

Question on Notice

No. 204

Asked on 7 March 2024

MR S BENNETT ASKED MINISTER FOR HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES AND MINISTER FOR WOMEN (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

Will the Minister confirm (a) that the chair of the WBHHS is directly managing a bullying and harassment Workcover claim made against her and (b) how much has been spent on legal costs associated with this and other cases tied to the former CEO of the WBHHS?

ANSWER

I am advised that the Chair of the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Board is not directly managing a bullying and harassment WorkCover claim made against her.

In the absence of further detail about the matters referenced, I am unable to provide any responsive information regarding legal costs in relation to such a claim.

Bullying and harassment complaints, when they are made, are generally managed in accordance with the principles within public sector frameworks including the Public Sector Commission Directives: *Individual Employee Grievances 11/20* and, where relevant, *Workplace Investigations 17/20*.

At a local level, the Department and the Hospital and Health Services each have policies in place to operationalise the Public Sector Commission requirements. The Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service (HHS) Policy, for example, applies to all Wide Bay HHS employees, including Board Members and Executives.

All investigations into allegations made against individuals must comply with principles of natural justice and procedural fairness. This requires any subject employee to be afforded the opportunity to respond to allegations against them and be provided with all relevant evidence in the matter.

If allegations of bullying or harassment are not substantiated, generally speaking, no further action will be taken and the matter will be closed, with an outcome communicated to the complainant/s. However, if allegations of bullying or harassment are substantiated, the action taken will depend on the substantiated conduct in issue and the status of the subject officer as a public service employee or board member.