



Ministry of Employment, Productivity & Industrial Relations

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RESPONSE TO THE WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION BY THE HON RATU SELA NANOVO

Parliament
GOVERNMENT BUILDING

Wednesday 24 May
Question 165/2017

I take this opportunity to respond to the written question posted by the Hon. Ratu Sela Nanovo with reference to the OHS Complaints received by the Ministry as follows;

Response

Can the Minister provide the House with the following –

- (a) **The total number of OHS complaint cases received by the Ministry for the past 5 years;**
- (b) **The number of cases closed; and**
- (c) **The number of cases still pending**

Table 1 below summarises the total number of complaints received, cases closed and cases still pending from 2012 to 2016.

Table 1

Complaints	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total number Received	61	56	38	61	62
Total number Closed	51	49	34	55	50
Total number pending	10	7	4	6	12
% Closed	83%	87%	89%	90%	80%

The trend shows a decrease in complaints received from 2012 to 2014 and then increase in 2015 and 2016.

The increase in OHS complaints is attributed to the increase in proactive approach through OHS training and OHS awareness in the workplaces as reflected in Table 2 below. The workplace stakeholders especially the workers and workers representatives have become more aware of the employers, contractors and the suppliers' duties in providing safe plants, equipment, work environment and systems of work and have reported directly to the Ministry any defects or risky situations they face.

The total number of cases closed every year is 80%. The high number in cases settlement is attributed to compliance strategies such as the issuance of enforcement notices (refer to table 3 below) in addition to statutory inspections and OHS management systems audit. The issue of Notices ensures a quick turnaround in minimising or eliminating the risk situations identified or reported through OHS complaints. The highest number of enforcement notices was recorded in the period 2014 and 2015 thus the higher settlement rate.

Table 2

No. of OHS Representatives & Committee Training and OHS Awareness				
No.	Year	No of Training Sessions Conducted	No. of OHS Awareness Conducted	Total No. of OHS Training and Awareness
1.	Year 2012	89 Workplaces	68 Workplaces	157
2.	Year 2013	72 Workplaces	55 Workplaces	127
3.	Year 2014	113 Workplaces	64 Workplaces	177
4.	Year 2015	96 Workplaces	67 Workplaces	163
5.	Year 2016	85 Workplaces	47 Workplaces	132
	Total	455 workplaces	301 workplaces	756 workplaces

Table 3

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total number of Notices	105	163	455	427	142

Moving forward the Ministry will continue to carry out proactive audit of the workplace OHS management systems to ensure the implementation of the OHS Act and workplace OHS policies, training of OHS representatives and committees and formulation and implementation of safe work procedures by the employers and workplace stakeholders.

I wish to reiterate to this august house that the Health and Safety at Work Act 1996 emphasises self-regulatory or co-regulatory management approach at the enterprise and national level in that “those who create the risks in the workplace and those who work with them have the primary responsibility to solve those risks.”

This basically means that the employers are to resolve workplace OHS issues through their workplace hierarchy (supervisors and managers) and OHS committees first and bring it to the Ministry as a last resort.

In this manner, the number of workplace OHS complaints reported to the Ministry is expected to reduce much further.

Sincerely

Honourable Jone Usamate
Minister for Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations