



STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

ELIZABETH KICKERT MLA (CHAIR), MICHAEL PETTERSSON MLA (DEPUTY CHAIR), ANDREW BRADDOCK
MLA

Inquiry into referred 2019–20 Annual and Financial Reports and Budget Estimates 2020-21
ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Asked by **MR CAIN** on 10 March 2021:

Ref: OLA Annual Report 2019-20, Digital Payroll Implementation

In relation to:

1. Has any assessment been done of the new Aurion payroll processing system?
 - a. What benefits has the new system delivered?
2. Is the digital timesheet system more robust than the previous paper version?
 - a. Are staff submitting forms on a more regular basis than previously?

MADAM SPEAKER: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. Yes. At the initiative of the agency management, an internal audit prior to 'go-live' was commissioned to provide assurances to the Office's Executive Management Committee on whether the transition activities have been managed in a controlled manner. The audit resulted in eight recommendations, all of which were accepted. Five of those have been completed and three are in progress and nearly complete.
 - a.
 - Timesheets and leave applications are now submitted and managed digitally from the individual's own computer, phone or other personal device which makes the system more accessible and reduces reliance on paper based forms.
 - The system updates leave balances overnight meaning that staff can view and predict leave balances online at any time.
 - Staff can manage changes to their banking, deductions and personal details from their own computer, phone or other personal device.
 - The system applies automated processes that reduce manual interpretation and calculation of pay rules which, in turn, minimises the risk of incorrect payments.
 - Long service leave entitlements including any public sector employment history is captured in the new system and is configured to apply relevant legislative requirements.
2. Yes.
 - The system applies set rules and logic to timesheet entries which eliminate functionality errors that were common on the paper based timesheet – and ensures these entries are correct prior to being submitted for approval. This has reduced the time spent by the HR and Entitlements team chasing staff to correct errors or requesting that leave forms be submitted to match the timesheet entries.

- Automating the timesheet approval processes has reduced the time spent on following up unsubmitted/missing paper timesheets.
 - Claims for overtime and certain allowances are also automated as part of the timesheet process. This has created a more efficient system with faster payment turnarounds.
 - Time off in lieu entitlements have been configured to automatically apply complex rule sets to administer entitlements overnight, once a timesheet has been approved.
 - Also, the Office's HR and Entitlements team can now distinguish between a timesheet that has not yet been completed by a staff member and a timesheet that has been completed and lodged with the manager/member but not yet approved.
- a. Yes, although it has not entirely eliminated the need for the Office's HR and Entitlements team to follow up unsubmitted or unapproved timesheets. The new functionality discussed above has allowed the Office to identify that the latter of these two categories is the more significant issue.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Signature:



Date:

22.3.2021

By Joy Burch MLA, Speaker