



Minutes

Members	
Craig Orme	Chair, Deputy President
Mark Harrigan	Deputy Chair, First Assistant Secretary, Business Support Services Division
Kristy s 47E(d)	A/g General Counsel
Tim Evans	Assistant Secretary, Service Access Branch
Karen Pickering	Assistant Secretary, Provider Engagement & Assurance Branch
Elaine s 47E(d)	A/g Assistant Secretary, Compensation and Income Support Policy Branch
Advisers	
Roger Winzenberg	Assistant Secretary, People & Security Branch
Presenters	
Neil Bayles	Assistant Secretary, Portfolio Reviews Taskforce Branch
Jill s 47E(d)	Executive Director, Transformation Strategy Stream
Rachel s 47E(d)	Director, Capability & Workplace Relations Section
Marissa s 47E(d)	Senior HR Adviser, Working Environment and Consulting Branch
Secretariat	
Sharyn s 47E(d)	Acting Assistant Director, Governance & Appointments Section
Linda s 47E(d)	Secretariat Support Officer, Governance & Appointments Section
Apologies	
Peter King	Deputy Commissioner, WA
Dr Stephanie Hodson	National Manager, Veterans & Veterans Families Counselling Service

Agenda Item 1. Opening Remarks

Agenda Item 1.1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr Peter King and Dr Stephanie Hodson.

Agenda Item 1.2 Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

Agenda Item 1.3 Minutes from previous meeting

The minutes of the 16 March 2018 meeting were endorsed as an agreed record of the meeting.

Agenda Item 1.4 Actions Arising from Previous Meeting

Members noted Action Items 50, 61, 65, 66, 71 and 72 were in-progress.

The members recommended that Items 67, 68, 69 and 70 be closed.

Agenda Item 2. Out of Session Decisions

There have been nil out-of-session matters since the last meeting.

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Agenda Item 3. Transformation

Agenda Item 3.1 Communications Plan – Support for VEA, DRCA and MRCA Delegates

Mr Bayles provided members with a briefing on the framework for delegates support and sought views on the tactical plan for communication and engagement from the members. All the Divisions that had been consulted were supportive of implementing the plan.

The intent of the plan is to deliver better outcomes for clients by providing more support for delegates, more clarity of expectations, better training, better mechanisms to seek help and advice and better tools to do their work. The plan is for a phased program communication and engagement activities over a six to nine months period that needs to consider the blended workforce DVA has and which includes contractors, non-ongoing and permanent APS.

Discussion centred on risks associated with the strategy, disarming perceived negative views about extension of delegations to contractors, concerns about escalation of issues, the mechanism by which delegations are applied whether by position or person, and the cost of implementing the program.

Decision

66. The Committee **endorsed** the Engagement and Communications Plan in principle with the inclusion of a delegations piece in the model outlining the language around making good decisions.

Agenda Item 3.2 Digital Transformation and Agile Capability

Ms **s 47E(d)** provided members with an update on the digital transformation and agile capability and advised that the national roll out of Digital Transformation training has been completed, and targeted Agile training for SES and project teams will commence in May 2018. A full evaluation report will be submitted to the People Committee to determine the future of the initiative in the context of organisational reform and whole of Government Digital Transformation.

The Digital Transformation Agency (DTA) has invited DVA to participate in an Inter-Agency Digital Service Standard Assurance Working Group. The working group will co-develop and trial a new agency digital maturity model for assessing and reporting on digital capability.

The DVA is actively engaged with the APSC and the DTA led Digital Capability Project – building a skilled Australian Public Service to support digital transformation.

Members noted the Digital Transformation and Agile Capability update.

Agenda Item 4. Graduate and Entry Level Programs

Agenda Item 4.1 Graduate Update

Ms **s 47E(d)** advised that applications for the 2019 Graduate Generalist and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Graduate Program closed on 30 April 2018 and that approximately 609 applications were received. This year DVA undertook its own indigenous recruitment exercise due to a low uptake in previous years.

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Members were advised that the 2018 Graduates had their major project topics and groups allocated, and that second rotations preferences had been distributed to the Graduates for nomination. The dates for second and third rotations and state location visits have also been confirmed.

Members noted the update on the Graduate program.

Agenda Item 5. Workplace Relations

Agenda Item 5.1 Diversity Action Plan

Ms **s 47E(d)** briefed members on the results of the 2017 Employee Census, which indicated that further work was required to demonstrate DVA's commitment to creating and supporting a diverse workforce. A dedicated Diversity Officer role was established and a Diversity Strategy has been developed in consultation with staff including the DVA's three Diversity Champions. The feedback that was received from the staff who attended the first Diversity & Inclusion Staff Network is also included in the document. Funding of \$138,500 is required to implement the initiatives outlined in the Strategy. This includes \$12,500 for seven diversity events in all locations and \$126,000 for diversity related training.

Discussion centred on the strategy and issues in regards to participation and budget.

Decision

67. Members endorsed the Diversity Strategy and supported the request for a Diversity Budget prior to the Strategy being presented to the Executive Management Board.

Agenda Item 5.2 Wellbeing Strategy

Ms **s 47E(d)** briefed members on the result of the 2017 APS Employee Census where DVA's wellbeing index score was rated low - 5% lower than the APS average and 2% lower than the larger operational agencies average. The census results indicate that DVA is not being effective in communicating, promoting or demonstrating that it cares for the wellbeing of staff.

Ms **s 47E(d)** advised that a Wellbeing Strategy has been developed and will undergo consultation with the Work Health Safety Committees and other stakeholders to ensure it is fit for purpose, before being presented to the Executive Management Board.

Members noted recommendations 1 – 3 and agreed for additional wording to be included encouraging staff to use communal areas.

Further Action:

73. Ms **s 47E(d) to update the communications plan in the draft Wellbeing Strategy to encourage use of communal areas.**



Agenda Item 5.3 Unscheduled Absence

Mr Winzenberg provided members with an update on unscheduled absences particularly in relation to categories of illnesses by age group (42-49 years) in the top 50 absence takers. There has been an improvement on last year's figures, and Managers are required to note the pattern of absences occurring around public holidays; and staff who are absent between 12 – 30 days per year.

A full report encompassing the year's unscheduled absences will be available to members later in the financial year for discussion.

Members noted the information provided on Unscheduled Absences.

Further Action:

74. Mr Winzenberg to provide the full report encompassing the full years unscheduled absence data as an Agenda item for the August People Committee meeting.

Agenda Item 6. Work Health & Safety

Agenda Item 6.1 Work Health & Safety/Workers' Compensation Update

Mr Winzenberg provided members with an update on Work Health and Safety incidents that occurred in three DVA sites: NSW – Legionnaires outbreak; NT – Cyclone; and VIC – water leak in a stair well. Members were advised that the continuity plan was activated and there are some lessons learned. Members noted that nil DVA officers were injured or became ill, and first aid officers were available during the events on each floor to provide support to staff as necessary.

Members noted the Work Health & Safety update and agreed that a senior leader should be advised of/and acknowledge serious workplace safety events.

Agenda Item 7. Performance, Learning and Development

Agenda Item 7.1 Learning and Development Program 2017-18

Mr Winzenberg provided members with an update on the Learning and Development programs and expenditure for the financial year to 31 March 2018. .

Members noted that the forecast FY2017-18 L&D expenditure is \$1.913m, which represents an over-spend of \$93,000 or 5 percent.

Members noted that in response to recommendation 9 of the Senate Inquiry into Veteran Suicide, a Request For Quote was issued for a review of DVA's client service training programs. A project committee, with representatives from the six divisions and the Portfolio Reviews Taskforce, has been formed and will oversee the project and ensure its scope includes relevant initiatives from the Transformation Agenda.

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Updates were also provided on work done with the Productivity Commission Inquiry team; Domestic & Family Violence training; the Building & Leading High Performance Teams workshop; the Mental Health First Aid course; and Intra Agency Network placement opportunities.

Discussion centred on the lack of writing skills of some DVA staff particularly at the APS 6 level and below where errors in punctuation, grammar and syntax were obvious in ministerial writings. Members expressed a need for good ministerial writing guidance to be available to staff and wondered what larger policy departments were doing to improve practical writing skills of their staff.

Members noted the update on Learning and Development activities and expenditure to 31 March 2018.

Further Action:

75. Marissa **s 47E(d)** to speak with the Corporate Service Centre to discuss regular, short and sharp messaging in newsletters to maintain awareness of learning and development programs/training available to DVA staff.

76. Roger Winzenberg to provide the People Committee with an options paper based on what the larger policy departments are doing to improve practical writing skills.

Agenda Item 7.2 Talent Management Pilot Update

Ms **s 47E(d)** provided members with an update on the Talent Management Pilot program and advised that the main lesson from the pilot program concerned communication. Despite a comprehensive communication strategy, informal feedback suggested that some managers felt that they did not have a sound understanding of the purpose, process and desired outcomes of the talent management pilot. Feedback received indicated that some EL2 managers lacked confidence in providing feedback to their staff in the career conversations that followed the assessment process.

Ms **s 47E(d)** advised that the DVA talent management strategy is aimed at the EL2 cohort across the Department and the main elements consist of Leadership Competency Identification, Talent Management Framework and Talent Management Administration.

The talent management strategy is scheduled to be introduced in time for the start of the 2018-19 Performance Feedback Scheme cycle in August-September 2018. People & Services Branch will work with stakeholders to raise awareness and promote the strategy prior to the launch scheduled for August 2018.

Decision

68. The Members endorsed the EL2 talent management strategy and approved its implementation.



Agenda Item 8. Workforce, Recruitment and Redeployment

Agenda Item 8.1 RRP Update - Sensitive

Mr Harrigan provided members with an update on the latest report and advised that the April EMB considered strategies from business areas to manage within 2018-19 FTE targets and endorsed oversight by RRP.

Members noted the statistics from the RRP meetings and out-of-session approvals.

Agenda Item 8.2 Shared Services Update - Corporate

Mr Harrigan advised that the Payroll Transition Project was going well with a range of issues under management particularly in areas of migration of long services leave balance and prior service data. The reasons causing the balance inconsistencies include differences in DVA and DHS HR system calculations, the mechanism of recording of prior service history in PeopleSoft and largely manual processes for the current calculation of LSL entitlements. The Project is confident that the implementation date of 31 May 2018, subject to sign-off on the ICT build, testing, data migration and business readiness.

A change support plan is being actioned which focusses on clarifying the post transition operating model and supporting DVA staff and managers through the changes. Training is planned in all States and Territories during May. A cutover plan has been developed which indicates key dates including freeze periods for updates to the organisational structure and HR data.

Mr Harrigan also advised that DVA has recently entered into a new partnership with Jones Lang LaSalle Australia (JLL), under a Whole of Government shared services arrangement, to provide facility and leasing management services and support to all DVA sites across Australia. JLL, DVA Property and the National CSC will be introducing a range of changes behind the scenes to streamline property management and reduce the time taken to resolve problems with our workplace facilities.

Members noted recommendations 1-5.

Agenda Item 9. Policy Changes

Agenda Item 9.1 Workers Compensation Indicative Premium 2018-19

Mr Winzenberg advised members that Comcare's premium for 2018/19 FY is 1.9 percent of our projected salary. The indicative cost is \$3.55m, which is a \$942,793 reduction on the previous financial year. This was due to the reduction in the number of Workers' Compensation claims lodged. The prevention strategy of encouraging managers and employees to report symptoms of injury/illness as soon as possible and the ongoing close management of all cases was a factor in the reduction of claims.

Members noted the indicative Workers Compensation Indicative Premium rate, prevention strategy and ongoing management of cases.

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Agenda Item 9.2 Amendment to the Managing Underperformance Policy

Ms **s 47E(d)** briefed members on the key changes to the redeveloped Managing Underperformance Policy: inclusion of the suggestions for improvement from the ANAO audit; the streamlining of process and removal of repetition. Feedback from staff and the CPSU was considered and changes have been made to the draft policy to reflect the feedback.

Members requested the policy be circulated to members for out-of-session consideration.

Further Action

77. Marissa **s 47E(d)** to elaborate on the support available to employees when health concerns are identified in the Managing Under-performance process.

Decision

69. The Members **endorsed** the implementation of the Managing Underperformance Policy in principle subject to the successful outcome of conversations between DVA and the CPSU and amendments to clarify the language used in page four; inclusion of a decision tree.

Agenda Item 9.3 Car Parking Policy

Mr Harrigan provided members with an update on the car parking policy. Since the last People Committee meeting in March, the draft Car Parking Policy had been submitted to the Staff Reference Group for comment along with a summary of the context and desired outcomes. Overall the policy was viewed positively and made allowances for the diverse needs of DVA Officers. The draft policy also takes into account new measures such as the DVA's approach to staff experiencing domestic violence.

Decision

70. The members **endorsed** the DVA Car Parking policy and requested that a review of the policy be undertaken annually.

Agenda Item 10 Security

Nil issues for this item

Agenda Item 11 Performance Measures

Nil issues for this item

Agenda Item 12 Other Business

Nil issues for this item

The next meeting is scheduled for 1 August 2018.

The meeting closed at 3:05pm

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