

**Commonwealth Members of Parliament Staff Enterprise Agreement 2020-23
Bargaining Group**

MEETING RECORD

Friday, 26 February 2021

11:30am – 1:00pm

1S3, Parliament House and by GovTEAMS

Present:

Name	Office / Organisation
Luke Barnes	Mr Dave Sharma MP
Simon Kelly*	Mr Llew O'Brien MP
Jorden Gunton*	Senator Wendy Askew
Helen Lewis	The Hon Stuart Robert MP
Rosemary Little	The Hon Peter Dutton MP
Tom Pretty	The Hon Dan Tehan MP
Nathan Winn	Mr Bert Van Manen MP
Kim York*	Senator Rex Patrick
Mick Jones*	Australian Services Union (ASU)
Poni Ravula*	ASU
Bryce Wilson	ASU (Mr David Smith MP)
Alison Byrnes	ASU (The Hon Sharon Bird MP)
Brydan Toner	ASU (Dr Mike Freelander MP)
Ron Johnson	Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU)
Eleanor Kennedy	CPSU
Kim Hall*	CPSU (Ms Sharon Claydon MP)
Trish Cowcher*	CPSU (Senator Jordan Steele-John)
Kate Sutherland	CPSU (Ms Lisa Chesters MP)
Steven Mammarella	Minister for Finance
Dana Sutton	Department of Finance
Luke Kostava	Department of Finance
Jo Fernandez	Department of Finance

*Via GovTEAMS

Apologies: Lynn Bonanno (Mr George Christensen MP), Mark Briers (Senator the Hon Anne Ruston), Daniel Frost-Foster (The Hon Trevor Evans MP), Michael Heydon (Senator Slade Brockman), Leonie Lloyd-Smith (Mr Rowan Ramsey MP), Tory Mencshelyi (The Hon Damian Drum MP)

Meeting Chair: Dana Sutton

Meeting opened: 11:40am

Meeting closed: 12:35pm

Item 1 – Introduction and apologies

- Ms Sutton opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees. Attendees introduced themselves and apologies were noted.

Item 2 – Business arising

- Open action items
 - 1/21 – Complete – Finance declined to provide the total number of votes cast in the ballot. However, the participation was above 70 per cent.
 - 2/21 – Complete – Finance confirmed that the APSC considered the costs of the EA consistent with its role under the *Workplace Relations Policy 2020*.
 - 3/21 – Complete – The CPSU provided information via email on 25 February 2021 on best practice family and domestic violence leave arrangements.
 - 4/21 – Complete – Finance added ‘sexual harassment and gendered violence’ as an agenda item.
 - 5/21 – Complete – Finance noted that The Minister thanked representatives for the invitation to attend a meeting and noted that his Department and office represented at bargaining and the Minister is kept informed of its progress. These existing arrangements continue to be appropriate. The Minister thanked bargaining representatives for their continued participation and contribution to the development of the proposed EA.

Item 3 – Discussion of bargaining issues

- Ms Sutton invited representatives to share their feedback on key concerns with the draft EA taken to ballot.
- Ms Little, on behalf of Coalition representatives, provided feedback after meeting and surveying employees. In summary common concerns included:
 - the inclusion of an additional six months’ pay pause
 - no floor in pay adjustments with request for a guaranteed floor. There were general suggestions of a number of levels from 0 to 1-1.5% per annum.
- Staff were appreciative of a number of new items agreed including increased Electorate Staff Allowance (ESA) and Long Service Leave flexibility.
- The meeting further discussed:
 - ESA. Representatives noted that the proposed increase to the ESA cap to one employee should be equivalent to the increase in ESA levels to the office and that further discussions are required on this point
 - General support for access to paid Family and Domestic Violence through Miscellaneous Leave.

Item 4 – CPSU claim: Sexual harassment and gendered violence

- Ms Sutton provided a summary of the earlier WHSC Committee meeting where the Minister attended to listen to the views of WHSC Committee members in relation to the establishment of the proposed Independent Review into the workplaces of Parliamentarians and their staff.
- The CPSU discussed that they were keeping their model clause and claim live since the issue is of significant concern.
- Ms Byrnes welcomed the recent letter from the Prime Minister to Senators and Members enclosing advice from the Australian Federal Police distributed by the Presiding Officers

regarding the reporting of criminal matters and encouraged similar communications to be distributed to staff. Ms Sutton indicated that further materials and support when dealing with reports of workplace assault is being developed and would be distributed.

Item 5 – Other business

- Mr Wilson asked how the proposed Independent Review would interact with bargaining.
- Ms Sutton discussed the length of time the bargaining processes take. She explained that under the approval processes under the *Workplace Relations Policy 2020*. Timing is dependent on a range of factors. For example, any proposals categorised as an enhancement require a trade-off which must be approved by the APS Commissioner. In addition, the remuneration offer must be approved by the APS Commissioner and the Minister has to be able to declare funding is available.
- Bargaining representatives asked how they could find out how much replacement employment they had available. Mr Kostava advised they could send a request to the Eacomment inbox for the data.
- Mr Johnson asked Finance for more detail on the bargaining timetable, explaining that certainty of dates and reasonable timing of meetings were necessary to facilitate good faith bargaining

ACTION ITEMS
6/21: Ms Sutton agreed that more information on the bargaining timetable would be provided to bargaining representatives.