



Joint Sessional Committee

## Workplace Culture Oversight

### MEETING COMMUNIQUE

Monday, 18 December 2023

On Monday, 18 December 2023 the Joint Sessional Committee on Workplace Culture Oversight (the Committee) met with Julia Agostino, Motion for Respect - Independent Project Manager (IPM) and the Motion for Respect Project Team (MRPT).

The Committee received an update in relation to Motion for Respect Recommendation 3. Recommendation 3 reads as follows:

<b>Acknowledge the need for change and initial steps for action</b>	
<b>3</b>	The Committee is to commission an independent review of Ministerial and Parliamentary Services organisational and governance structure, including an audit of instruments of appointment, employment conditions, recruitment processes and pay structures.

As previously advised, Workplace Research Associates (WRA) were selected by the IPM to undertake this review. WRA, led by Principal, Dr Julie West commenced work on 18 September 2023 with key stakeholder meetings taking place that week. On 19 September 2023, the Committee met with WRA and received a briefing outlining processes and priorities moving forward – for more detailed information see a previous [communique](#).

Since WRAs appointment, the MRPT have been working with Dr West to ensure WRA has all the information needed to progress the work in accordance with the project timelines, as well as research and other tasks related to this recommendation.

During November, WRA will consulted with parliamentary staff including Legislature-General managers to learn more about these teams and the role they play in supporting the Parliament. Consultation meetings are also scheduled with the Clerks and Presiding Officers.

On 1 November 2023, to assist with the review, a Members' satisfaction survey was conducted at Parliament. The survey results suggested overall satisfaction with services, but with some areas requiring attention. Results were provided to the Clerks and Presiding Officers, with comments provided only to WRA to assist with preparation ahead of consultation meetings in November.

At the previous meeting, the IPM provided a WRA Progress Report for the Committee's information.

On 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> December, WRA held a co-design workshop with the PRG, the Sergeant-at-Arms and the Usher of the Black Rod.

MRPT continues to liaise with WRA to ensure WRA has all necessary information to progress the review in accordance with the project timelines, as well as research and other tasks related to this recommendation.

The Committee received an update in relation to Motion for Respect Recommendation 4. Recommendation 4 reads as follows:

<b>Steps to create long-term change</b>	
<b>4</b>	Establishment of a centralised and independent human resources unit, accessible for all Ministerial and Parliamentary Services personnel, called ‘MPS People, Culture and Change’.

The IPM advised that the Motion for Respect Report suggests the structure and operational requirements of the HR unit will be better designed having the benefit of the recommendation 3 structure review completed. The IPM is cognizant of the importance of waiting for this review to be complete but is also aware of the current timeline in place for delivery. Therefore, work has commenced to consider recommendation 4 in more detail, including whether there are options to satisfy the intent of the recommendation, and suggests flexibility may be required with respect to timing. The IPM has flagged that careful consideration and consultation with the employers will be required to achieve the best possible outcome, and this process should not be rushed.

The Committee received an update in relation to Motion for Respect Recommendation 5. Recommendation 5 reads as follows:

<b>Steps to create long-term change</b>	
<b>5</b>	Implementation of a complaints and reporting framework for MPS People, Culture and Change to operate within including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» The power to investigate complaints about discrimination, sexual harassment and bullying, including allegations against Members of Parliament</li><li>» Setting internal processes for dealing with conduct matters both informally and formally</li><li>» Setting investigation procedures, protections against victimisation, sanctions, and policies containing information about external complaint bodies.</li></ul>

The MRPT has commenced a desktop audit to identify current policies, processes and frameworks, and research is being undertaken to establish best practice. MRPT notes this recommendation is complex as it deals with powers to investigate complaints about Members of Parliament, and that as such, a well-informed approach is likely to require expert advice, possibly including legal advice to assist the MPRT with delivery.

The Committee received an update in relation to Motion for Respect Recommendation 6. Recommendation 6 reads as follows:

<b>Steps to create long-term change</b>	
<b>6</b>	Create and implement (in consultation with staff) the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Ministerial and Parliamentary Services Code of Conduct for:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Parliamentarians</li><li>- MPS personnel</li></ul></li><li>» Diversity and inclusion strategy</li><li>» A family friendly workforce strategy</li><li>» Performance management framework</li><li>» Consumption of alcohol policy</li></ul>

The MRPT has researched best practice and how this may be applied in the Tasmanian context. The MRPT is awaiting the outcome of the recommendation 3 structure review before finalising as changes may be required.

The MRPT has commenced consideration of Motion for Respect Recommendations 7, 8 and 9.

The Committee received an update in relation to Motion for Respect Recommendation 10. Recommendation 10 reads as follows:

<b>Steps to create long-term change</b>	
<b>10</b>	Completion of Our Watch's Workplace Equality and Respect Standards across Ministerial and Parliamentary Services

The MRPT has commenced work on recommendation 10 by determining what this program comprises and what is required to complete the Standards and integrate into the organisations. The MRPT will engage next with Our Watch to determine requirements for participation.

Motion for Respect Recommendations 11 to 14 are in relation to measuring change through reports and surveys, noting timelines for delivery of these recommendation do not commence until 12, 18 and 24 months into the project.

For more detailed information (including timelines) for recommendations 3 to 14 see current implementation tracker [here](#).

The Committee notes the importance of this review and encourages employees across each employee group to become fully informed and engaged to collectively work towards providing a better workplace for all employees.

The Committee further notes that change can be challenging and commits to providing ongoing updates to inform all interested parties. The Committee notes there will be opportunities to provide input into and participate in the work of WRA and the MRPT.

For further information regarding the Committee’s activity in overseeing implementation of Motion for Respect Report Recommendations, [Implementation Trackers](#) are available on the Committee’s [webpage](#) to enable all interested parties, including all current and past employees of the MPS Workplace (as defined by the [Motion for Respect Report](#) to include elected Members of Parliament, Ministerial and Parliamentary Support employees, Parliament House employees and people performing contracted services) to access updated information in relation to progress of implementation of Motion for Respect Report Recommendations.

These documents will be updated regularly and any further relevant information provided to the Committee related to progress of the recommendations to ensure all interested parties have access to current information.

The Committee’s next meeting will be held mid-February 2024.