

ESTA UCC UPDATE

On 18 November 2021, the AEAU participated in the ESTA Consultative Committee (**UCC**).

The purpose of the Consultative Committee is to provide a process that supports positive and constructive consultation between the AEAU and ESTA. It's also where AEAU members can raise concerns and get answers from ESTA representatives. Topics discussed at the most recent UCC were:

Agenda Items
Better Management of Overtime Messaging
Opening FSV multiskilling opportunity to more staff
Auditing during pandemic changes
CT/DP wage disparity discussion
VPSC People Matters Survey
Incorrect Course enrolment data
Ability for Ambulance call takers to disconnect from abusive callers
Funding for ongoing Ertcomm ARO
First Aiders (Team Leaders)
Accessing Leave due to furloughing of unvaccinated staff
Reduction & 'dumbing down' of L&D Services

ESTA Presentations
Netcomm Workflows – Paddy Goodall
Talent Pools
Flexible Learning – Kylie West
Centre of Excellence Pilot
Proactive Mental Wellbeing Check Pilot

If you would like us to raise a concern at the next ESTA Consultative Committee or would like to discuss any of the agenda items from the recent meeting, speak to your union delegates Sharyne Doensen or Roger Parker. Alternatively, you can contact the AEAU via email aea.vic@unitedworkers.org.au

Agenda Items	
1.	<p>Better management of Overtime Messaging</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members are receiving multiple OT messages outside of work hours. ESTA will speak to WFM and find out how many messages have been sent over the past few months and will see if they can improve the process.
2.	<p>Opening FSV Multiskilling Opportunity to more staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When will the opportunity be made for BalSECC Ambulance staff to multi-skill? Information will be coming out over the coming months for BalSECC BalSECC will apply equitable access as is now being applied at Tally Ho. Dependent on workload demands.
3.	<p>Auditing during pandemic changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is ESTA auditing the new Ambulance call taker workflows? ESTA appreciates the workforce taking on the new changes and frequency in which the changes occurred. ESTA do not consider errors relating to these rapid changes to be a performance related matter. TL's were looking at workflows when doing audits, however most attention has been on new operators. But again - not as a performance appraisal matter. QIT team would have difficulty reconciling it to a shift report.
4.	<p>CT/DP wage disparity discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions required on how we rectify and define the call-taker role. Attrition is a problem in the role and the role itself is challenging. Unions and ESTA need to work together to find solutions. EBA negotiations are further away to discuss this, June 2023 the EBA expires so it won't be until early 2024 that anything legally binding will occur.
5.	<p>VPSC People Matters Survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns about ESTA not providing data of people matters survey when requested by unions. A full report is coming out this week and will be provided to all employees.
6.	<p>Incorrect Course enrolment data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request for ESTA to ensure enrolment data is correct before sending out. By the time the course was launched there was a loss of new employees, ESTA acknowledge the error and will double check this data in the future.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FTE 2.8 increase - can ESTA clarify at what point from employment through training to mentoring that an employee is counted in the 'FTE' increase? <i>[Prue to clarify – matter still outstanding]</i>. Data for secondments to be provided to unions. ESTA to date the data in the monthly UCC Report.
7.	<p>Ability for Ambulance Call Takers to disconnect from abusive callers (AEAV)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ambulance call-takers have no avenue to disconnect or transfer abusive callers which is affecting the mental health of staff. ESTA used to have a workflow where call-takers could transfer callers to the Duty Manager. Request for this workflow to be re-instated. Police also have a workflow to disconnect when abused. Request to make sure a process is formalised so that staff aren't having to develop workarounds Michelle O'Donoghue is currently looking into giving Ambulance the same workflow as Police. Request acknowledged and ESTA says this is something they should be able to get up and running quite quickly & Michelle is happy to get the work done.
8.	<p>Funding for ongoing ARO in ERTCOMM (AEAV)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ERTCOMM ARO 1400-0200hrs has somewhat assisted with workload Still have concerns that ESTA has not put forward a business case to have the ARO position permanently funded. AEAV would like to know who will advocate for a permanent ARO. ESTA can't say when the funding for ARO would be put to ERC for approval. AEAV request an opportunity for delegates and staff to have input with relevant parties on the proposal Paul Hodgen identified Cameron Turner as having carriage of any business models for funding proposals of this nature. As the consolidation of funding is currently in progress – ESTA will have Cameron Turner debrief the unions on what has been put to Government.
9.	<p>First Aiders (Team Leaders) (AEAV)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why were all TLs rostered onto a First Aid course? Concern that some staff thought it was compulsory & that it appeared this was ESTA just 'ticking a box'. Paul Hodgen advised this is a workplace health and safety requirement for ESTA to have first aiders present at the SECC 24/7. ESTA will make it clear that the first aid course is not compulsory. AEAV request for ESTA to clarify if the First Aid training that all Ambulance staff already undertake is covering this. ESTA to follow this up to reduce training duplication.

10.	<p>Accessing Leave due to furloughing of unvaccinated staff (AEAV)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern that furloughed staff on leave due to vaccine mandate are being included in the leave liability, which is affecting other staff's ability to access leave. • ESTA advise unauthorised staff are considered separately, similar to a staff member on maternity leave. • ESTA also advise that the available leave has not been reduced. • Union raised concern around furloughed staff affected Short-notice Leave (SNL). There are times where SNL will not be available due to unauthorised workers. • ESTA advise SNL is only looked at on the day and so ESTA believe their hands are tied. • Has ESTA asked unauthorised staff whether they are intending on returning after leave? If ESTA has a time-line this could assist in replacing staff who will not return. • ACMs are keeping in touch with staff and respecting their position, some staff do not wish to speak to ESTA at the moment. • Government regulations and directions will have a big influence on this, and ESTA will be recruiting to replace staff who will not return. • ESTA have agreed to commit to a meeting to discuss the plan to address SNL and unauthorised workers in the first week of December.
11.	<p>Reduction & 'dumbing down' of L&D Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESTA advised of a reduction in the requirements for hiring of CTD employees, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Reduced typing speed</i> ○ <i>Reduced cognitive ability testing</i> ○ <i>Panel interview replaced with video interview</i> ○ <i>Assessment centre scrapped</i> • Unions raised the concern that a lower standard will lead to increases in failures and early attrition and may also place extra burden on Trainers, Mentors and TL's • AEAV requested further information on the nature of the cognitive ability testing and a comparative outline of what is / is not being tested. ESTA have agreed to supply this information

ESTA Presentations	
12.	<p>NETCOMM Workflows</p> <p><i>Presenter: Paddy Goodall</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESTA wants to explore whether Netcomm can assist Ertcomm in the 16-25 minute mark to process DRREQ2 & IHTQAP2 events • ESTA advise that this idea arose from a ‘think tank’ in September • ESTA advise that this will divert call demand from Ertcomm to Netcomm <p><i>Discussion</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ AEAU does not agree with the implementation of the proposed ‘diversion’ workflows and instead request an opportunity to bring forward alternatives and discussions on those alternatives with members. ○ Unions are concerned that patients in these time frames can be in critical condition, the complexities of calls with Dr and Div 1’s can be challenging and it’s a nuanced space. ○ Unions raised that this will lead to an increased workload and double handling. ○ Unions assert that ESTA is not assessing the risk on the call-taker and dispatcher; changes are being implemented by ESTA’s narrow view that the pandemic is the cause of current delays in call wait-times. The Unions assert the real reason for protracted call wait-times is long-term shortfalls in baseline staffing levels. ○ Unions wants a risk assessment and a formal process for consultation ○ ESTA says they understand that they would need to support the staff, but they believe that this would be better for the patient than the call being left on hold. ○ ESTA agreed to consulting members in further meetings and asking for feedback. ○ ESTA agreed to a risk assessment however, the risk assessment will be based on the feedback from consultation.
13.	<p>Talent Pools</p> <p><i>Presenter: Prue Taylor</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESTA are developing their selection process to enter a talent pool • Talent pool positions for dispatch, ATL & ACM will be advertised twice a year • Talent to stay in the pool for a two-year term • ESTA commit to giving those people in the talent pools on-shift learning opportunities while within that pool • As opportunities arise, the vacancies will open to the talent pool first through a formal selection process

Flexible Learning

Presenter: Kylie West

- Training is a hybrid model and consists of offsite theory with remote support
- Pre-recorded webinars that learners can revisit
- Assessments can be completed remotely and will be timed
- Practical assessments are mandatory lab days will take place onsite
- Mental health and safety in ambulance is an issue, however ESTA believe on-shift mentoring will address this
- ESTA do not believe this will impact candidate quality or attrition and the assessments will remain the same
- In terms of reviewing ESTA will do a formal evaluation of the initiative – scheduled 3 months from the program

Union Discussion, Q&A

14.

- Unions put to ESTA that groups trained onsite are coming in underprepared. Concern that there will be exacerbated issues if training occurs offsite.
 - ESTA is treating this like a pilot – unions request consultation through tracking
- How will confidentiality be managed?
 - ESTA using CAD Training database – ESTA to check if confidential info will be available, e.g. LOI addresses
- Issue is that this is available within people's homes
 - ESTA is to look at this but says they trust their people
- Mentoring – non-standard rosters, will people potentially have two mentors?
 - Yes.
- Mental health of learners is not just about the content of the call, but the support staff receive from mentoring and training – has there been a mental health and risk assessment been done?
 - No current risk assessment has been done and there seems to be no plan to have one.
 - ESTA aims to monitor through the mental health plan.
- Why hasn't ESTA kept this in house?
 - ESTA believes they can trial doing things differently and in new ways and the market is signaling that this is possible. To qualify – ESTA advise that the market is an assessment made by "The Talent Team"
 - Recruitment and Talent Team say the market is telling them that people want the off-site training.
 - ESTA intend to measure against records from the last six years to see how this initiative compares
 - ESTA can provide an audit after the first 12 months.
- Have ESTA approached ESOs in other states to see if they have gone about similar rosters and remote training to learn from them?
 - No.

Centre of Excellence Pilot & Proactive Mental Wellbeing Check Pilot

Presenters: Lauren McDonald & Tim Peck

15.

- The Centre of Excellence have been engaged by the Government to further develop a mental health strategy that assists 7 emergency service members (FRV, CFA, VicPol, ESTA, SES, Ambulance & DEWLP Fire-Fighters).
- The initiative is called “Responder Assist”
- Aims to provide:
 - better information to feed back into the program
 - education and cultural awareness to clinicians
 - research and capturing information to understand why people are getting injured and what’s happening once injured
- The program will have a specialist network of physicians to assist members, 1 of which will be employed fulltime with Phoenix – data will be collected through that process.
- Specialist network is not a free service and has to be elected by the member

Discussion

- How is this different from EAP? *Assessment will be more thorough at referral. EAP can be problematic when ESTA can’t figure out where the person got “lost”*
- What info is ESTA receiving? *ESTA would assist with scheduling and would receive de-identified data*
- When will scheduling take place (During work or outside)? *Specifics haven’t been worked out yet. Each health check will take an hour and they hope will be during work hours*
- Will night shift workers be able to access assistance? *The initiative aims to provide assistance outside of working hours and across all shift times*