

STAC PROTOCOL FOR MANAGING BUSINESS OF SHORT LIFE WORKING GROUPS

Background

1. In some circumstances, STAC may decide to conduct business by establishing a short life working group. This document describes the agreed processes for short life working group business.
2. The various processes contained within this paper will in most cases run on a parallel basis, and it is the intent of all parties that the first meeting will take place within 6 weeks of the STAC agreement to set up the short life working group. The intended timescales for the various parts of the short life working group processes are appended to this paper.

Agreeing to set up a short life working group

3. A short life working group will only be established where there is partnership agreement within STAC plenary to do so.

Setting the terms of reference

4. The administrative secretariat will draft a terms of reference for the short life working group. The terms of reference should include the following-
 - a short description of the issue;
 - the size of the group;
 - whether the remit of the group is to negotiate a settlement or scope an issue;
 - a timescale for the conclusion of the group's work; and
 - a lead official for each side (once identified).
5. It is for the employer and staff side secretariats to give final approval of the terms of reference before it comes into operation. It is not the role of the short life working group to establish the terms of reference.

Populating the groups

6. The administrative secretariat will contact the employer and staff side secretariats to ask for nominations for the short life working group. The number of nominations made by each side should not exceed half of the number required to populate the group and will include a lead official from each side. However one substitute may also be nominated, who may attend as a full participator in the absence of the substantive member of the group.
7. Any changes to the population of the group will only be by prior agreement between the employer and staff side secretariats.

Arranging meetings

8. The administrative secretariat will be responsible for arranging short life working group meetings liaising, as necessary, with the lead official of each side to identify a suitable date. They will also provide secretariat support for the meetings. Any papers which the employer or

staff side representatives wish to be considered by the short life working group must be routed through the respective secretariats, and should be with the administrative secretariat for circulation at least 1 week in advance of the date of the meeting. Anything which arrives from another route will not be put forward for consideration.

9. The administrative secretariat will circulate any papers due for consideration. Anything received by the group from any other source should be disregarded.

Conducting the meetings

10. The short life working group should operate within the parameters set by the terms of reference. If either side wish to diverge from this, they must first of all secure agreement from the STAC co-chairs.

11. The working group will be chaired by either both lead official on a co-chair basis, or by one of the lead officials if this is deemed appropriate by the working group. This will be decided at the first meeting.

Post meeting

12. A note of the meeting will be issued by the administrative secretariat to the members of the group and the employer and staff side secretariats.

13. The administrative secretariat will also note the action points to be taken forward from the meeting, and send a note of these to the assigned individuals(s), along with a deadline for completion. The administrative secretariat will keep track of progress with action points, and report this to the employer and staff side secretariats at the secretariats meetings.

Reaching a conclusion

14. The short life working group should look to fulfil their remits as quickly and effectively as possible. If this is not achieved within 3 meetings, then the employer and staff side secretariats will consider whether it is appropriate for the group to continue or seek to identify other ways in which the issue can be resolved.

