

24 October 2018

Ministry of Health - Flexible Work, Mental Health and Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 17 October 2018

1. Flexible Work – No consultation with PSA

The Ministry has a poor track record when it comes to consultation with the PSA. We referred to clause 65.1 of the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2009*, which requires that “*there shall be effective consultation... on matters of mutual interest and concern, both formal and informal, between management and the Association*”. The Ministry’s failure to comply with the award is evident in the recently released “Flexible Work in the Ministry – information for managers and staff”. Refer [here](#) to view our concerns.

After a lengthy discussion about a matter of great importance to members, the Ministry’s only concession was to “look at” a transition to retirement policy. We will continue to hold the Ministry to account for its failure to comply with the award. If members have difficulties accessing flexible work options, please contact the PSA.

2. Mental health resolution

We discussed the resolution endorsed by members on 10 October 2018 (refer to previous bulletin [here](#)). While the Ministry suggested reference to the Public Service Commission (PSC), we were very clear this was a resolution from members about the priority the Ministry should give to staff mental health and well-being. We will be writing to the Secretary about this matter.

3. Contractors

One hundred and twelve contractors are currently engaged. Refer [here](#) for contractor and recruitment data.

4. Restructures

The Ministry provided updates on the HSPIB and EEU restructures. We were assured all roles now have a role description, despite a recent restructure showing this was not the case. If any member still has a position description, please contact the PSA.

5. Talent pools

Both the PSC and Ministry have talent pools but it is entirely up to a manager if they choose to activate. To be included in a talent pool you must apply for a role at that level (grade) and be deemed suitable for such a role. The Ministry gave an undertaking to provide greater clarity in a HR bulletin.

6. Ministry Response to People Matter – 2018 Public Sector Employee Survey

We were advised each branch will hold discussions with staff and develop a plan that identifies three priorities for action. Branches will then work on one priority they propose the Ministry as a whole should progress. Workplace Relations will coordinate responses and prepare a brief for the Executive’s consideration. People Matter survey results continue to be of concern in relation to grievances and bullying. We encourage members to participate in branch discussions and influence Ministry priorities. Relocation sub-JCC



24 October 2018

Ministry of Health - Flexible Work, Mental Health and Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 17 October 2018

The Ministry recently engaged a consultant as Interim Relocation Project Director. We find it difficult to believe there was no-one from the Ministry or other parts of the public sector who was not suitable for this role rather than appointing another consultant. We were further advised:

- » staff will move to interim locations at Chatswood and St Leonards from April-June 2019
- » interim St Leonards site will not be set up for agile working apart from one floor
- » all staff will have a laptop, VPN and Skype for Business before the interim moves

- » training will be provided for new systems and processes
- » phone solution has not been identified
- » the Ministry is still working on electronic approval of briefing notes.

The PSA raised the issue of implications for staff in the event of loss/theft of laptops on the way to and from work at home or another location. The Ministry will clarify and provide further advice to staff.

