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PART C: Submission

1. How would you describe the workplace culture(s) of the Commonwealth parliamentary workplace(s) where you work/have worked? Please outline specific strengths and/or weaknesses in terms of workplace culture(s), based on your experiences, as appropriate.

I was employed for over [REDACTED] within the one office & had a wonderful experience. A great culture was fostered by the Member & the Chief of Staff. I was a young female employed by a male member and never had any issues with culture outside the odd "bad seed" coming on as staff but this was always appropriately dealt with. I believe there could be more focus on personal development & growth within these offices, however I also understand that given the workloads this can be challenging to achieve.

2. Based on your experiences, what are the factors that already do, or could contribute to a safe and respectful environment in Commonwealth parliamentary workplaces?

It all comes down to the people & the Members & the management within the offices. I had only good experiences in this respect. I always felt as though should an issue arise that I was able to take things to the office managers, chiefs of staff & the member themselves without being made to feel like I was creating issues etc.

3. Based on your experiences, what are the factors that may contribute to workplace bullying, sexual harassment or sexual assault in Commonwealth parliamentary workplaces?

I would say mostly the pressure that the staff & members are under. Not that this makes it acceptable. However, as previously mentioned, not once in the period of time of my employment was I ever made to feel like I was unsafe in any way.

4. Are you familiar with any Commonwealth parliamentary workplace policies, processes and/or practices in relation to staff and worker safety and wellbeing, workplace bullying, sexual harassment or sexual assault? If so, please outline your understanding of how these policies, processes and/or practices operate.

I loosely recall upon signing contracts that there was mention (I cannot recall if verbal or written) about processes and mechanisms in place. Due to how long ago this was, I would not be able to recount details. I also cannot recall whether these were official mechanisms or internal procedures put in place by the chief of staff.

5. During your time working in a Commonwealth parliamentary workplace(s), have/did you receive any education or training in relation to worker safety and wellbeing, and/or how to prevent or respond to workplace bullying, sexual harassment or sexual assault? If yes, please outline your experience of the training and whether it was useful in increasing your knowledge and/or skills in relation to preventing and responding to workplace bullying, sexual harassment or sexual assault.

Not that I am able to recall

6. Are you aware of how you and/or other people working in Commonwealth parliamentary workplaces can report workplace bullying, sexual harassment or sexual assault (either formally or informally)? If yes, please specify what reporting options exist, and outline your experience with accessing and/or using those reporting options if applicable.

I cannot recall if there was a formal process in place, I assume there would have been. Should an issue have arisen, I would have raised with my chief of staff & member directly & sought their advice on how to escalate, inclusive of raising (if relevant) with the AFP. As previously mentioned, I did not ever have an issue whilst working in the office & I therefore do not know the process well.

7. Are you aware of any supports available in Commonwealth parliamentary workplaces to people who experience workplace bullying, sexual harassment or sexual assault? If yes, please specify what supports exist, and outline your experience with accessing and/or using those supports if applicable.

I am not aware. Based on my knowledge of being a MOPS staffer I expect that there would be support in place but as previously mentioned given I never needed to explore these options, I do not recall.

8. Based on your experiences, do you have any suggestions or recommendations on how to improve the prevention of and responses to workplace bullying, sexual harassment and sexual assault in Commonwealth parliamentary workplaces?

No

9. Is there anything else you would like to tell the Commission?

No

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