

OFFICIAL

## WHS Committee - Minutes

Meeting 8 – Wednesday, 4 September 2024, MS Teams

Meeting opened: 3:02 pm (AEDT)  
 Meeting closed: 3:46 pm (AEDT)  
 Meeting chair: Scott Mischke – PWSS Chief People Officer

Attendees	Office
Tamsin Anspach	Senator the Hon Penny Wong, <i>Health and Safety Representative</i>
Lisa Banyard	Hon Dr Jim Chalmers MP, <i>Health and Safety Representative</i>
Leanne Coleman	Hon Kristy McBain MP, <i>Health and Safety Representative</i>
Chantal D'Argaville	Hon Peter Dutton MP, <i>Health and Safety Representative</i>
Jan Hafiz	Ms Cassandra Fernando MP, <i>Health and Safety Representative</i>
Cathy Heidrich	Hon David Littleproud, MP <i>Health and Safety Representative</i>
Simon Kelly	Mr Llew O'Brien MP, <i>Health and Safety Representative</i>
Mary von Marburg	Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, <i>Health and Safety Representative</i>
Sienna Parrott	Senator Larissa Waters <i>Health and Safety Representative</i>
Kate Sutherland	Ms Lisa Chesters MP, <i>Health and Safety Representative</i>
HSR	Dr Helen Haines MP, <i>Health and Safety Representative</i>
Emma Groube	CPSU
Jess Stone	CPSU
Invited Presenters	Office
Sandra Fisher	Director, WHS – PWSS
Jeremy Mann	Assistant Director, Learning & Development - PWSS
Observers	Office
Bonnie Pederson	Senator the Hon Don Farrell
Brendan Macnamara	Director, Parliamentary Business Resources, Ministerial and Parliamentary Services (MaPS), Department of Finance
Juliette Roberts	Assistant Director, MaPS, Department of Finance
Ebony Roach	Assistant Director, WHS - PWSS
Secretariat	Office
Gai Jansen	Director, Strategic Unit – PWSS (Secretariat)
Mila Logan	Assistant Director, Strategic Unit – PWSS (Secretariat)

Apology	Office
Amanda Bruce	Assistant Secretary, MaPS, Department of Finance
Anupam Sharma	A/g Assistant Secretary, MaPS, Department of Finance
Christina Grant	Head, Parliamentarian Resource Review - PWSS
Susan Kappel	Mr Alex Antic MP, <i>Health and Safety Representative</i>
Guy Mosel	Senator Penny Allman-Payne, <i>Health and Safety Representative</i>
Joshua Polak	United Services Union (USU)

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## Agenda Item 1 – Welcome and apologies

The Chair opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country, noted previous meeting minutes and provided the following updates:

- Apologies were noted from Joshua Polak, Susan Kappel.
- The PWSS Advisory Board held its first meeting in July and is scheduled to meet four times a year. The Board can advise the PWSS on the performance of its functions, and consider proposed mandates to policies or procedures, or proposed mandatory education or training programs for MOPS(S) employees. The next meeting will be held on 28 October 2024.
- The PWSS website is being progressively updated with information about the range of services offered by the PWSS. In addition to transferring content from the MaPS website, new material is being developed and added. Work has also begun on the PWSS brand which will be reflected in a new website design.
- Christina Grant commenced with the PWSS on 27 June as the new head of the Parliamentary Resource Review.

## Agenda Item 2 – WHS Quarterly report

Sandra Fisher presented the quarterly WHS report, noting that:

- The Corporate Responsibilities nomination form is now available on the PWSS website.
- The WHS team and Academy teams are collaborating on a project to enable online access to first aid training via the PWSS Academy.
- TelusHealth EAP is available to all Parliamentarians and MOP(S) employees, and their immediate family members.
- Before Blue, an 8-week low intensity coaching program, will launch from 1 October 2024. The program is intended to assist individuals in dealing with issues such as social anxiety, dealing with conflict in the workplace, etc.
- The PWSS is planning a mailout to electorate offices next month. Members are encouraged to provide suggestions regarding resources to be included in the mailout package.
- A new WHS team member is progressing work on the baseline risk register. Members will be consulted on the draft baseline risk template once it is finalised.
- The WHS team is simplifying the ergonomic assessment process to remove barriers to requesting an assessment. This includes enabling value for money and supporting community by sourcing local providers (where possible) for in-person ergonomic assessments.
- The team has taken a number of incident reports by phone and is proactively following up offices to facilitate streamlined incident reporting.

The CPSU raised the following items for discussion:

- If an intranet page would be created to store sensitive information. The Chair confirmed that a variety of options are being considered, with IT firewall and PWSS Academy as possible interim solutions.
- Consultation timeframes for the draft WHS documents. Sandra Fisher advised that the draft early intervention policy will be sent to the Department of Finance for consultation, followed by anticipated consultation with the WHSC next month. The draft Alcohol and Other Drugs policy has

progressed through the PLT and Advisory Board and will continue to broader consultation over the coming months.

- Concerns with the type of examples included in the draft Right to Disconnect Factsheet. The Chair clarified the intent of the factsheet and noted the PWSS is working closely with Department of Finance as the policy owners to inform any required changes.
- A number of offices who have not yet moved onto VOIP systems have had the ability to record calls added their phone functionality. It is understood that this can be arranged through MaPS state offices like enabling voicemail to text options. While it is a manual process that the Electorate Officer would need to trigger during an offensive or aggressive call, it is an option that offices should consider to assist with managing these calls.
- Lisa Banyard (HSR) requested clarification on the resolution of the security camera issue noted in the quarterly report, noting that offices need additional guidance on the operation of security camera systems. Ben Macnamara (Ministerial and Parliamentary Services) invited further discussion offline.

**ACTION ITEM 1:** Mailout to include PWSS lanyard cards, lanyards, the editable emergency contact document and the PWSS Academy learning catalogue with other items still to be determined.

### Agenda Item 3 – PWSS Academy

Jeremy Mann from the PWSS Academy presented an overview of the range of learning and development offerings available through the Academy, including bespoke training programs, tailored to office requirements (e.g., by combining components from different courses into a single training session).

New learning programs will continue to be released on the PWSS Academy over time.

**ACTION ITEM 2:** PWSS Secretariat to distribute the PWSS Academy learning catalogue with the draft minutes for Meeting 8.

### Agenda Item 3 – Other Business

The CPSU requested that the draft PWSS Rules be consulted upon and requested clarification about the proposed roles for the PWSS Consultative Committee, how the WHSC would collaborate and engage with the committee, and the process for selecting committee members.

The Chair advised that the draft PWSS Rules were with the Special Minister of State (SMOS) Office. The PLT secretariat had prepared a document earlier in the year highlighting the intersections between the various parliamentary consultative groups. The PWSS will expand on this and develop a stakeholder engagement map to provide greater clarity on the various functions and interactions between CPWs.

The CPSU asked whether the CPW HR Advisory Panel is considering the recommendations of the Dignified Access Report. The Chair noted that the APH Inclusion and Diversity Champions have oversight of this and that the APH recommendations are currently being reviewed to determine their possible application to Electorate Offices.

**ACTION ITEM 3:** PWSS Secretariat to include an update on cross-agency collaboration at the CPW HR Advisory Panel as item on the agenda for discussion at Meeting 9.

**ACTION ITEM 4:** PWSS Secretariat to develop a PWSS stakeholder map outlining the intersections between CPW agencies and parliamentary committees, consultative groups.

### Resourcing Review – an out of session update has been provided due to connectivity issues during the meeting

The Independent Review of Resourcing in Parliamentary Offices (the Resourcing Review) is considering factors affecting workloads in federal parliamentary offices, particularly in electorate offices, in accordance with Recommendation 3 of the Review of the Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984.

To date the Resourcing Review has facilitated 77 interviews, and conducted a survey which received 499 complete responses from parliamentarians and staff. Interviews were conducted across the country with a view to including a representative group from metro, regional and remote locations.

Work will now commence on drafting a final report that is expected to be provided to the SMOS by the CEO of the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service. The Report is due by the end of October 2024, it will include a series of findings and recommendations.

Interested parties and individuals may contact the Resourcing Review by email:  
[resourcereview@pwss.gov.au](mailto:resourcereview@pwss.gov.au)

### Agenda Item 4 – Close

- The Chair thanked members for their attendance.
- Meeting 9 is scheduled for Wednesday, 4 December 2024.
- The meeting closed at **3:47** pm.