

Sector Reference Group

24 June 2021

Wembley Golf Course

SECTOR REFERENCE GROUP (SRG) MEETING

Date	Thursday, 24 June 2021
Time	3.15pm – 4.20pm
Attendees	34 in person, 8 via Zoom
Chairs	Tony Brown and Davina Hunter

SUMMARY OF MEETING

Welcome, introductions and acknowledgement of country by Tony Brown (**TB**)

- Review of slides that provided to attendees.
- TB discussed the introduction of the Industrial Relations Legislation Amendment Bill (**Bill**) into State parliament in 2020, and that this has not progressed since then. TB advised that the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (**DMIRS**) has advised that minor amendments will be made to the Bill.
- Davina Hunter (**DH**) discussed the reasons for establishing the SRG and the need to develop the Terms of Reference (**TOR**) for the group. The SRG were advised that the purpose of the group meeting today was to provide an overview and receive feedback on the types of information and resources that LGs require from WALGA in the future.
- WALGA lobbied Members of Parliament in 2020, which contributed to the Bill not passing the Legislative Council before the final sitting date in 2020. As the Labour party has a majority of members in the lower and upper houses of Parliament, any further lobbying will prove difficult as the introduction of the Bill is not likely to be opposed.
- Summary of the WALGA advocacy position as confirmed by May 2021 WALGA State Council resolution – modernisation of the WA IR system to align with the Federal system and for the State Government to provide adequate funding to enable a smooth transition.
- WALGA representatives will meet with the new State IR Minister in July 2021.
- DMIRS are preparing wage summaries of the two WA State Local Government Awards to provide the sector in response to WALGA's request.
- DH and Rosemary Miller from the WALGA ER team recently met with the WAIRC to ask for assistance with navigating their library resources and to determine whether there is any training that can be offered by the WAIRC library. It was noted that the WAIRC do not appear to be ready for the influx of employees when LGs move to the WA State system. However, the WAIRC staff are helpful in WALGA's experience.

- Updates on other meetings – WALGA ER recently met with the ASU in response to the applications for the two new State awards (which contain the same terms as the two Local Government interim awards).
- Future preparations – WALGA has an allocated budget to seek legal advice regarding the transition. The recent survey conducted by WALGA ER has shown that LGs also consider legal advice will be required to navigate the transition.
- The WALGA ER team have started preparing resources to assist subscribers with the transition as part of a ‘toolkit.’
- WALGA is planning to engage a Consultant to canvass the LG sector about their needs as part of the transition and to obtain feedback on preferred terms and conditions of employment if the sector is successful in modernising the State awards.
- The ER service operates on a subscription basis. The ER service can provide certain support for the sector as a whole, particularly around advocacy, but in-depth support will be limited to ER subscribers as they fund this service.
- DH gave an overview of ministerial review process– slide ‘Ministerial Review of State IR System’.
- DH provided a recap of the transitional provisions.
- A question was asked if a Federal EA has expired and the transition occurs, what happens to the Agreement? DH confirmed DMIRS will be contacted to ask about this specific matter (along with other questions we have about the transitional provisions), and a response will be provided to the sector once advice has been received.

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK PROVIDED

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR SRG	
Questions	Response
Q1 – How do you like to receive information from WALGA?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ER Alerts • Direct emails • Shared resources portal / specific WALGA website page • Regular face to face meetings/forums
Q2 – How do you like to provide information to WALGA?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys • Emails • WALGA website portal or specific website for IR transition • In person meetings, forums or workshops

<p>Q3 – What do you need from this Sector Reference Group?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on transition • Identify common LG issues and share information • Networking and discussion opportunities • Knowledge for prepping organisation for change • FAQs • Strategies on retaining HR professionals when LGs convert from the Federal to the State system • Standard award conditions to include in EAs • Other LG experiences including examples of transition in other states • Combined queries collated and clarified by WALGAWAIRC • Information summary for SRG attendees to provides to CEOs/Exec group • To announce progress/changes, provide feedback in person at meetings or via Zoom • Microsoft Teams group, LinkedIn group or private Facebook group for ER/HR professionals to share and connect • Update LSL Regulations • Live EA portal on union claims • Union relationships and communication with unions re role of SRG • Agree with WALGA’s proposed terms of reference for SRG • 2-3 hour seminars every 8 weeks through the transition • Help, advice and support • Need clear basic instructions on what is required, what the next steps are and when • Advice on how to change policies and procedures
--	--

FUNDING FOR PROPOSED TRANSITION

<p>Resources required by your LG?</p>	<p>Response</p>
<p>Q1 – Resources from WAIRC and State Government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for transition • Appropriate lead time for legislation implementation to all LGs to upskill • Fact sheets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Both for employers and employees ○ Summary of changes ○ Where to get help ○ Specific clause references ○ Summaries of Acts and Regulations • Q&As • Templates for policies and industrial agreements • Online guides similar to FWC • WAIRC website, easy navigation • Email alerts (decisions, award changes, etc) • One stop shop for all resources. Similar to FWO website

<p>Q2 – Training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinars on specific topics • On line training • Face to face training workshops • In house training • Train higher level staff that can deliver training to the remainder of staff • Training for HR practitioners, managers, CEOs, executive teams • Training on the transition process • Suggestions on training length. E.g. full day for HR professionals, 3 hours for managers/directors/supervisors not in HR
<p>Q3 – Resources from WALGA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fact sheets, guidelines, tool kits and templates • Key information seminars and workshops • Same as now, advocacy and advice • Comparison documents between Federal and State Awards and the Federal and State systems more generally • Assistance for officers to implement transitional arrangements • Information regarding union involvement in State system and union coverage • Coordinated legal advice available to all LGs, legal advice on planned known inconsistencies • Consistent approach to classification descriptors • Webinars and workshops • Queried whether WALGA's additional resource of 1 FTE is enough
<p>Q4 – Other</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What to do with EAs now? E.g. if have an EA that has passed its nominal expiry date (NED) or due to pass its NED? • Unfair dismissals • WAIRC needs to provide facility/helpline where you can go for help/assistance • Detailed steps to take to transition from Federal to State • Examples from other states (Qld) • Factsheet or resource for employees to explain the transition from the Federal to the State IR system • How to attract and retain HR specialists • Seek feedback from current LGs that operate in the State system and any key issues they may experience • Queried the role of enterprise agreements and whether to revert back to the award • More staff to assist with transition • Any interest in having same pay structure across all LGs? • Agreement template

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – SRG Meeting Agenda for 24 June 2021 and attached summary of projected costs from the sector wide survey

Attachment 2 – Copy of PowerPoint presentation from meeting