



Office for Seniors
Te Tari Kaumātua

Administered by the Ministry of Social Development

Aide-mémoire

Meeting

Date: 13 February 2019 **Security Level:** IN CONFIDENCE

For: Hon Tracey Martin, Minister for Seniors

File Reference: REP/19/1/028

Meeting with Human Rights Commission – Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner

Event details 3.30pm to 4:00pm on Tuesday, 19 Feb 2019 in your office

Expected attendees

- Saunoamaali'i Dr Karanina Sumeo, Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) Commissioner, Human Rights Commission
- Joanna Maskell, Senior Advisor, Equal Employment Opportunities, Human Rights Commission
- Taine Polkinghorne, Sexual Orientation Gender Identity Sex Characteristics (SOGISC) Advisor, Human Rights Commission
- Diane Turner, Director, Officer for Seniors (OFS)

Purpose of event The newly appointed EEO Commissioner requested a meeting with you to understand the plan for implementing the new strategy and discuss opportunities to support older workers.

She also wants to talk about the Amendment to the Births, Deaths, Marriages, and Relationships Registration Act. The Department of Internal Affairs has been asked to provide advice on this matter.

Background The Human Rights Commission (HRC) has three Commissioners; the Chief Commissioner, Disability Rights Commissioner, and EEO Commissioner.

Dr Karanina Sumeo was appointed to the EEO Commissioner role at the end of 2018. One of her responsibilities is to lead, evaluate, monitor, and advise on equal employment opportunities.

HRC made a written submission to the development of the new strategy and recommended the Government:

- To implement a national strategy for the ageing workforce,
- To develop an Ageing Workforce tool-kit for employers and workers, and

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- To run a campaign about the benefits of older workers to dispel myths and reduce discrimination.

OFS has had a strong relationship with the previous Commissioner and is looking to continue this with Dr Karanina Sumeo. The Director met with Dr Karanina Sumeo in December 2018 and provided her with an overview of seniors' issues.

Suggested talking points

Employment was the fourth most mentioned topic by people from last year's public consultation for developing a new strategy. Submitters said that older workers are more likely to face ageism, reduced opportunities and options.

The draft strategy is on schedule to be released in March/April 2019 for public consultation. We are proposing that older people should be able to work if they want to or need to, are fairly treated and valued for their contribution, and those who cannot work are provided with support.

To maintain the momentum of the strategy some possible initial priorities have been identified:

- Encouraging workplaces to employ people over the age of 50 and provide guidance to employers on supporting older workers to contribute their potential
- Encouraging the State Sector to be a role model of good employment practice in supporting of an ageing workforce

These priorities are subject to budget approval, and/or agreement from the respective Ministers. It may also change after consultation with stakeholders.

We are aiming to launch the new strategy towards the end of this year and then work on detailed action/implementation.

Possible questions

- What are your priorities as the new EEO Commissioner?
- What are the actions/programmes that are proposed or underway by the HRC to address ageism, and reduced options and opportunities for older workers?
- How can we work together to address these issues for older workers in the strategy and action plan?

Next steps

We would appreciate your support and feedback on the draft strategy once it is released for consultation.

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