



Title:	Progressing the Public Service Amendment Bill through Committee of the Whole House stage		
Ref Number:	MoSR 2026-0065		
Date:	6 March 2026		
To:	Hon Judith Collins KC, Minister for the Public Service Hon James Meager, Minister progressing the Bill in the House		
Contact:	Stephanie Wyse, Manager – Policy, Strategy, Policy and Integrity, ph 9(2)(a) privacy		
Encl:	Yes (responses to remaining tabled amendments)	Priority:	High
Security Level:	IN CONFIDENCE		

Purpose We understand you are likely to be progressing the Public Service Amendment Bill (the Bill) through Committee of the Whole House stage on Tuesday 10 March. This Aide Memoire summarises progress already made and provides a reminder of key points that may arise in the ‘summing up’ debate on the preliminary clauses.

Background On Tuesday 17 February the Committee of the Whole debated and voted on Part 1 of the Bill (which contains all of the substantive provisions), agreeing for these provisions to stand part. The remaining Parts to be debated or voted on include:

- **Part 2** – containing 10 minor, consequential amendments to other statutes as a result of the substantive changes in Part 1. These are summarised on pages 38 & 39 of the supporting material we provided to your office on 4 February (MoSR 2026-0023 refers);
- **Schedule 1** – this minor change inserts transitional provisions into the Act to provide for the shift from two current Deputy Public Service Commissioners to one; and
- **The preliminary clauses 1** (Title) and 2 (Commencement – providing for the Bill to come into force the day after Royal Assent).

Remaining tabled amendments There is one amendment related to the Title clause from Hon Hernandez, which proposes to change this to “The Privatising the Public Service Amendment Act”.

There are five amendments relating to Commencement:

- one from Hon Hernandez proposing that the Act should come into force the day after a Commission of Inquiry into “appointment processes within the public sector”
- four from Hon Belich proposing various commencement dates for all or parts of the Act. The main reason advanced for these changes is to reflect the “constitutional significance of the reforms and ensuring agencies and employees have adequate time to prepare for structural and governance changes”.



The original versions of these amendments, along with our handwritten responses prepared during debate, are attached to this report.

**General points
that may arise
during debate**

Given that debate on the preliminary clauses can also allow for a ‘summing up’ of members’ concerns, there are a number of broader themes that may be raised again at this stage. In the debate on Part 1, these issues were largely raised in the form suggested in the supporting material, and were all responded to. They included concerns about:

- a perceived lack of rationale for the Bill, and the lack of public consultation and bi-partisan consensus during the policy development phase of the Bill – *see pages 12-13 of the supporting material for suggested responses;*
- a perception that the changes to the purpose clause, the removal of re-appointment provisions for chief executives, the ability for the Commissioner to designate and be involved in appointments to key positions, and the provision for DPMC to appoint members of the Policy Advisory Group on fixed-term contracts would all create risks to political neutrality or the politicisation of the public service – *see pages 14-15, 35-36, and 21-22 of the supporting material;*
- a concern that changes to the purpose clause and replacement of agency specific long-term insights briefings with one such briefing coordinated by DPMC would undermine the public service’s focus on the long-term public interest – *see pages 14-15 and 32-33 of the supporting material;* and
- A concern about the removal of references to pay equity and freedom from bias in remuneration and the ‘diversity and inclusion’ provisions in the Act – *see pages 19, 23-25, 27, 31, and 35 of the supporting material.*

Next steps

We are available to discuss any of these issues or any other concerns you may have ahead of the remainder of the Committee stage, if you wish.

Noted

Hon Judith Collins KC
Minister for the Public Service

Hon James Meager
Minister progressing Bill in the House