



Employee Consultative Group – Terms of Reference

Introduction

1. Clause 8.1 of the Commonwealth Members of Parliament Staff Enterprise Agreement 2024-2027 (MOPS EA) provides for the establishment of an Employee Consultative Group (ECG) to be 'consulted on workplace issues pertaining to employees generally (as opposed to issues relating to individual employees or individual offices)'.

Agreement

2. The ECG agrees to use its best endeavours to consult, communicate, negotiate and advance matters brought before it promptly.

Role of the ECG

3. The role of the ECG is to:
 - a. Provide a forum for staff employed under the MOPS EA to raise matters of interest about the workplace or their employment;
 - b. Consult with staff employed under the MOPS EA on workplace and employment matters which may be raised by the ECG, by staff employed under the Enterprise Agreement and their representatives, by the Minister, by the Department of Finance or by other relevant organisations;
 - c. convey to the Minister, in their management role of the Members of Parliament Staff 1984 Act (MOP(S) Act) employment framework, the views of MOP(S) Act employees on workplace and employment matters;
 - d. prepare advice and recommendations to the Minister on workplace and employment matters affecting staff employed under the MOPS EA;
 - e. be promptly consulted by the Department of Finance on proposed changes to, or establishment of, guidelines or policies in relation to the Enterprise Agreement, where the proposed change affects employees; and
 - f. be promptly consulted by the Department of Finance on the operation and application of the MOPS EA.
4. The Department of Finance undertakes to include the views and recommendations of the ECG in relevant briefings to the Minister and to report back to the ECG at each meeting.

ECG Composition

5. The ECG is comprised of:
 - a. Employee representatives from all political parties on a proportional basis to party staff numbers, to be selected by employees covered by the MOPS EA;
 - b. Employer representatives, including a nominee of the Minister and/or representatives of the Department; and
 - c. A representative of each union covered by the MOPS EA.

ECG Representation

6. Work groups for MOP(S) Act employees will be based on party lines, with a number of ECG representatives and reserve representatives being allocated to work groups proportionate to the number of employees in each party.
7. Each work group is responsible for the election of its representatives. The Department of Finance is able to assist employees of Independent Senators and Members and Minority Parties during the nomination and election process for ECG representatives and reserves.
8. In addition, reserves from each work group may attend meetings as a substitute employee representative if an ECG representative for their work group is unavailable. It is the responsibility of the ECG representative to arrange a reserve to attend any meetings they are unable to attend.
9. Where a reserve attends a meeting in place of an ECG representative at the request of that representative, they are counted as a MOP(S) Act employee representative for their work group for the duration of that meeting.
10. ECG Representatives who will be absent from a meeting are asked to advise the Department of Finance prior to the meeting of any substitution arrangements that have been made, to ensure that relevant information is provided to the reserve employee representative.
11. Where a general election or other circumstance occurs that changes the number of MOP(S) Act employees within a party or work group, to the extent that the number of ECG representatives and reserves allocated to each work group is no longer proportionate to the total number of employee positions in a work group, the work groups will be restructured to restore proportionately.
12. In the 48th Parliament, the total number of ECG representatives and reserves to be elected is as follows:

Work Group	ECG Representatives	Reserves
Australian Labor Party	6	2
Liberal Party of Australia	2	1
National Party of Australia	2	1
Australian Greens	1	1
Representative for staff of Independent Parliamentarians and Minority Parties	1	1

13. There may also be one representative on the ECG from each union covering MOP(S) Act employees.
14. There will be no more than five management representatives at any meeting of the ECG, including a nominee of the Special Minister of State and/or representatives from the Department of Finance.

Terms of Office

15. MOP(S) Act employees and union representatives on the ECG will serve until, in the event of a federal election, the selection of new employee representatives (based in any revised party proportions) is finalised.
16. If a MOP(S) Act employee representative ceases to be employed under the MOPS EA, the representative will cease membership of the ECG. The representative may be replaced by an employee from the reserve list.

Operations of the ECG

17. Meetings will be held on a regular basis as agreed by the ECG, with generally four meetings per calendar year, unless otherwise agreed by the ECG. The ECG may also schedule additional meetings at its discretion. Matters may also be required to be considered out of session, with specific consultative timeframes advised.
18. A formal meeting of the ECG is only constituted when there is attendance from at least one member from each of the following groups:
 - a. Employee representatives
 - b. Union representatives
 - c. Employer representatives
19. The date of each meeting will be proposed during the previous meeting.
20. Finance will provide secretariat support and chair each meeting.
21. MOP(S) Act employees or their representatives may attend meetings of the ECG as observers. At the request of the ECG, observers may be asked to contribute or provide information about specific issues. Observers may be requested to leave the meeting during discussions of a confidential nature.
22. Finance will generally call for agenda items at least two weeks before the meeting. Agenda items and any relevant papers should be provided to the Department of Finance for distribution to all members as early as possible prior to the meeting. The Department of Finance should distribute any relevant documents to members at least one week prior to the meeting.
23. The Department of Finance will endeavour to distribute the draft minutes to all members within 10 working days and provide ECG members with five working days to provide comments or suggested changes. The minutes will then be finalized and posted on the MaPS website, unless a significant disagreement with the minutes is notified.

Version	Date	Author	Cleared
1.0	31/07/2025	HR Policy	Special Minister of State

