

## MINUTES – EMPLOYEE CONSULTATIVE GROUP (ECG) MEETING

Friday, 19 October 2012

Room 1R6, Parliament House, Canberra

### Present:

Mr Clancy Dobbyn	Office of Senator Gavin Marshall
Ms Maxine Sells	Office of the Hon Tony Abbott MP
Mr Jay Tilley	Office of Senator Christine Milne
Ms Rosemary Little (via teleconference, from 10.40am)	Office of the Hon Peter Dutton MP
Mr Rod Broadbent	Office of Senator John Madigan
Ms Kim Travers (via teleconference)	Community and Public Sector Union
Mr Tony Nairn	Department of Finance and Deregulation (Finance)
Mr Michael Frost	Finance
Mr Adam Lasscock	Finance
Mr Jon Box	Finance
Ms Hilda Selim	Finance

### Apologies:

Ms Carmel Cook	Office of Ms Janelle Saffin MP
Mr Michael White	Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance
Ms Joanne Knight	Australian Services Union

Meeting Opened: 10.05am

Meeting Chair: Mr Tony Nairn

Meeting Closed: 12.10pm

### **Agenda Item 1 – Welcome and apologies**

- Mr Nairn opened the meeting and all attendees introduced themselves.

### **Agenda Item 2 – Business arising**

- At the previous meeting, Mr White enquired as to whether employment with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) and/or the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) may be recognised for leave and severance purposes. Mr Nairn informed the ECG that he had informed Mr White that employment with the ABC and the SBS is recognised.
- Ms Travers informed the ECG that she will continue to investigate the recognition of prior service for severance purposes by the States and Territories in relation to MOP(S) Act equivalent employment.

### **Agenda Item 3 – Online budget reporting tool**

- Mr Frost gave an overview of the online budget reporting tool that will assist Senators, Members and authorised persons track budget expenditure of various entitlements. It is anticipated that the tool will be available in the near future.
- Mr Frost also advised that significant improvements are being made to the Monthly Management Reports. The improvements are expected to be implemented over the next few weeks.
- Senators, Members and employees will be provided with further information closer to the implementation date.

### **Agenda Item 4 – Domestic violence and workplace rights**

- As this item was raised by Ms Cook, the ECG agreed the item be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

### **Agenda Item 5 – Workplace giving program**

- Ms Cook has requested that the International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) be added to the list of charities under the workplace giving program.
- Mr Nairn explained that the workplace giving program is limited to 20 charities and proposed that IWDA replace one of the existing charities. Mr Nairn suggested that Canteen be replaced as they require funds to be forwarded through a clearing house, which is unable to be done through the payroll system.
- Mr Nairn advised that one employee has used the workplace giving program since its inception in June 2011.
- This item will be discussed further at the next meeting.

### **ACTION**

- Finance to email ECG representatives with the link to the workplace giving program page on the Ministerial and Parliamentary Service (M&PS) intranet.

## **Agenda Item 6 – Definition of workplace and implications for non-ongoing employees**

- Ms Travers requested clarification on Departmental circular 2012/18 regarding the definition of work base for non-ongoing employees and how this interacts with their travel entitlements.
- Mr Nairn explained the aspects of the employment framework behind this circular. There was a discussion regarding the access to travel and travelling allowance for non-ongoing/casual MOP(S) Act employees and how their work base is determined.

## **Agenda Item 7 – Enterprise Agreement Guidelines**

- The following revised guidelines were circulated to the ECG prior to the meeting for their review:
  - Corporate and Responsibility Allowance
  - Travelling Allowance
  - Motor Vehicle Allowance
  - Private-plated Vehicles
  - Domestic Travel
  - Overseas Travel
  - Working from Home
- The guidelines were discussed and all were adopted without further amendment.
- Mr Nairn proposed that the *Occupational Health and Safety and Office Protocols* guideline (OH&S guideline) be removed as most of the information within the guideline has been updated and provided with the Work Health and Safety information on the M&PS intranet. The office equipment section of the guideline will be moved to the relevant section of the M&PS intranet. ECG members agreed to remove the OH&S guideline.
- Mr Nairn noted that all Enterprise Agreement guidelines have now been revised with the exception of the *Recognition of Prior Service* guideline which is awaiting further information as noted above. Ms Travers stated that some States do recognise prior service with an Australian Parliamentarian for severance purposes, however is presently unable to locate any policy detailing this. The *Recognition of Prior Service* guideline will be discussed at the next meeting.
- There was a brief discussion regarding the availability of fire warden training for employees. Mr Nairn advised that the service provider is currently conducting audits on all offices to determine whether fire wardens are required at individual locations and will be followed by the training of fire wardens. [Correction: the training of a fire warden, if required, will occur as part of the audit of offices by the service provider, First Five Minutes.]
- Ms Travers queried what measures Finance takes to attempt to contact employees prior to debiting money from their pay in accordance with debt recovery procedures outlined within the Enterprise Agreement. Ms Travers noted that any

attempts to contact an employee about a debt recovery should be reasonable in the circumstances. Mr Nairn stated that that was the intention of Finance.

- Mr Broadbent suggested a guideline be developed on proper use of social media and use of iPads, mobile phones and computers. Mr Nairn noted that guidance in relation to the use of the internet, email and social media is available on the M&PS intranet.

#### **ACTION**

- Ms Travers to email Mr Nairn the details regarding a particular debt recovery from an employee by Finance.
- Ms Travers to provide ECG members with any available policies from State or Territory parliaments regarding recognition of prior service for severance purposes.

#### **Agenda Item 8 – Other business**

- Ms Travers enquired as to the status of the Enterprise Agreement implementation and processing of entitlements. Mr Nairn advised that all entitlements that involve payments under the Enterprise Agreement have been processed. Ms Travers thanked Finance for their efficiency and assistance during this time.
- Mr Dobbyn noted that his work on the hotel guarantees has been delayed due to work commitments. Mr Broadbent offered to assist Mr Dobbyn with this task.
- Ms Little requested clarification regarding the definition of work base for employees employed under the Relief Staff Budget. Mr Nairn referred her to Departmental circulars 2012/18 and 2010/61, available on the M&PS intranet.

#### **Agenda Item 9 – Next meeting**

- The next meeting is scheduled for February 2013, at Parliament House, Canberra. A specific date, on the Friday of a sitting week, will be advised closer to this time.