

Correction

Dr AMANDA COHN: Thank you both for your commitment and your enthusiasm. That's much appreciated. Last year, Mr Webb, you advised the Committee that to include non-gendered titles in the HR system onboard system was underway. Can you update us on that?

MARK WEBB: Yes, absolutely. The underlying core system SAP, which we use for HR, and the HRONboard system, which is the system that we use to onboard people into the organisation, have both been updated to include the Mx title. Also in the onboarding system, there is an option for someone to say, "The way I would prefer to refer to myself is not listed here and I would like to—", and then someone from the HR team contacts the individual and says, "Okay, yes, that's great." In our old SAP system, Mx is as far as it would be pushed, but we are in the process of starting a project to replace that system. It is 25 years old and runs all of our pay runs, so it needs to be working well. We have made a core requirement of that project the capacity to add an extended list of titles that could be included there. With that new system in place, we'll be able to extend that a little further in terms of the default list. But as I said, because we know that these replacements take a while, you don't want to get them wrong, so we put in place this other process to see if we can capture anyone who isn't captured by the Mx title and make sure that we can reflect that. It is not as structured as I would like, but it is the best we can do until we replace that core system.

Dr AMANDA COHN: Thanks. Moving forward with those new systems, I appreciate that in the style guide for other New South Wales government agencies, it's best practice to provide an option to opt out of having a title entirely. MARK WEBB: Yes, absolutely. Dr AMANDA COHN: Is that the intention with those new systems?

MARK WEBB: Absolutely, that is the case. In fact, I think—and, again, my clerks will correct me if I get this wrong—in the HRONboard system there is an option at the moment where you can say, "No, I don't have a title." I think we've worked out a way of flagging that in the SAP system as well. It requires a manual intervention, if I'm remembering correctly. But we can do it for that. We just can't extend the list of titles any further than Mx in the underlying system.

Dr AMANDA COHN: Just to clarify the current process, people can identify that their preferred option isn't on the list, and they are then proactively contacted by HR? MARK WEBB: That's correct, yes.

Further advice:

MARK WEBB: The next one was for Dr Cohn. The team just wanted me to reiterate that both the SAP and the HRONboard systems with titles, as she was asking about, does require a manual intervention to have no title in it at all. It's very difficult for those systems to deal with nothing being in that space. So they just wanted me to emphasise that the requirement is that we do a lot more manual work in that kind of situation. It's not something that just happens automatically going through. The last payroll audit that we ran was in May 2023 and found no instances of underpayments, so we're very interested in hearing about the details around what you've found and we can look into that.

Correction/clarification

Parliament recognises and supports those who do not use gendered titles and acknowledge that in their current state, Parliament's corporate systems may not provide an individual's preferred option in relation to use of a title.

For clarity, a manual intervention cannot be taken to remove the need for a title in our current SAP system. Instead manual interventions are undertaken in various aspects of our work and other systems to try and cater to an individual's preference to not use a title, to the extent that this is possible. This may include, for example, keeping a separate record of an individual's preference regarding use of title and either excluding or manually removing the title field from correspondence.

Whilst our current HR systems have been updated to provide Mx as a non-gendered title option, the requirement for a title to be included has been noted as a significant limitation and we recognise that our manual interventions are not infallible. In the design for a replacement of the Parliament's core HR and payroll system we have stipulated a requirement for a title field to be left blank, as well as an ability to easily update and add preferred titles.

Parliament continues to engage with our systems support provider to investigate alternative options and interventions for the Title field in our current state.