

EMPLOYEE CONSULTATIVE GROUP (ECG) MEETING 2 – RECORD OF MEETING

Friday 10 February 2023
GovTEAMS

Meeting opened: 10:35
Meeting closed: 11:25

Meeting Chair: Ms Jillian Flinders – Department of Finance

Attendee	Office
Amy Knox	Ms Joanne Ryan MP
Liz Bateson	The Hon Mark Dreyfus KC MP
Nathalie Rosales-Cheng	The Hon Anne Aly MP
Cameron Byers	Office of the Hon Chris Bowen MP
Reilly Thomas	Senator the Hon Slade Brockman
Michelle Hutchinson	The Hon Peter Dutton MP
Jessica Howard	Mr Bert van Manen MP
Cathy Heidrich	The Hon David Littleproud MP
ECG substitute	Dr Helen Haines MP
Hannah Smith	CPSU
Bonnie Pederson	Office of the Special Minister of State
Jillian Flinders	Finance, Chair
Gary Jolly	Finance, Director HR Policy and Assurance
Simon Bartholomew	Finance (Secretariat)

Apologies:

Emma Groube (CPSU)

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome and apologies
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Chair opened the meeting with a welcome to country.• Apologies were noted:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Emma Groube CPSU• Hanna Smith, CPSU was welcomed to the meeting.• Members introduced themselves.
Agenda Item 2 – Record of Meeting and Action Item update
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There were no comments received on the Record of Meeting 1 which was accepted as final.• There were no Action Items from Meeting 1.• The Chair noted that no comments had been received on the Professional

Development Program, which had been distributed out of session after Meeting 1.

Action Item 1: – Professional Development program

- [Professional Development Program](#) was finalised following consultation with members. Members are invited to provide further feedback.

Agenda Item 3 – ECG Terms of Reference

- [ECG Terms of Reference](#) for the 47th Parliament have been finalised following consultation with members.

Agenda Item 4 - Policy update

- The Chair provided an update on the following policies
Leave for family and domestic violence
 - Currently the Enterprise Agreement provides all employees (excluding casuals) with access to miscellaneous leave, personal leave and/or flexible working arrangements.
 - Finance is preparing guidance material (including case studies, FAQs) to support the provision of 10 days (non-accruable) paid miscellaneous leave to casual employees in accordance with that provided by the National Employment Standards.

Substitution of public holidays

- Members questioned timeframe for the Australia Day substitution, raised concerns about banking of substituted days and sought advice regarding substitution approval/non-approval. Finance advised these matters are to be included in the guidance material.

Leave relating to COVID-19

- Casual employees will no longer have access to paid miscellaneous returning to pre-COVID arrangements.
- MaPS website is to be updated.

Action Item 2 – Leave for family and domestic violence

- Updated guidance material for the MaPS website will be circulated out of session for consultation.

Action Item 3 - Substitution of public holidays

- Provide copy of [Direction 2023/03 Substitution of a public holidays for ongoing and non-ongoing employees](#) and email provided to Parliamentarians and employees to members.
- Supporting guidance material (including case studies, FAQs) for the MaPS website will be circulated out of session for consultation.

Action Item 4 - Leave relating to COVID-19

- Updated information for the MaPS website to be circulated out of session for

consultation.

Agenda Item 5 - A new enterprise agreement (EA) – timeframes and related matters (CPSU)

- The Chair advised the Enterprise Agreement expires on 5 August 2024, with the last pay increase due on 5 August 2023 (3% as per the *Public Sector Interim Workplace Arrangements 2022*).
- The CPSU noted there were a number of issues that members wanted to address. There was concern that timeframes for a replacement Enterprise Agreement may ‘run-over’, and whether some organisational arrangements could be put in place by the end of the year to allow for bargaining to commence early next year.

Action Item 5 – Enterprise Agreement

- Chair to consider organisational timeframes for Enterprise Agreement.

Agenda Item 6 - Set the Standard – 2023 priorities and structures for feedback/employee involvement (CPSU)

- The CPSU sought further information regarding priorities, consultation and avenues for employee feedback.
- Members raised concerns from employees that there appeared to be a lack of consultation with timeframes being insufficient to allow for meaningful consultation. There was also a need for Departmental employees to be consulted.
- The Chair noted the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet had the lead for implementing recommendations of the *Set the Standard* report, facilitated by the Parliamentary Leadership Taskforce.

Action Item 6 – Set the Standard: Consultation

- The Chair will advise the MaPS Assistant Secretary Workplace Culture and Reform regarding consultation matters raised at the meeting.

Agenda Item 7 - Allowances – delays in processing (CPSU)

- The CPSU and other members raised concerns about delays in payment of travelling allowance (TA), also noting that when payments back up the costs can be considerable.
- Members also noted the level of TA does not necessarily cover accommodation costs, particularly in Sydney, and asked how often TA is reviewed.
- Members also raised issues regarding PEMS.

Action Item 7 – Travelling Allowance

- The Chair to invite representatives from IPEA and PEMS to the next meeting and to include the invitation as a standing agenda item for future meetings.

Agenda Item 8 - Other business

- Members noted the timeframe for recent grants processes (e.g. Stronger Communities) was very short and imposed unrealistic workload demands, without adequate resourcing.
- The Chair advised there is an on-line module which assists with streamlining the drafting of grants submissions.

Action Item 8 – Grants process

- The Chair will refer the concerns of members regarding ‘reasonable time’ for submission of grants, to the Finance Grants team.

Agenda Item 8 - Next meeting

- The Chair proposed that the next meeting could be a hybrid face to face and on-line meeting, and this was agreed.
- Given Budget and Senate Estimates in May it was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Friday, 2 June 2023.

The meeting closed at 11.25.