**MR DAVIS:** I just thought it was such good work.

**MS ORR:** Exactly. That is a good point. Commissioner, in that motion there was quite a bit of longer term work around psychosocial hazards; so Mr Davis has picked up on one tenet of that broader suite of work. Can we get an update as to how that broader suite of work is going and how that fits into the psychosocial work that you

have been working on, more broadly?

**Ms Agius:** Thank you, Ms Orr. I have advised before at these hearings that we now have a dedicated psychosocial team at WorkSafe ACT and they have specialised psychosocial regulatory experience. One of the things that we have recently implemented, which is just fabulous, is a tool called iAuditor. iAuditor is a program that is digitising how we undertake inspections and collect and analyse our inspections data. It will be used to measure three indicators, and those indicators are attitude, capability and compliance with psychosocial hazards. The tool is used in the workplace, so it is a field tool, and inspectors can immediately give the PCBU a score out of 100 per cent to let them know what the maturity is in their workplace for managing psychosocial hazards.

It also allows them to give the PCBU some feedback and suggestions around what they can do about those hazards. What we are so proud of, given that we are such a small jurisdiction, Ms Orr, is that both New South Wales and Queensland have approached us, as they have heard about the work that we are doing in iAuditor, and they have asked if they can use the work that we have done to implement it in their jurisdictions. New South Wales inspectors are coming down to do some joint inspections with our psychosocial hazard team to learn from the team in the ACT.

In relation to sexual harassment and, in particular, the motion that you moved, Safe Work Australia have worked to develop some regulations and a model code of practice. We have made some suggestions about where we think they could change and that work, of course with Respect@Work, is continuing around Australia. We also launched, in October 2021, the plan for managing work-related sexual harassment. That was with our psychosocial strategy, so they were both launched in October 2021.

There are a number of priorities for us this year in relation to sexual assault prevention. I was on the response steering committee in the ACT, the Workplace Reference Group, which was looking at sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention in the ACT. That is work that Minister Berry is doing, and Ms Amanda Grey, the Deputy Work Health and Safety Commissioner, is going to follow up with some of that work throughout the next few months.

**MS ORR:** Okay. You said you have launched the iAuditor tool. Is that being widely used or is it still being rolled out?

**Ms Agius:** We started using iAuditor in our psychosocial team as a pilot. We now are using that right across our psychosocial team, as well as in our dangerous substance team and our construction team, and we are developing it to be used in our general inspectorate as well. One of the benefits of that tool is that our inspectors take that into a workplace and they all are asking the same questions on the same risks, which means that we are not having issues where 10 different inspectors go out and 10 different inspectors say 10 different things. So it is ensuring that the inspections that we are conducting are consistent.

**MS ORR:** Have you done any analysis yet of the sorts of things that you are finding through the investigations, for want of a better way of putting it?

**Ms Agius:** Because of iAuditor?

**MS ORR:** Yes.

**Ms Agius:** Yes. We are doing that all of the time. I know that, for instance, last week our inspectors were out in Taylor, as part of Operation Safe Prospect. We did 99 workplace visits on Thursday out in Taylor. They came back and the senior directors were able to immediately log in to that tool and see all of the issues that the inspectors had seen on that day, including, for instance, how long it took for them to conduct an inspection, what was the average time that they were in a workplace, how many PCBUs they had spoken to and how many workplaces they had been at. So that can be done almost immediately.

**MS ORR:** The point I was going to was more along the lines of: when the inspectors go out and do the audits, is any feedback coming through those audits that is starting to show up any systemic things that might need addressing?

**Ms Agius:** Yes, it is. Going back to psychosocial hazards, our psychosocial team are currently working on a proactive retail program. I know that there are two main issues that they are finding in retail. One is that there is no clear workplace violence and aggression risk assessment in place and the other is that there are not adequate complaints systems in place for workers to report if they experience workplace violence or aggression.

**MS ORR:** Okay. Also on my motion, there was a bit of work in there around moving to a more proactive work environment for mitigating the risk of sexual assault and harassment within workplaces, as opposed to the reactive environment that we have traditionally had. How is that work going in moving to that proactive and preventive-type work?

**Ms Agius:** It is going well. We know that if we conduct more proactive visits, the level of reactive visits decreases. We see that even in data that Safe Work Australia put out. As we have just started collecting data, that is one of the things that we are considering at the moment. But our psychosocial hazard team are out and about. I know that the week before last there were almost 100 workplace visits conducted in retail and hospitality, so we are doing lots of proactive work. We have now started to set targets for our inspectors on how many workplace visits they should be doing a week. That is consistent with other jurisdictions, and we have consulted with the CPSU in relation to that.

**MS ORR:** My question was more towards shifting workplace cultures, as opposed to the good work that WorkSafe is doing to be proactive.

**Ms Agius:** Sorry. I think it is a bit too early to tell how that is going from a community perspective; it is a wait and see.

**MS ORR:** Can I get an update on what work WorkSafe ACT has undertaken to start to lead that shift and that cultural change that we all are working towards and hope to see?

**Ms Agius:** It is in relation to our proactive visits that we are going out on. We are also doing some educative work. I have mentioned already the Managing Work-related Sexual Harassment Plan and the work that both Amanda and I are doing. We also are communicating through WSIR on what is happening nationally and contributing to the work that is happening nationally.

One of the things that we are doing is in relation to young workers, because we have seen some of the workers comp data and we know that young workers are particularly vulnerable when it comes to workplace aggression, harassment, sexual harassment and assault. We have a dedicated WorkSafe inspector who is going out and speaking to young workers at their training organisations. We also are planning to do a massive advertising campaign for young workers. That has all been developed now so that we can engage young workers. Michael Young can talk more about what Safe Work Australia is doing because he is our representative on Safe Work Australia.

**MS ORR:** In the interests of time, I think that was my supplementary; you are off the hook this once, Mr Young.

**MR CAIN:** Minister, I have some questions relating to the Auditor-General's report into the Campbell primary modernisation project. I quote from page 1:

The Delegate disagreed with the Tender Evaluation Team's recommendation and instead recommended to the Director-General that Lendlease be identified as the preferred tenderer because they offered the 'best value for money'. In making this recommendation the Delegate noted that Lendlease outscored Manteena on three of the six weighted evaluation criteria (comprising 30 percent of the criteria) and asserted that these criteria are 'reliable long term indicators of a company's ability to deliver quality projects and government initiatives such as Secure Local Jobs'.

That is the end of the quote from the Auditor-General's report. Minister, why were assessment criteria reweighted during the assessments to give the job to Lendlease, rather than the tenderer with the highest score, Manteena?

**Mr Gentleman:** Thank you, Mr Cain. This probably is more of a question for procurement than this session of WorkSafe ACT and industrial relations. I will ask Damian to provide some comment in relation to our side of this question.

**Dr West:** Thank you, Minister. I too acknowledge the privilege document. This matter should be directed towards Procurement ACT and, I think, Major Projects Canberra and Education in regard to the conduct of the procurement itself and in relation to the Auditor-General's findings.

**MR CAIN:** I note that the secure local jobs code is one of the items mentioned here. Obviously, you are the registrar for that, Dr West, so I presumed you were the delegate in this case.

**Dr West:** This event occurred a number of years ago, from memory of the contract in question. I assumed the role of registrar early this year. I think the reference to the secure local jobs code in the material as presented by the Auditor-General was made

in passing by one of the delegates involved in the tender process, rather than specifically relating to the operations of the secure local jobs code and the registrar at the time.

**Mr Gentleman:** It is certainly a procurement question.

**THE CHAIR:** I have a question about work health and safety policy, page 43. There were 72 queries specifically related to COVID-19 by the end of the 2020-21 reporting period. Did WorkSafe ACT undertake any community support or community education activities during the 2020-21 reporting period to support employers and businesses impacted by COVID?

**Mr Gentleman:** Can I begin, Chair, by saying that, of course, managing the impacts of the pandemic has been a huge task in the last couple of years, and we will continue to deal with it in the future. There have been a number of challenges through the Omicron wave and there have been strict health orders put in place.

They have been relaxed a little through national cabinet, as you have heard, and across different jurisdictions. But that does not mean that people in our PCBUs, in particular, are not responsible for keeping their workplace a safe place in which to work. I will pass to the commissioner to give you her outline of the work that they have been doing.

**Ms Agius:** Thank you for the question. The answer, simply, is yes, and I will just explain some of the things that we did. Firstly, I sat in on the Major Projects Canberra meetings which were occurring. I would have to think of how often they were occurring. I think at first they were occurring almost daily. They included a range of stakeholders, both PCBU employer reps and employee reps. There was a lot of consultation and a lot of engagement with all of those groups in relation to what the expectations were to comply with WHS obligations during COVID.

Our compliance and enforcement policy specifically says that an improvement notice is what we use to educate PCBUs. During the period of the COVID lockdown—it was announced on 12 August—we conducted a number of workplace visits, particularly in the residential construction sector, where our inspectors carried out 459 inspections across September and November, with a focus on COVID compliance.

Initially, COVID compliance was determined to be around 34 per cent in that September period. But by the end of October, because of the work that we were doing through September, the improvement notices that we issued and also the education engagement that we were doing with workplaces, that COVID compliance rate had increased to 70 per cent, which was more than double what it initially was.

**THE CHAIR:** Did you need to put in additional resources to support the queries, or additional infrastructure?

**Ms Agius:** Actually, we were really quite lucky. Because a lot of workplaces were closed down, in order to keep our own staff safe, as part of our own risk assessment we determined that we would not do proactive visits at that time, except for the COVID ones. So all of our inspectors were diverted into COVID compliance, rather

than using them in our other proactive campaigns.

**Dr West:** It is also worth recognising the significant amount of work that has gone into the ACT public service framework for managing its workforce through COVID. Quite a comprehensive work health and safety framework has been put in place, based on leading international and national advice, as well as through Safe Work Australia and our representatives.

That has allowed us to manage our service, our directorates, and really ensure that our workplaces are operating at the highest degree of safety for our staff—and also for members of the community to interact with our staff. Through the last 12 months and the 12 months before that, we have developed a comprehensive system, and that system was tested through two pieces of assurance work late last year.

One was through an external review. In the second one, all directorates were asked to review their COVID-19 work safety arrangements and ensure that we had the right practices and protocols in place. So, for the service as a whole, we are very proud and recognise the work that has been done to ensure workers' safety. That flows on to members of the community through a vast amount of work—policy work and program work—and also engaging with staff and their representatives over that journey.

**MS ORR:** Commissioner, you also noted that you are the labour hire licensing person. Can I get an update on how the implementation of the Labour Hire Licensing Scheme is going?

**Ms Agius:** It is going really well, partly because we had significantly more licences than were initially anticipated. The scheme came into effect on 21 May and there was a six-month period prior to the compliance, which began on 27 November. We have had 737 applications.

Initially, it was thought that the scheme would issue around 500. We have issued 674 to date; we have refused 40 of those applications; seven licences have conditions attached to them; and 24 of those licences are still under consideration by the team. That meant that the initial staffing requirement was not enough, particularly in the period just before the scheme went live, at the end of November, when a whole lot of licences were applied for. In November 217 licences were applied for, so we brought on some temp people just to cover some work for that period.

Regarding the 40 applications that were refused, there were a number of reasons for that. Some of them were due to the fact that the applications had not been paid for. When that occurred, the labour hire licence team would write to the applicant and let them know that we could not approve the licence until it was paid. They were given an opportunity to pay. If they did not, they were given a further opportunity, and if they did not pay then the licence was refused.

There were some duplicate applications. There was one licence refused because there was a failure to provide an appropriate workers compensation policy, which is one of the requirements of the scheme. There were some people who had applied for a licence initially and then received some third-party advice and decided that they did

not need the licence.

Now that we have those names out, they are the first group that our team will be following up on in relation to compliance. We have also drafted our compliance and enforcement policy under the Labour Hire Licensing Scheme, and we are waiting for the first meeting of the labour hire licence advisory committee in order to finish the consultation on that policy. So we have started the consultation, we have put that policy to the Work Health and Safety Council and we have asked for feedback. We will finalise that consultation at the advisory committee.

**MS ORR:** Okay. Have you seen any issues with compliance—noting that it is still early days for the scheme—just in the initial start-up period?

**Ms Agius:** Not as yet. We had a couple of complaints that were followed up on, but they were deemed to be compliant. There have been some discussions with some PCBU's who have asked questions about labour hire providers that they are using and whether or not they are on the register. We have been able to provide advice on where they can locate that information.

**MS ORR:** Okay. Of the applicants that you have seen come through, what sorts of industries and sectors are we looking at for those applications?

**Ms Agius:** The highest level of licences is in the computer system design and related services industry. Next is professional, scientific and technical services. Then we have construction, defence, public administration and other industries. Public administration is the lowest percentage, at 7.81 per cent.

**MS ORR:** Commissioner, how does that differ from the make-up of licence holders in other jurisdictions that have schemes?

**Ms Agius:** It is fairly consistent across Australia, We have noted that perhaps we have not got as high levels in the construction industry, so we will be doing some compliance there. A lot of construction companies in the ACT are contractors and subcontractors. There are some labour hire firms in the ACT, but our construction industry is a little bit different to some of those larger jurisdictions.

**MR DAVIS:** My question is about the young workers strategy. I want to acknowledge that the commissioner was kind enough to give a briefing on some questions my office specifically had last week, but, as with all good things, you go away and you percolate and you have even more questions. Could I get the exact number of workplace inspectors that we have who dedicate their time to inspecting workplaces of young people, where we know that there is a disproportionately high percentage of young employees?

**Ms Agius:** We have one dedicated inspector, Mr Davis. That inspector plays a coordination role. I guess that is the best way to describe that inspector. That inspector does our training. They also engage with Skills and with MBA and the CIT; they go out and speak to students.

I mentioned iAuditor. As part of the iAuditor tool, all of our inspectors, when they

visit a worksite, are alerted to the need to consider our vulnerable categories of workers—and they include young workers, as well as culturally and linguistically diverse people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and people with disabilities. They will ask questions and ensure that everything is in place for those workers.

**MR DAVIS:** Commissioner, were the government to provide the resources to employ additional inspectors, would you want additional inspectors who were specifically trained and targeted the workplaces where there are a disproportionately high number of young people? Or would it be more beneficial to have, as you have just described, more people trained in understanding this iAuditor program and therefore able to adapt in different workplaces? Which would be the emphasis you would put on that?

**Ms Agius:** Thank you for the question, Mr Davis, because this is part of my vision for WorkSafe. It goes to what I would like to see at the end of my tenure, which is that every single inspector that we have at WorkSafe should be able to go to any workplace and carry out an inspection that covers everything that we do. Dangerous substances, workers compensation, work health and safety, young worker, sexual harassment, psychosocial risks—every inspector should be able to go to a workplace, look at the workplace, assess all of those things and see where it is at. We are moving towards that, but it may take some time. Amanda and I are both on the same page here. Particularly when you are in a small jurisdiction, you want to be able to utilise your resources as best as you can, and I think that is the best way to utilise our resources.

**MR DAVIS:** That is good to know. Thank you.

**MR CAIN:** Minister, on page 146 of the CMTEDD annual report, you say that feedback from 12 submissions, from 41 stakeholders, was considered and “used in the development of the Secure Local Jobs Code Advisory Council’s review recommendations to government”. How, specifically, was this feedback considered and used?

**Mr Gentleman:** Yes, it was considered. There is an evaluation process that we look at, and we ask businesses to engage through that process, too. We have an auditor in place to look at how that is operating. The Secure Local Jobs Code Advisory Council is appointed with members drawn from both employee and employer representative groups. I will go to Dr West and ask him to provide some more detail for you.

**Dr West:** Thank you, Minister. Regarding the submissions that were provided to the secure local jobs code as part of the review, the thematic areas of those submissions were provided to the council as it deliberated on its recommendations as part of the review. Those submissions informed the steps taken and the recommendations that were eventually presented by the committee through to the minister. So the 41 contributions were considered and the thematic areas explored and presented to council as the review was undertaken.

**MR CAIN:** Thank you.

**THE CHAIR:** Page 26 of the new *State of the Service Report* highlights:

The ACTPS continues to ensure measures are taken to promote gender equality within the Service.

On page 15 of the WorkSafe annual report for 2021 you list the gender breakdown in the inspectorate as being only a quarter female representation and three-quarters male. Can you talk to me about that breakdown?

**Mr Gentleman:** Yes. It is an important question as government moves forward to ensure that we are getting the gender balance right across our employment in the ACT. Sometimes there are challenges with the skills adhering to the requirements of the position. I will ask the directorate officials to tell you about some of the work that they have been doing to try and achieve that.

**Ms Agius:** Thank you for the question. When I initially walked into the job at WorkSafe, we were 85 per cent male. There was a view that inspectors in WorkSafe could only be male, so the only women that we had in the organisation were admin people. So there were some ASO4s and ASO3s who were female, but there were no women in leadership positions.

Not long after I started, I had two inspectors at that stage who were women. I tasked those particular women with setting up a women's committee. The task was to make recommendations to senior leadership on how we could encourage women into our workplace. Since that time we have put on a number, about five women, in our inspectorate.

Just recently we advertised a range of positions in our general inspectorate, and our ad specifically referred to the need for us to have a more diverse workforce. We have asked for different job experience. We have asked for hairdressers, cleaners and across a section of industry so that we can ensure that we are getting lots of different people applying for the positions at WorkSafe, rather than just the traditional previous trade or construction worker.

We are also doing quite a bit of work in relation to encouraging women to enter trades, so I have spoken to a number of young women in apprenticeships and I have spoken at a Women in Construction breakfast. We are trying to get the message out that we want women in construction. Hopefully, that will also come across into our agency.

**Mr Gentleman:** Chair, I am very pleased to have a female leadership team at WorkSafe. They are doing an excellent job and I think they are showing the way to other women across industries that were previously male dominated. So well done to you all.

**MS ORR:** I have a question for the minister. Can you provide an update on changes to portable long service leave and the portable long service leave scheme here in the ACT?

**Mr Gentleman:** Yes, indeed. Thanks very much for the question. We are doing our best to expand the portable long service leave scheme for the ACT. We want to make sure that everybody has the opportunity to have workplaces that encourage people to bring their skills to the fore. I think this gives us an opportunity to do that.

What we have been doing, under the parliamentary and governing agreement, is to expand the portable long service scheme to include more industries. The commitment specifically mentions hairdressers and contract caterers. This work is underway. It will take some time; we will need to ensure that we can continue to balance the schemes that already exist, as well as introduce these new areas. Over the next few months we will be working with stakeholders and the advisory council to determine the best way to do this. We hope to have these changes in place by the end of this calendar year.

**THE CHAIR:** On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank Minister Gentleman and all of the witnesses from CMTEDD, WorkSafe ACT and the ACT Long Service Leave Authority for your attendance today. I do not know that there were any questions taken on notice, but if there were, please provide them to the committee secretariat within five working days. The committee is adjourned for today.

**The committee adjourned at 2.38 pm.**