

MINUTES – Work Health and Safety Committee Meeting

Friday, 30 November 2018
Parliament House, Room 1S2

Present:

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| Josh Manuatu | Liberal Party of Australia |
| Alison Byrnes | Australian Labor Party |
| Thomas Moorhead | Australian Labor Party |
| Mia Mussett * | The Australian Greens |
| Kim York | Independents |
| Lisa Downs | Office of the Special Minister of State |
| Amy Knox | Community and Public Sector Union |
| Poni Ravula | Australian Services Union |
| Eva Sarah * | Jardine Lloyd Thompson (JLT) |
| Holly Winter * | JLT |
| Sharon Forester | Ministerial and Parliamentary Services Department of Finance |
| Bek Bjarnadottir | Ministerial and Parliamentary Services Department of Finance |

* via teleconference

Apologies: Mr Joseph Wheeler
Mr Nathan Winn
Ms Helen Lewis
Mr Ben Crowther
Ms Emma Harding
Ms Rosemary Little
Mr Simon Kelly

Meeting Opened: 10:05 am

Meeting Chair: Bek Bjarnadottir

Meeting Closed: 10.50 am

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome and apologies

- Ms Bjarnadottir welcomed the members of the committee and noted apologies.

Agenda Item 2 – Actions arising from the previous meeting

- Finance/JLT to communicate with WHS Site Officers regarding new arrangements at APH and arrange 12-monthly refresher training for WHS Site Officers.
 - In progress.
- JLT to include category of notifiable incidents in the quarterly WHS report.
 - Completed
- Finance to provide further communication regarding SAO program and associated CRA.
 - Completed.
- Finance to include the Skytrust login user guide and links to Skytrust on the pages of the M&PS website that relate to the use of Skytrust.
 - In progress.
- JLT/Finance to communicate with all staff regarding EAP services and ensure there is a focus on the availability of mediation services.
 - Completed.

Agenda Item 3 – WHS Report

- The WHS report for the period 1 July 2018 to 30 September 2018 was provided to the committee members and Ms Bjarnadottir called for any comments.
- Mr Manuatu noted a large number of notifiable incidents related to leaking water. He asked if any of these incidents relate to the same weather event or the same property. Ms Bjarnadottir advised it is likely that multiple incidents could be linked to the same weather event. It was also noted that it is expected there will be a reduction of notifiable incidents for similar issues following further clarification with Comcare.
- There was discussion regarding the number of fire and emergency hazards reported, Ms Bjarnadottir explained the majority of those were administrative items that were systematically being rectified. Ms Byrnes questioned the cause of the spike, and whether it was attributed to the contracted emergency services provider (F5M), the M&PS state office or another external contractor. Ms Downs advised she would confirm the cause but believed it was F5M.
- Mr Moorhead raised concerns regarding the spike in anxiety and stress related incidents reported. Ms Forester explained that each reported incident may pertain to multiple reports of the same incident, or multiple reports by one employee of an ongoing incident. Ms Byrnes asked if M&PS could work to break that down in future reports to show if it is an individual or multiple people reporting. Ms Downs offered that it may also relate to better communication leading to more reporting, and the Special Minister of State's office would be reluctant to start reporting details that may deter people from lodging incidents like this – Ms Forester agreed.

- Mr Manuatu said it was also important to note that there were close to 450 MOP(S) Act employees essentially made redundant over the reporting period and the numbers may be a reflection of that.
- Ms Knox offered that it may also relate to the revised Workplace Bullying and Harassment Policy. Ms Forester said there is also a new mechanism for reporting, using Skytrust.
- Mr Moorhead asked if the statistics for the contact centre only relate to MOP(S) Act employees, Ms Sarah advised the numbers also include contact from M&PS state office employees and from the MOP(S) WHS team.

Agenda Item 4 – WHS Site Inspections at APH

- Ms Bjarnadottir noted the Committee’s previous agreement to have WHS Site Officers located in Electorate Offices take responsibility for WHS site inspections in APH and opened the item for further discussion.
- Ms Byrnes offered that if the Department implemented that plan, the WHS Site Officer would need to be paid for that additional duty.
- Ms Bjarnadottir suggested the option of having an external contractor conduct the inspections in offices other than in the Ministerial Wing.
- The Committee suggested that Finance liaise with the chamber departments regarding existing arrangements.

Agenda Item 5 – Other Business

- Mr Manuatu mentioned there are several HSRs’ email addresses that are incorrect on the M&PS website. Ms Bjarnadottir said she would review to see what addresses M&PS has recorded within the HR management system.
- Ms Knox advised there was a member of the CPSU who raised an issue with comments made during training regarding the Workplace Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure. Ms Bjarnadottir advised she would work to ascertain which training this occurred at and discuss the comments with those concerned.
- Ms Byrnes raised the issue of the building works being conducted in the House of Representatives and the Senate. She advised the works are approximately nine months overdue and is causing a number of WHS concerns. Ms Bjarnadottir offered to contact DPS to encourage them to provide communication to staff regarding the work and expected timeframe for completion.

Agenda Item 8 – Next meeting

- The Committee agreed that the next meeting will be held at Parliament House at 10:00am AEST on Friday 15 February 2019.

Action Items

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| Finance to include the Skytrust login user guide and links to Skytrust on the pages of the M&PS website that relate to the use of Skytrust. |
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| Finance to liaise with chamber departments regarding existing arrangements for external providers delivering services throughout the building. |
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| Finance to ascertain which training comments regarding the Workplace Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure occurred at and discuss the comments with those concerned. |
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| M&PS to contact DPS to encourage them to provide communication to staff regarding the building work and expected timeframe for completion. |
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