

# WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE (WHSC) MEETING 2 – RECORD OF MEETING

Friday 10 February 2023  
GovTEAMS

Meeting opened: 14:05  
Meeting closed: 15:00

Meeting Chair: Jillian Flinders– Department of Finance

Attendee	Office
Lisa Banyard*	Hon Dr Jim Chalmers MP
Kate Sutherland*	Ms Lisa Chesters MP
Tamsin Anspach*	Senator the Hon Penny Wong
Emily Tyrrell*	Senator the Hon Tim Ayres
Chantal D'Argaville*	Hon Peter Dutton MP
Simon Kelly*	Mr Llew O'Brien MP
Stella Weston-Smith*	Mr Andrew Wilkie, MP
Bonnie Pederson	Office of the Special Minister of State
Adi Roy Chowdhury	Marsh Emergency Management Services
Caroline Fazekas	Marsh Emergency Management Services
Victoria Su	Marsh Emergency Management Services
Jill Flinders	Finance, Chair
Gary Jolly	Finance, Director HR Policy and Assurance
Cathy Stokes	Finance, Director HR Advice and Support
Anna Finnegan	Finance, Director, Workforce and Programs
Simon Bartholomew	Finance (Secretariat)

\* Health and Safety Representative

## Apologies:

Emma Groube (CPSU)

Mary Von-Marburg\* (Office of Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash)

Helen Lewis (Office of the Hon Stuart Robert MP)

### **Agenda Item 1 – Welcome and apologies**

- The Chair opened the meeting with a welcome to country.
- Apologies were noted:
  - Emma Groube (CPSU)
  - Mary Von-Marburg (Office of Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash)
  - Helen Lewis (Office of the Hon Stuart Robert MP)
- Adi Roy Chowdhury, Caroline Fazekas and Victoria Su from Marsh Emergency Management were welcomed to the meeting, to present Agenda Item 5.

### **Agenda Item 2 – Action items and Record of Meeting**

- The Chair advised that all Action Items are complete.

### **Agenda Item 3 – WHSC Terms of Reference**

- [WHSC Terms of Reference](#) for the 47th Parliament finalised, following consultation with representatives.

### **Agenda Item 4 – WHS Quarterly Report**

- Caroline Fazekas, from Marsh Emergency Services, addressed key points from the WHS Quarterly Report (as provided to the Committee prior to the meeting).
- The Quarterly Report now includes a consecutive quarter comparison.

### **Agenda Item 5 – WHS Update**

- Cathy Stokes provided the WHS update.
  - Marsh will continue their emergency management function.
  - Benestar Australia is the new Employee Assistance Program provider.
  - Casual employees will no longer have access to paid miscellaneous returning to pre-COVID arrangements.
  - The MaPS WHS website information is currently being reviewed, including a review of WHS roles.
- The Chair advised that reporting of COVID-19 via Skytrust remains important to inform planning.

#### **Action Item 1 - EAP contact cards**

- To be updated for Benestar Australia.

#### **Action Item 2 – MaPS website under review (e.g. emergency management)**

- Feedback invited from WHSC members, out of session, to the [MOPSWHS@finance.gov.au](mailto:MOPSWHS@finance.gov.au) in-box.

#### **Action Item 3 - COVID leave arrangements)**

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

consultation.

#### **Agenda Item 5 – Safe and Respectful Workplace training**

- Anna Finnegan, Director, Workforce and Programs, was welcomed to the meeting and provided an update on the Safe and Respectful Workplace training, which acknowledged issues raised by the CPSU and other feedback.

#### **Agenda Item 6 – Other business**

##### HSR Training

- The CPSU and other representatives noted that the process to apply for HSR training was not clear or accessible.
- Arrangements for travel and access to other workplaces for appropriately trained HSRs was also not clear.

##### Set the Standard

- The CPSU and other representatives 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 that the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet had the lead for implementing recommendations of the Set the Standard report, with implementation being facilitated by the Parliamentary Leadership Taskforce.

##### Access to WHS items for the office

- The availability of WHS items for the office was raised, along with a complex business case process to acquire new items (e.g. acquiring a lightweight trolley).

##### Family friendly work hours

- An issue was raised regarding the management of family friendly work hours against work expectations and sitting schedules. This arose towards the end of last year with additional sitting days added and employees recalled from holidays and family events.
- These work health and safety concerns should be acknowledged when considering future parliamentary sitting hours and work arrangements.
- The Chair noted that MaPS have no ability to influence the House of Representatives and Senate, but they can communicate the concern to the Usher of the Black Rod.

##### Grants process

- WHSC members noted that the timeframe for recent grants processes (e.g. Stronger Communities) was very short and imposed unrealistic workload demands, without adequate resourcing. (This was also raised at the Employee Consultative Group meeting in the morning.)
- The Chair advised that she will refer this matter to the Grants team, noting the requirement for 'reasonable time' to respond.

#### **Action Item 4 – HSR training**

- Clarify and provide advice regarding training application process.

**Action Item 5 - HSR travel and access to other workplaces**

- Chair to discuss with CPSU out of session.

**Action Item 6 - Set the Standard**

- Chair to facilitate joint ECG/WHSC joint meeting.

**Action Item 7 - Availability and process for obtaining WHS items**

- HR Advice and Support to review process and item availability.
- Committee members to provide feedback regarding process and item availability.

**Action Item 8 - Family friendly working hours.**

- Committee member concerns to be raised with the Usher of the Black Rod.

**Action Item 9 - Grants process: WHSC concern regarding a reasonable timeframe to respond**

- Chair to raise with 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 are in May it was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Friday, 16 June 2023.

The meeting closed at 15:00