

# EMPLOYEE CONSULTATIVE GROUP (ECG) MEETING 1 – RECORD OF MEETING

Thursday 13 November 2025  
MS Teams

Meeting opened: 11:00am AEDT  
Meeting closed: 12:45 pm AEDT

**Meeting Chair: Mr Scott McWhirter**, Assistant Secretary (a/g), HR Frameworks

Attendee	Office
Liz Bateson	Hon Michelle Rowland MP
Brydan Toner	Ms Joanne Ryan MP
Amy Knox	Ms Joanne Ryan MP
Sofia Wilson	Ms Joanne Ryan MP
Gabriel Steger	Hon Ged Kearney MP
Catherine Moore	Hon David Littleproud MP
Cate Clunies-Ross	Hon Sussan Ley MP
Kathy Quinn	Senator the Hon James McGrath
Simon Kelly	Mr Llew O’Brien MP
Catherine Moore	Hon David Littleproud MP
Kym Chapple	Senator David Shoebridge
Amy Ware	Office of the Special Minister of State
Emma Groube	Community and Public Sector Union
Joshua Polak	United Services Union
Katherine Messer	Parliamentary Workplace Support Service (PWSS)
Lucy Hutchens	Parliamentary Workplace Support Service (PWSS)
Jaan-Clare Witcombe	Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA)
Nate Riley	Finance, MaPS (observer)
Shannon Frazer	Finance, MaPS (observer)
Anupam Sharma	Finance, MaPS (observer)
Lachlan Bayliss	Finance, MaPS (observer)
Felix McCarthy	Finance, MaPS (Secretariat)

Apologies:

- Simon Price, Office of Senator the Hon Bridget McKenzie

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

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome and apologies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chair opened the meeting with an acknowledgement of country.</li> <li>• Chair introduced the First Assistant Secretary of Ministerial and Parliamentary Services, Shannon Frazer, to speak. Ms Frazer introduced herself and opened the new ECG for the 48th Parliament.</li> <li>• The CPSU advised that they would provide written feedback regarding the ECG Terms</li> </ul>

of Reference for the 48th Parliament, in particular a request for consultation documents to be circulated to reserve members even when they are not attending ECG meetings.

**Agenda Item 2 – Updates from IPEA** [Agenda Item 3 was addressed prior to Agenda Item 2 due to audio issues with IPEA’s connection.]

- The Chair invited IPEA to provide an update regarding issues with using Cabcharge, which had been raised by the CPSU prior to the meeting. Cabcharge was being declined as a form of payment by taxi operators, especially in the cities of Sydney, Melbourne and Perth. Members noted that using Cabcharge has become very difficult in these cities, to the point where the use of taxis was being avoided.
- IPEA advised that they do not have a contract with Cabcharge, but use it as a billing service. It was recommended that MOP(S) employees enquire with a taxi operator whether they will accept Cabcharge in advance of using their service. It was also advised that issues can be escalated by IPEA, if employees get the taxi number in cases where Cabcharge was declined.

**Agenda Item 3 – Updates from PWSS**

- The Chair invited the PWSS to provide information on the Professional Development Program (PDP) which was currently being developed. PWSS noted that the PDP would not focus on work level standards or Parliamentarians’ rights as an employer, but rather it would focus on training and capability development, and enhancing safety and respect in the workplace.
- The PWSS ran through a PowerPoint presentation on the framework, with role specialisation segmented into core, expert and specialist tiers. The PWSS explained how the PDP would be used, and the proposed tools to be made available for staff and offices to complement the PDP, including: learning development plans, office capability planners, role profiles, performance planning and review resources, personal development planners, and self-reflection tools. The PWSS noted that they intended to consult on the proposed PDP until the end of November.
- A member noted that inclusion of anti-racism training was a positive, but also queried why disability inclusion was not included as a core capability. Another member added that it would be beneficial if further training of this kind was provided.
- A member commented that an outstanding issue is that parliamentarians do not have access to managerial training themselves. The PWSS advised that they have a legislative remit to also provide training to parliamentarians, however, it does not have the same offering as what is provided to MOP(S) employees. It was noted that further training options for parliamentarians would be explored.
- A member asked the PWSS if they have liaised with DPS regarding ICT training, in order to avoid potential duplication of training options. The PWSS noted that they had liaised with the DPS regarding staff training, as well as other relevant agencies supporting MOP(S) employees.

#### Agenda Item 4 – EA Implementation Updates

- The Chair advised that Finance was in the final stages of developing the draft guideline for the same day travel entitlement. The Chair noted that the intention was to circulate a draft guideline prior to the next ECG meeting.
- Members queried how the entitlement would be administered, the evidence required, and eligibility criteria. A member commented that a reimbursement model for same day travel would not be feasible given their work environment, and stated that this was the sentiment of numerous MOP(S) employees.
- The CPSU raised that members would like guidance on how they can request discretionary payments in place of a same day travel entitlement being operational. The Chair advised that guidance can be provided to all MOP(S) employees.
  - **Action item 4.1** – MaPS to provide guidance to MOP(S) employees on how they can request discretionary payments in lieu of a same day travel entitlement.
- The Chair noted fee free salary sacrifice arrangements coming into effect. The Chair noted that employees have been advised that existing salary sacrifice arrangements with Smart would not cease automatically; an employee would need to cease their arrangement with Smart independently of any salary sacrifice arrangement they commence with Finance.
- The Chair noted the guidelines approved by the Special Minister of State which are now publicly available: additional hours, related allowances and TOIL; leave and public holidays; discretionary payments; delegates' rights and salary packaging.
- The Chair addressed the matter raised by the CPSU requesting that leave balances be made visible on payslips. The Chair stated that leave balances on payslips was not a priority for Finance at this time, and this functionality was not possible without enhancements to the payroll system (which MaPS does not control).
- A member raised the recent issue of superannuation payments not being made to certain MOP(S) employees. The Chair advised that Finance had been alerted to this issue and it had been resolved for the affected employees.
- A member raised the crediting of Excess (Canberra) Travel Leave (ECTL), in particular for staff transitioning between contracts. There was concern from some MOP(S) employees as to whether they were receiving their full credit per the travel they had undertaken. The Chair noted that Finance is continuing to work with IPEA on an automated solution.
- The Chair raised the process of casual contracts and how that process was evolving, advising that MaPS would be looking into a process of a bulk upload of timesheets to further streamline the process. The Chair noted that Finance hoped to be in a position in the new year to provide update on a systems solution. A member commented that timely payment of casual employees was crucial for staff retention. Another member queried whether the timeframe for casual timesheet submission could be expanded.

## Agenda Item 5 – Policy Updates

- The Chair requested that any input on the draft guidelines, which had been circulated to members of the ECG, be provided in writing. The CPSU advised that they intended to share the draft guidelines with all of their members. A member noted that it would be useful if Finance could provide the reasoning for the changes that have been made.
  - **Action item 5.1** – MaPS to provide comments in the respective guidelines on the rationale for changes that have been made.
- Members agreed to provide comments by 28 November 2025.

## Agenda Item 6 – Classification Review

- The Chair noted that the Classification Review was a priority, with staff within MaPS dedicated to progress the review.
- Finance outlined progress on the Classification Review, with a focus on the information gathered to date. Finance noted that there were some gaps in the data, and that the three scoping questions in the discussion paper sought to address those gaps.
- A member commented that they would like remuneration to be included in some form. The Chair noted that the review is intended to be structured per the Terms of Reference.
- The USU noted that the circulated Terms of Reference states that the classification review may collect data on remuneration for similar roles in other jurisdictions, the APS and private sector. The USU requested that such data be gathered as part of the review, noting that the review's primary focus will be to examine the complexity of the work undertaken by electorate offices.
- A member requested that data collected for the review should factor in complexity of work undertaken as well as the independence of work (i.e. lack of any supervision). The member also cited the level of risk associated with some of the work that an electorate employee was expected to conduct independently, as it could impact the employing parliamentarian's public image and reputation.
- The USU and CPSU requested out of session meetings to progress the review. The USU also highlighted the importance of the review, noting that it was a commitment under the current Enterprise Agreement. The USU also reiterated their request to have a copy of the previous Classification Review to be made available to the ECG.
  - **Action item 6.1** – Subject to approval from the Minister, provide to the ECG a copy of the previous Classification Review.
- Members asked for an indicative timeframe for the completion of the Classification Review. The Chair reiterated that the review was being prioritised and a timeframe for completion would be advised.
- The CPSU shared a summary of information gained from a survey of electorate officers. The CPSU noted that they were comfortable that the sample cohort for the

survey represented metropolitan, regional and rural electorate officers. It was noted that the sample cohort did lack the involvement of electorate officers within certain political parties, however this was indicative of the representation within the CPSU's membership.

#### **Agenda Item 7 – Other Business**

- The Chair concluded the meeting and thanked all participants for their involvement and feedback. It was noted that the next ECG meeting would likely be in February of next year.
- The meeting closed at 12:45 PM AEDT.