

Division 11: Registrar, Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission, \$11 775 000 —

Ms L.L. Baker, Chair.

Mr W.J. Johnston, Minister for Commerce and Industrial Relations.

Ms S. Bastian, Chief Executive Officer.

Mr M. Hadfield, Chief Financial Officer.

Mr J.E.P. Welch, Senior Policy Officer.

Mr N. Roberts, Chief of Staff, Minister for Commerce and Industrial Relations.

[Witnesses introduced.]

[10.10 am]

The CHAIR: Member for Hillarys.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: I refer to the services and key efficiency indicators on page 121 of volume 1 of budget paper No 2. Service 1 is “Support to the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission and Industrial Magistrates Court” and service 2 is “Conciliation and Arbitration by the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission”. Through the minister, is the commissioner able to talk to us about any changes in patterns or in the nature of the case load over the past 12 months, and any pointers to what sort of changes in case load might occur in the next 12 months?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I am very happy to invite the registrar to answer that. I just make the point it is not the commissioner; it is the registrar. I think it is a very interesting question and I look forward to any advice that Ms Bastian is able to provide.

Ms S. Bastian: The report the member is seeking for those statistics is provided in the chief commissioner’s annual report directly to Parliament. It is not something that I report on. It is something that she will determine in terms of the outcomes and trends and those impacts on the commission that have happened in the last 12 months. There is nothing further that I can provide.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: I refer to the outcomes and key effectiveness indicators on page 120 of budget paper No 2. The estimated actual for 2017–18—the year that is just concluding—is timeliness at 98 per cent and accuracy and relevance of information at 96 per cent. They are similar figures to the actual figures in 2016–17. Why do we then budget for a target that is lower than that for next year? Why do we budget at 90 per cent rather than try to keep going at 95, 96 or 98 per cent?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: We have not amended the target. It just continues to be the same target that we have had in the past. It is an important opportunity to measure outcomes and efficiency. The 90 per cent figure is considered to be an appropriate target level. It is great that the registry is able to work at such a high outcome that it is able to get these much higher figures. I am sure the registrar and I can discuss it for next year’s budget. Maybe we should look to increase it if we can continue to have such excellent performance from the registry.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: I agree; I think the performance is outstanding. The feedback I get is also very positive. I cannot fault that in any way.

I do not want to make my last question sound like how long is a piece of string: with the review that is being undertaken by the minister into the Industrial Relations Act—I am sure we can talk about that in other forums—there potentially could be significant changes to the way the registry works depending on what the final recommendations are and what the government chooses to do after those recommendations. Can the minister give a time line of when he intends to have legislation introduced following the review, or is it too early to determine at this stage?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I am not quite sure that that relates to the budget estimate for the industrial registrar.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: It impacts on the whole appropriation of this division.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Yes, sure. I am not trying to be obstreperous but we are just about to do the division on the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety. Questions about the review will come up during that division. It is a bit early to talk about any changes at the commission when the final report has not been handed down, the government has not responded and we have not even started working on any legislation, if that is what is required.

The CHAIR: I am hearing the minister say that he will answer the question in division 17. Is that okay, member?

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: Yes, I can ask that question then.

The appropriation was recommended.

