

EMPLOYEE CONSULTATIVE GROUP (ECG) MEETING 8 – RECORD OF MEETING

Thursday 6 March 2025
MS Teams

Meeting opened: 11:03am AEDT
Meeting closed: 12:04pm AEDT

Meeting Chair: Ms Amanda Bruce, Assistant Secretary, HR Frameworks

Attendee	Office
Bryce Wilson	Mr David Smith MP
Liz Bateson	The Hon Mark Dreyfus KC MP
Michelle Hutchison	The Hon Peter Dutton MP
Kym Chapple	Senator David Shoebridge
Emma Groube	Community and Public Sector Union
Joshua Polak	United Services Union
Jessica Ewing	Parliamentary Workplace Support Service (PWSS)
Anupam Sharma	Finance, MaPS (observer)
Felix McCarthy	Finance, MaPS (Secretariat)

Due to privacy arrangements some attendee details have been removed from this list

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome and apologies

- The Chair opened the meeting with an acknowledgement of country.
- Members in attendance introduced themselves.
- Apologies were noted:
 - Sofia Wilson, Office of Senator the Hon Sue Lines
 - Amy Knox, Office of Ms Joanne Ryan MP
 - Jessica Howard, Office of Mr Bert Van Manen MP
 - Nathalie Rosales-Cheng, Office of the Hon Anne Aly MP
 - Connor Wherrett, Office of the Hon Chris Bowen MP
 - Leonie Lloyd-Smith, Office of Mr Rowan Ramsey MP
 - Cathy Heidrich, Office of the Hon David Littleproud MP

Agenda Item 2 – Enterprise Agreement implementation updates

- The Chair raised the draft minutes from ECG meeting 7 for input by members. The draft minutes from ECG meeting 7 were agreed to without change.
- The Chair updated the group on implementation of the Enterprise Agreement, beginning with changes to casual contracts. The Chair noted positive feedback received by offices, and difficulties that have also been encountered by offices in adopting the new process. A member noted that this was consistent with feedback that the CPSU has received from its members.

- A member queried why paper contracts cannot be used for casual employees, noting that some employment engagements may only be for a brief period. The Chair advised that paper contracts resulted in a higher rate of error than the digital versions, which was part of the rationale for the transition over to the digital version.
- The Chair raised the changes to fixed term employment procedures for MOP(S) Act employees, as a result of the amendments to the *Fair Work Act 2009*. The Chair advised that Finance has been working closely with the PWSS to facilitate these changes flowing through when the renewal of contracts occur, and that PWSS is proactively contacting all offices.
- The Chair raised the updated process for the crediting of Excess Canberra Travel Leave (ECTL) and advised that the reporting requirements for ECTL is being finalised with IPEA, as well as the timeframe for submitting claims. The Chair advised that a bulk leave credit will be assigned to eligible employees, and employees will be notified of receiving this credit.
- The Chair raised the issue of superannuation not being calculated on payments of Nominated Traveller Allowance (NTA), which was raised by an ECG member in the previous meeting. The Chair advised that this issue had been fixed by the end of the pay 13 fortnight (payday 19 December 2024).
- The Chair raised the behaviour codes discussed in the previous meeting and invited input from members once the responsible parliamentary committee was reconstituted following the upcoming Federal election.

Agenda Item 3 – Updated determinations

- The Chair raised the recent determinations signed into effect by the Special Minister of State: the *Parliamentary Business Resources (Parliamentary Business) Determination 2025*; the *Members of Parliament (Staff) (Employee Direction) Determination 2025*; and the *Members of Parliament (Staff) (Employment Arrangements) Determination 2025*. The Chair advised guidance regarding the changes contained in these determinations would be circulated to employees soon.
- A member queried the office structure section of the *Members of Parliament (Staff) (Employment Arrangements) Determination 2025* in regard to the resourcing review. The Chair advised that the resourcing review is currently with the office of the Special Minister of State.

Agenda Item 4 – Policy updates

- The Chair advised that feedback on the Additional Hours guideline and the Leave and Public Holidays Guideline had been incorporated, and these updated versions would be circulated in advance of the out-of-session meeting for discussion.
- The Chair advised that the policy prioritisation table had been updated to show the status of each policy update, and advised that it would be a standing item to be circulated in ECG meeting document packs.
- The Chair advised that Finance is seeking written, consolidated feedback on the Salary Sacrifice and Delegates Rights guidelines.

- On Salary Sacrifice, the Chair advised that the transition to in-house processing of salary sacrificing for superannuation was underway, and the legal team are reviewing the terms of the arrangement. The Chair noted that this arrangement was to be in place by May 2025.
- A member asked to confirm that fees would not be charged on salary sacrifice contributions to superannuation. This was confirmed to be the case.
- On the Delegates Rights guideline, a member noted an inconsistency between the delegates rights provisions within the *Commonwealth Members of Staff Enterprise Agreement 2024-27* and the draft guideline (written comments would be provided outlining the issue).
- The Chair invited the PWSS to discuss the draft Probation policy. A member advised they found no issues with their first read of the policy, however, they did enquire if there was some method for Parliamentarians and their office managers to be informed of when probation periods were coming to an end.
- A member raised an instance of an employee on probation who was denied access to their leave entitlements. The member raised whether information could be added to the guideline to confirm that employees on probation still have access to leave entitlements.

Agenda Item 5 – Classification review

- The Chair raised the classification review process and advised that procurement was on track and underway.
- The Chair advised that the request to circulate the previous classification review was still pending consideration by the office of the Special Minister of State. The Chair advised that this would remain an action item until the status of circulating the previous classification review is confirmed given it was not released by the prior Government.

Agenda Item 6 – Other business

- No other matters were raised.

Agenda Item 7 – Next Meeting

- The Chair concluded the meeting.
- The meeting closed at 12:04 PM AEDT.