

# MINUTES – Work Health and Safety Committee Meeting

Friday, 25 October 2019

Parliament House, Room 1S6

Meeting Opened: 10:05 am  
Meeting Closed: 11.00 am  
Meeting Facilitator: Bek Bjarnadottir - Ministerial and Parliamentary Services  
Department of Finance (Finance)

## Present:

Josh Manuatu	Liberal Party of Australia Office of the Hon Angus Taylor MP
Nathan Winn	Liberal Party of Australia Office of Mr Bert van Manen MP
Loretta Sist	Liberal Party of Australia Office of Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham MP
Charles Headlam *	Liberal Party of Australia Office of Mrs Bridget Archer MP
Jacob White	Australian Labor Party Office of Ms Alicia Payne MP
Kate Sutherland	Australian Labor Party Office of Ms Lisa Chesters MP
Simon Kelly *	The Nationals Office of Mr Llew O'Brien
Kim York *	Independents Office of Senator Rex Patrick
Joseph Wheeler *	Australian Greens Office of Senator Di Natale
Steven Mammarella	Office of the Minister for Finance
Eleanor Kennedy	Community and Public Sector Union
Poni Ravula	Australian Services Union
Suzanne Hopkins *	Jardine Lloyd Thompson (JLT)
Bri Reid	Jardine Lloyd Thompson (JLT)
Dana Sutton	Finance
Sharon Forester	Finance
Bek Bjarnadottir	Finance

\* via teleconference

Apologies:

Stella Weston-Smith – Independents

## **Agenda Item 1 – Information Session**

- Bri Reid from JLT delivered an information session to the members of the committee, which contained information on the WHS Act, the role of Health and Safety Representative and how to work as an effective WHS Committee.

## **Agenda Item 2 – Welcome and apologies**

- Ms Bjarnadottir welcomed the members of the committee and thanked them for their attendance. She noted an apology from the HSR for staff of independent parliamentarians, Stella Weston-Smith. Ms Forester confirmed MaPS' commitment to WHS for MOP(S) Act employees and sought support from the committee members for future WHS enhancements and initiatives.

## **Agenda Item 3 – Review of previous committee**

- The committee was provided with a brief review of the key outcomes from the previous committee prior to the federal election. The addition of a question regarding Bullying and Harassment training on the Workplace Inspection Checklist was discussed; Ms Sist raised a concern from a WHS Site Officer in her workgroup regarding this question. Ms Sist requested MaPS reconsider how the question is phrased.
  - Action: MaPS to review question 10.3 of the Workplace Inspection Checklist.

## **Agenda Item 4 – Actions arising from previous meeting**

- MaPS to review reporting capabilities with particular regard to demographics and hazards.
  - in progress.
- MaPS to discuss with Presiding Officers the option of including bullying and harassment training as part of new parliamentarians' inductions.
  - completed.
- MaPS to discuss with DPS the need to advertise that security officers in Parliament House can provide first aid.
  - completed.

## **Agenda Item 5 – WHS Annual Report**

- Ms Bjarnadottir called for any queries regarding the WHS Annual Report. Mr Manuatu noted a reduction in the number of reported injuries. Mr White requested copies of the previous five annual reports to enable a comparison. Mr White also asked if it would be possible for future incident reports to differentiate between Canberra staff in Parliament House and in Electorate Offices. Ms Forester advised there may be an issue with confidentiality due to the low number of staff in ACT electorate offices, but this would be considered for future reports.
  - Action: MaPS to provide copies of the last five annual reports to the committee members.

## Agenda Item 6 – Staff Assistance Officers (SAOs)

- Ms Bjarnadottir advised she would shortly be writing to all HSRs and Deputy HSRs to complete the annual refresher training for the Staff Assistance Officer training. Mr Manuatu asked if a 'contacts' sheet could be provided to assist SAOs in directing an employee to the appropriate contact.
  - Action: MaPS to provide a SAO contacts document.

## Agenda Item 7 – Rehabilitation Management System

- Ms Bjarnadottir explained that MaPS has included *Rehabilitation Management System* as a standing agenda item for future meetings so HSRs can present any ideas or suggestions to MaPS with regard to early intervention initiatives. Ms Forester detailed two initiatives MaPS had already implemented:
  - Discretionary payments for minor medical expenses for compensable and non-compensable injuries.
  - Enhanced reporting capabilities for ergonomic assessments.

Mr Ravula asked whether this was part of the early intervention initiatives promoted by Comcare. Ms Forester replied that it was and explained discretionary payments are offered on a case-by-case basis as MaPS becomes aware of instances where these reimbursements may be applied. Ms Forester explained that accessing the payment would not preclude an employee from later deciding to submit a workers compensation claim.

## Agenda Item 8 – Other Business

- There were no items under other business.

## Agenda Item 9 – Next meeting

- The committee requested future WHS Committee meetings and ECG meetings be held on the same day and as early as possible in the morning to allow for members to return to their respective states. The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, 14 February 2020.

## Action Items

MaPS to review question 10.3 of the Workplace Inspection Checklist.
MaPS to review reporting capabilities with particular regard to demographics and hazards.
MaPS to provide copies of the last five annual reports to the committee members.
MaPS to provide a SAO contacts document.