

# Emergency Services Reform Office

## Establishment of Working Groups

Working groups provide the 'subject matter expertise' to the Project Team. Members of working groups will be seconded from across the sector and other partner organisations.

Working groups will be charged with making recommendations to the Project Team and Reference Group. They will be required to establish a workplan, brief terms of reference and provide regular reports on their progress. These will be provided to the Reference Group and Emergency Services Reform Office (ESRO). Templates for these will be provided by ESRO. Any changes to the approved workplan will need to be provided to the Reference Group and ESRO for comment.

Composition of the working groups will be determined through an application process/registration of interest, with the Project Team determining the final composition. The Project Team may discuss membership of the working groups with the Reference Group and/or Chief Officers. Consideration may also be given to engaging people from partner organisations or those with relevant expertise (such as OCIO for IT related workgroups, DSD for Training related workgroups, OPEC for HR related work groups). As the selection for the working groups will be based on merit, not everyone that applies will be selected.

Staff applying to join a working group must manage their working group commitment with their day-to-day work commitment. The time commitment should be discussed with line managers and their endorsement should be sought. Additionally, managers are encouraged to support their staff in their endeavours to participate in working groups.

Volunteers can and should be members of various working groups. Staff must be mindful of the commitment of volunteers, and consideration must be given to meeting times and distribution of workload. Volunteers are able to seek reimbursement for travel if required (see guidelines for reimbursement). Volunteer managers are encouraged to support their volunteers in their endeavours to participate in working groups.

Each working group will have a chairperson and executive officer support. The chairperson will generally be a senior staff member who applies to be on the working group, and it would be advantageous if that person had some working knowledge of the function they were leading. The executive officer is more of an administrative role, and would suit someone with strong administrative (including written communication) skills and/or someone wishing to gain an understanding of a particular function of the organisation. Additionally, staff from the ESRO are able to provide assistance to working groups. This can be negotiated by the chairperson and project team.

Each member of the working group is required to have an email address and be prepared to utilise technology wherever possible. This will ensure the efficient distribution and exchange of information.

### **Resourcing**

Expenses associated with volunteer travel may be reimbursed in accordance with the Volunteer Finance Manual (this can be found on the Volunteer Portal). This must be included as part of the workplan submitted to the ESRO.

For some working groups, a budget may be required (for example to engage with an external contractor). The costs and timing for this must be included as part of the workplan.

Salaries of working group members will be considered an in-kind contribution by the respective agency.

Any expenditure **MUST** be considered and approved by the ESRO.

### **Reporting**

Regular informal reports from working groups must be provided to the Project Team, with formal reports (prepared by the Project Team but with Working Group endorsement) provided to the Reference Group on a regular basis. The frequency of these reports will be determined by the Chairperson of the respective working group in conjunction with the ESRO. A template will be provided by the ESRO.

### **Conflict of Interest**

Members will raise any potential conflicts of interest – the Chairperson will determine whether a conflict exists. If this conflict involves the chairperson, the ESRO will resolve it.

### **Consultation and Engagement**

Members of working groups are strongly encouraged to consult with the sector or wider partner agencies.

Any surveys are to be sent out through the ESRO – this is to ensure that people are not being bombarded with a number of surveys.

Other requests for feedback are to be coordinated through the ESRO who can then provide advice on the best way to engage with the sector (ie through the Reference Group, through newsletters, direct mail outs etc).