

MINUTES – EMPLOYEE CONSULTATIVE GROUP (ECG) MEETING

Friday, 27 April 2018
Parliament House, Room 1S2

Present:

Mr Nathan Winn	Ms Nola Marino MP
Ms Alison Byrnes*	The Hon Sharon Bird MP
Mr Thomas Moorhead*	Senator the Hon Kim Carr
Ms Maree Goodrick*	Senator Kimberley Kitching
Ms Sophie Nicolle	Senator Richard Di Natale
Mr Tim Hurd	Mr Andrew Wilkie MP
Ms Amy Knox	Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU)
Mr Poni Ravula	Australian Services Union (ASU)
Mr Josh Zwar	Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann
Mr Tony Nairn	Department of Finance (Finance)
Ms Tara Williams	Finance
Mr Andrew House	Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA)

* via teleconference

Apologies: Mr Josh Manuatu and Mr John Harris

Meeting Opened: 10:00 am
Meeting Chair: Mr Tony Nairn
Meeting Closed: 11.25 pm

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome and apologies

- Mr Nairn opened the meeting, and noted apologies.

Agenda Item 2 – Business arising from the previous meeting

- Ms Byrnes advised she is awaiting a response from the House of Representatives on parking and trolley issues and will follow up.
- Mr Nairn stated that all guidelines from the previous meeting were being set up for the Ministerial and Parliamentary Services website and these changes should be on the website and a notice emailed out next week.

Agenda Item 3 – EA Guidelines

Domestic Travel

- Mr Nairn asked if there was any feedback on the Domestic Travel guidelines and the format on the website. Suggestions were made that a number of sections would benefit from a reference to the specific item in the travel determination.
- Ms Nicolle asked about the telepresence facilities mentioned in the guideline and requested a link to this information on the website.
- With these amendments the guideline was accepted.
- Mr Hurd asked for clarification of personal stopovers and personal benefit. Mr House explained these provisions.
- Ms Byrnes voiced concerns over notice of the new travel determination not being distributed via email. Mr Nairn noted that the website front page had been updated with that advice and that the changes to the determination were very minor.
- Ms Byrnes requested that if all employees are not emailed about changes, Finance email the ECG.
- Mr Moorhead suggested that there be a standing agenda item about any changes to the guidelines or determinations. Mr Nairn explained that Finance seeks to provide notice that is in line with the significance of matters and, based on previous feedback from employees, tries limit the number of all staff emails.

Travelling Allowance

- Mr Nairn explained the only amendments relate to the overpayment of travelling allowance and recovery by IPEA.
- Mr Moorhead requested clarification in regards to whether or not employees were required to keep accommodation receipts for 6 years after travel including after ceasing employment. Mr House confirmed this is correct and Mr Nairn will add words to that effect in the guideline.
- The guideline was accepted.

Motor Vehicle Allowance

- Mr Nairn explained there were no amendments to the Motor Vehicle Allowance other than the new format. The guideline was accepted.

Overseas Travel

- Mr Nairn explained the proposed amendments to the Overseas Travel guideline, mostly resulting from the new Parliamentary Business Resources framework. The guideline was accepted.

- Ms Nicolle request if the Ministerial and Parliamentary Services website could contain a link to a statutory declaration. Mr Nairn will look into this.
- Mr House provided an update on PEMS, explaining that the travelling allowance form was almost ready for user testing. ECG members will be involved in the user testing which should be in the next couple of weeks.

Private-Plated Vehicles

- Mr Nairn explained the PPV guideline has no changes other than the new format and other information on PPVs from the website has been incorporated into the guideline. The guideline was accepted.
- Mr Nairn noted that all the guidelines had now been revised and he will make the above changes and arrange for them to be published on the website.

Agenda Item 4 – Other Business

- Ms Knox asked what options are available for a Member who considers that their budget for travel is not big enough. Mr Nairn suggested that the Member may raise this with the Minister. Mr Zwar suggested that the Member also contact their Advice and Support Director in case they are not aware of, or have not used, some travel options such as the additional trips for training.
- Mr Hurd asked about the ability to get a converter to sit on a desk to enable standing work and advice received from a M&PS State office. Mr Nairn suggested emailing MOPSWHS@finance.gov.au for assistance. Ms Nicolle noted the Senate has now agreed to provide a standing desk for an office in the Senate wing.

Agenda Item 5 – Next meeting

- Friday, 22 June 2018
- Friday, 21 September 2018

Action Items

Ms Knox to draft domestic violence leave letter and distribute via email to ECG.
Ms Goodrick to provide ideas for next ECG meeting.
Ms Byrnes to draft letter to the Presiding Officers regarding car parking and trolley issues.
Mr Nairn to look at providing a statutory declaration form on the M&PS website.