

Responses to Questions on Notice or further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings

Witness	Nicole RICH
Committee member	Jade BENHAM
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Question:

How many staff are currently working on the fair fuel taskforce?

Jade BENHAM: Okay. Can you confirm how long the fair fuel taskforce has been operating and whether the 23 inspectors and associated legal support staff are ongoing positions, or are they temporary appointments?

Paul EDBROOKE: I will hand to the director for this answer, I think.

Nicole RICH: Yes, thanks, Ms Benham, for your interest. We are currently scaling up. We have actually had the recruitments out for the roles recently. They have been recruited on an ongoing basis because, like all of our taskforce, we have got quite a lot of experience now. The sorts of roles that we are recruiting for the taskforce involve things like intelligence analysts, inspectors, investigators, lawyers.

Jade BENHAM: Similar to the tobacco-licensing scheme.

Nicole RICH: We do not do tobacco licensing, but underquoting and renting taskforces, yes. They are all frontline operational roles, and it is really to make sure that, particularly in this current circumstance with the fuel supply disruption event, we are making sure that the laws are well understood by industry and that people can have confidence in them.

Jade BENHAM: So those 23 are on the ground now?

Nicole RICH: No, we are in the process of rolling that on. So only –

Jade BENHAM: So how many are on the ground now?

Nicole RICH: I could not tell you how many are on the ground now, but what I can say is that once government had determined that this was a priority and it announced the new funding, we immediately reprioritised some of the work of existing staff so that we could scale up that work now. As the new staff come on, we will obviously redistribute that work.

Jade BENHAM: Great. Can you advise the committee within the notice period of how many staff are actually on the ground working now? Is that something you can provide? How many taskforce –

Nicole RICH: Yes, Ms Benham, I probably can, but just to note that we have an existing workforce that, as I say, do a range of things, and all of that workforce are doing –

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Jade BENHAM: But how many are working on the taskforce itself with that funding? That is what we are after, just the number of how many are there now.

Nicole RICH: Yes, sure.

Answer:

Consumer Affairs Victoria currently has 57 authorised inspectors, a majority of which are presently assigned to fair fuel compliance activities. These staff are undertaking activities including industry engagement, compliance monitoring and inspections in relation to fuel price reporting obligations.