

OFFICIAL

WHS Committee - Minutes

Meeting 7 – Wednesday, 12 June 2024, MS Teams

Meeting opened: 3:05 pm (AEDT)

Meeting closed: 4:02 pm (AEDT)

Attendees

Meeting chair: Kate Wandmaker, Deputy Chief Executive Officer – PWSS.

Attendees	Office
Lisa Banyard*	Hon Dr Jim Chalmers MP
Susan Kappel*	Mr Alex Antic MP
Guy Mosel*	Senator Allman-Payne
Sienna Parrott*	Senator Larissa Waters
Kate Sutherland*	Ms Lisa Chesters MP
Jess Stone	CPSU
Brendan Macnamara	Director – Parliamentary Business Resources, Ministerial and Parliamentary Services, Department of Finance
Sandra Fisher	PWSS, Director – WHS
Mila Logan	PWSS, Assistant Director – WHS

* Health and Safety Representative

Apologies

- Tamsin Anspach* – Senator the Hon Penny Wong
- Leanne Coleman* – Hon Kristy McBain
- Chantal D’Argaville* – Office of Hon Peter Dutton MP
- Hafiz Jan* – Ms Cassandra Fernando MP
- Cathy Heidrich* – Office of David Littleproud MP
- HSR* – Dr Helen Haines MP
- Simon Kelly* – Mr Llew O’Brien MP
- Bonnie Pederson – Office of the Special Minister of State
- Emily Tyrrell* – Office of Senator the Hon Tim Ayres
- Mary Von-Marburg* – Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash
- Scott Mitschke – PWSS Chief People Officer
- Joshua Polak – USU
- Emma Groube – CPSU
- Hannah Smith – CPSU

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Agenda Item 1 – Welcome and apologies

The Chair opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country, thanking members for their participation. The following updates were noted:

- Apologies from Scott Mischke, Melissa Corlis, Joshua Polak, HSR Helen Haines Office, Chantal D'Argaville, Emma Garbutt.
- PWSS' new website is currently under development. Once completed, PWSS will have complete control over website functions with simplified, user-friendly access to information and resources, and we hope, capability for online WHS role nominations, workstation assessments requests, and incident and hazard reports submissions, which will come directly to the WHS team.
- Recruitment activity is ongoing. Improvements to service delivery timeframes are anticipated with new staff recently commencing in the HR Advice and Workforce Strategy teams, and new members expected in the WHS team.
- Flu vaccination program data is currently showing a 20% participation rate of all MOPS staff. Members were encouraged to promote flu vaccination program participation with pharmacy vouchers available until 31 July 2024.
- Members discussed contributing factors to low vaccination uptake, including issues with reimbursement requests via PEMS usability, while noting that the vaccination portal and additional vaccination options offered this year have improved overall program uptake. It was also noted that Queensland currently offers free flu vaccinations.
- Members discussed options for including additional APH vaccination clinics and consideration to onsite vaccination clinics in each state in future.
- Specific issues relating to CCTV were discussed and it was agreed by the Committee Chair that the PWSS would raise with the Department of Finance as the relevant agency.
- The CPSU (Jess Stone) raised specific reporting mechanisms for incident reporting, not only Skytrust. It was noted that the order of reporting mechanisms has been changed to frontload phone, email reporting ahead of Skytrust incident reporting.
- Members discussed the requirements for incident reporting and the frequency and mechanism for reporting incidents and hazards. The escalation in protestor related incidents was particularly noted, with offices reporting fatigue from constant readjustment to unexpected protestor events.
- Members agreed to convene an optional WHSC meeting to discuss protestor-related incidents, with an extended invitation to MaPS for input from an emergency management perspective.

ACTION ITEM 1: PWSS WHS Secretariat to invite Members to optional WHSC meeting on Wednesday, 24 July 2024

ACTION ITEM 2: PWSS WHS to clarify CCTV issues with Ministerial and Parliamentary Services (Department of Finance).

Agenda Item 2 – WHS quarterly report & Action Items update

Sandra Fisher (Director, PWSS WHS) provided the following updates:

DPS smoking and vaping policy

- No comments raised on this occasion.

Building fire safety requirements for offices

- No comments raised on this occasion.

PWSS Academy – WHS training modules, Mental Health First Aid Training

- The WHS risk management online training module will be updated to include key legislative changes, including code of practice updates.
- All training modules will be reviewed, and where appropriate, updated and developed in-house.

Human Resources Advisory Panel

- The 11 June PLT meeting was postponed, and a new date is yet to be announced. The Impairment Policy will be released after consultation at the rescheduled PLT meeting.
- The next meeting of the HR Advisory Panel is scheduled for 11 July. PWSS WHS is attending with other members from the CPW entities.

Statistics

- The incident data report was sent out just prior to the meeting with several reporting changes made. Protestor and graffiti and constituent aggression incident data are now distinctly categorised, with additional data from other reporting sources, such as reports received from MaPS and notice in advance of protestor activity.
- The CPSU (Jess Stone) suggested changing the order of reporting mechanisms in relevant communications to phone and email, followed by incident reporting through Skytrust.

Agenda Item 3 – Standing Items (*Chair*)

Psychosocial hazards and psychological injury

- Discussed in previous agenda item.

Family friendly working hours

- This is a standing item but there were no comments raised on this occasion.

WHS Review

- The CPSU (Jess Stone) noted the APH focus of the Dignified Access Review, inquired about scope to include electorate offices in the package of recommendations. The Chair noted the opportunity for broader discussion with the Department of Parliamentary Services.

ACTION ITEM 3: PWSS to relay CPSU feedback regarding inclusion of electorate offices in Dignified Access Review Report.

Resources Review

- The Chair noted Review Head Ms Debbie Arnold has departed PWSS to take up an opportunity in another Government Department. A process is currently underway to identify a new Review Head, with announcements to be made in due course.
- The Review team has had 23 engagements with Parliamentary offices to date (approximately one-third of all planned engagements).
- A survey is in development which will be circulated to all Parliamentary offices and their staff. Circulation will include all *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* employees, including those who did not have face-to-face engagement with the Review team.
- The Review team has consultation sessions planned with the Community Public Sector Union and the United Services Union in July and August.
- Report recommendations will be provided to the Prime Minister and to the Special Minister of State who will then decide on its distribution.

- The Chair noted the CPSU request to be provided with a copy of the report, noting that this is a decision for the Government.

Agenda Item 3 – Other Business

Workload and working hours

- The Chair noted no concerns had been raised regarding excessive or high workload and/or working hours from a WHS perspective but may have been raised through other forums such as the Case Coordination Team.

Federal Election

- The Chair noted the responsibility of Parliamentarians for identifying their workforce requirements, to recruit accordingly for the federal election cycle. To support this, PWSS is simplifying the recruitment and engagement process, with resources expected to be available by the next election.
- The Case Coordination Team is available to assist staff through these challenging periods with planning for change or career transition options.
- The Learning and Development team are developing a wellbeing workshop to assist staff in proactively recognising, managing, and responding to workload issues, including guidance on managing wellbeing through self-regulation.

Agenda Item 4 – Next meetings and close

- The Chair thanked members for their attendance and contributions and reconfirmed Meeting 8 on **Wednesday, 4 September 2024.**
- Members agreed to convene an optional meeting on Wednesday, 24 July 2024.
- The meeting closed at 4:02 pm.