



SENATOR THE HON MATHIAS CORMANN
Minister for Finance
Leader of the Government in the Senate

Key Points

- *Elections are required for Health and Safety Representatives for each work group of employees under the Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984.*
- *Elected employees serve as representatives on the Work Health and Safety Committee.*
- *Representatives and their deputies also fulfil the role of a Staff Assistance Officer for their work group.*
- *Employees, other than employees of independent parliamentarians, should expect to hear from their respective parties on the process for nomination and election shortly.*
- *Employees of independent parliamentarians may nominate themselves directly to the Department of Finance.*

MIN 2019/04

All Senators and Members
All MOP(S) Employees

ELECTION OF WHS REPRESENTATIVES FOR MOP(S) EMPLOYEES

Elections are required for Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) to participate as members of the Work Health and Safety Committee (WHS Committee) for *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* (MOP(S) Act) employees, following the 2019 federal election.

Work Health and Safety Committee

The purpose of the WHS Committee is to promote consultation with MOP(S) Act employees on a broad range of WHS issues, including the development of WHS policies and procedures.

The WHS Committee is constituted in accordance with the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act). The WHS Committee consists of elected HSRs who represent work groups based on political party affiliations. Each work group elects a number of HSRs proportionate to the number of employees in the work group. MOP(S) Act employees are asked to nominate as candidates for election as HSRs or deputy HSRs (DHSRs) for their particular work group (political party or independent grouping).

Training on working as an effective WHS committee will be provided at the first committee meeting.

Election of HSRs and DHSRs

I have contacted each work group and all independent parliamentarians separately to discuss the requirements under WHS legislation for the election of their HSRs and DHSRs. Employees other than staff of independent parliamentarians should expect to hear from their work groups (parties) about this process shortly.

The Department will provide assistance during the nomination and election process for HSRs and DHSRs of the work group for employees of independent parliamentarians. Eligible staff from this group are invited to email MOPSWHS@finance.gov.au to request a nomination form. Nominations from employees of independent parliamentarians are to be submitted to the Department by 22 August 2019. The Department will contact relevant employees regarding a ballot, if required.

The WHS Act requires that the WHS Committee meet at least once every three months. The next meeting of the WHS Committee will be held in Canberra on a date to be agreed with the newly elected HSRs.

Associated travel costs for WHS Committee members

Travel costs associated with WHS Committee meetings for representatives who are electorate employees will not be debited from their employing parliamentarian's electorate support budget, providing the representative is not also travelling to Canberra for other purposes.

More information

Employee representatives on the WHS Committee will be eligible to receive payment of a Corporate Responsibility Allowance (CRA) of \$21.22 per fortnight. If the employee representative also fulfils another role which provides CRA, they will also receive CRA for that additional role. DHSR's are not be eligible to receive CRA.

It is expected that HSRs and their deputies also fulfil the role of a [Staff Assistance Officer](#) (SAO) for their work group, or discharge this responsibility to another staff member within their work group. SAOs also receive CRA and are trained to provide other employees with information and support regarding bullying and harassment in their workplace. Advice regarding the nomination of an alternative staff member for the SAO role must be made in writing to MOPSWHS@finance.gov.au.

I encourage all parliamentarians to support their employees who are considering being involved in the WHS Committee and the associated roles.

If employees have any queries about the selection of representatives for the WHS Committee, please contact your Ministerial and Parliamentary Services' Advice and Support Director on the number below*.

Yours sincerely

Mathias Cormann
Minister for Finance

5 August 2019

* Advice and Support Directors	State / Territory	Contact Number
Ms Donna Fiveash (A/g)	ACT, NSW	02 6215 3426
Ms Deesiree Kaufline	NT, SA	02 6215 3640
Mr Daniel Collet (A/g)	QLD, WA	02 6215 1373
Mr Shane McGaughey	TAS, VIC	02 6215 3827