



# Set the Standard

## Implementation Update

April 2022



### Update from Kerri Hartland

#### Chair, Parliamentary Leadership Taskforce

I am pleased to present the first implementation update following the release of *Sex Discrimination Commissioner Kate Jenkins' Set the Standard: Report on the Independent Review into Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplaces*.

The Set the Standard report highlighted an unacceptably high rate of people, particularly women, in Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplaces have experienced at least one incident of bullying, sexual harassment, or actual or attempted sexual assault.

I thank those who came forward to share their experiences as part of the review. It has been inspiring to see the courage of people who have shared distressing experiences with the hope that they can make these workplaces better for those who come after them.

I thank Commissioner Jenkins and her team for developing clear recommendations to ensure the necessary cultural and practical change to provide safe, respectful workplaces for those working in our Federal Parliament. I look forward to continuing to work with Commissioner Jenkins throughout this reform process.

The 28 recommendations in the Set the Standard report are designed to support everyone in Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplaces to perform at their best and bring these workplaces into line with the standards expected of all Australian workplaces.

We have seen positive progress to date. A cross-party Parliamentary Leadership Taskforce was established in February 2022 to oversee the implementation of the Report's recommendations. I am the independent chair of the Taskforce, which, to date, has met three times.

We are committed to ensuring the voices of participants to the Report, and those now working across Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplaces, are heard through the implementation of the recommendations. I welcome feedback on the implementation process as we together implement change.

I plan to provide regular future updates on the progress of this important reform process throughout the next two years.

Please feel free to reach out to the Secretariat at [PLT@aph.gov.au](mailto:PLT@aph.gov.au).

# Set the Standard Implementation Update

## Parliamentary Leadership Taskforce

The Parliamentary Leadership Taskforce comprises three representatives from the Government, three from the Opposition, one from a minor party, one independent, and is chaired by Ms Kerri Hartland.

The Taskforce is supported by an Implementation Group with membership from each Parliamentary department and other Commonwealth agencies. The Taskforce and Implementation Group are assisted by a Secretariat.

The Taskforce met on 3 February, 28 February and 24 March 2022 and will reconvene following the 2022 federal election.

Statements following each Taskforce meeting are published on a [new webpage here](#) and report on progress against each of the 28 recommendations of the Set the Standard Report.

Early priorities identified by the Taskforce include a new induction package for incoming parliamentarians and their staff following the election and the establishment of the Office of Parliamentary Staffing and Culture.

## Progress to date

Several recommendations from the Set the Standard Report have been completed or are well progressed. These include:

- 1 - [Statement of Acknowledgement to Parliament](#) delivered on 8 February 2022.
- 2(a) – Parliamentary Leadership Taskforce and Implementation Group established.
- 20 – Expansion of Parliamentary Workplace Support Service.
- 21 - [Joint Select Committee on Parliamentary Standards established](#) 14 February 2022 to inquire into and report on the development of codes of conduct for Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplaces. Report by 1 November 2022.
- 17 and 24 – [Parliamentary Workplace Reform \(Set the Standard Measures No. 1\) Bill](#) passed on 15 February 2022 to provide additional protections to staff of parliamentarians.

- 26 – Department of Parliamentary Services funded in the 2022-23 Budget to undertake a feasibility study of the Parliamentary Health and Wellbeing Service.

## Parliamentary Workplace Support Service expansion

The Parliamentary Workplace Support Service (PWSS) has been expanded.

The PWSS' support services are now available to all Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplace participants in relation to serious incidents or misconduct, or workplace conflict that relates to a work health and safety risk.

The PWSS independent workplace review and resolution mechanism, available to current and former parliamentarians and MOPS Act employees, is now able to review all incidents of bullying, assault, sexual assault, harassment, sexual harassment, and unreasonable workplace conduct that amounts to a risk to work health and safety. This means that the PWSS can review complaints concerning conduct that occurred before 18 May 2019.

A digital platform has been established to receive anonymous complaints, and additional information is available about the handling of anonymous and bystander reports. The reporter can choose to use a pseudonym and can provide contact details if they would like follow up support from a PWSS case coordinator

For further information, visit [www.pwss.gov.au](http://www.pwss.gov.au).

## Review of the Members of Parliament (Staff) (MOPS) Act 1984

The Set the Standard Report recommended a comprehensive review of the MOPS(S) Act to ensure consistency with modern employment frameworks. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet is seeking feedback on the MOP(S) Act.

You can [make a submission to the review here](#) or contact [Mops.Act.Review@pmc.gov.au](mailto:Mops.Act.Review@pmc.gov.au) for more information.

Submissions close at 5pm AEST on 8 June 2022.