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## PART C: Submission

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Thank you for your work on making Parliament House a safer workplace for all.

I have worked for a Member of Parliament for roughly two years, and had not intended to make a submission to this Review because I believed the voices of those who has experienced this workplace for longer should be elevated. However, due to an incident of serious nature that I experienced in the time since this Review was announced, I decided to make a submission.

To summarise my answer to some of the questions laid out in the online form, we received brief and light training on a number of issues including bullying on a platform [REDACTED] though these training services are not thorough by any means. I was not aware and had not been made aware of how people working in Commonwealth parliamentary workplaces can report workplace bullying, sexual harassment or sexual assault, other than through internal party processes. Overwhelming feedback from my peers on the EAP counselling service is that it has failed in processing times, proper assistance and even to pick-up the call from their end in some cases.

Due to a recent incident of sexual harassment I experienced, I wanted to speak further to the culture of Parliament House. It's undeniable that long hours, excessive drinking, and high stress have contributed to a culture where people are made to feel vulnerable and others have room to act inappropriately. On top of this there are three other cultural factors that contribute to this behaviour: a powerful hierarchical structure, isolation due to the locations of Electorate Offices, and a strong notion of who is 'good' and 'bad' due to the political nature of the work.

These factors make Parliament House a largely unique workplace with unique relationships. Because of this there is little in the way of induction or otherwise that indicates to new staff what *is* and *isn't* appropriate behaviour in this workplace.

**I want to make the point that the onus often falls on women to teach other women what behaviour is normal and what behaviour is not. This sort of guidance and mentorship from more senior women is emotionally taxing and time consuming, with no remuneration or compensation of any kind.**

Without correcting this imbalance of responsibility, the culture of Parliamentary workplaces will never change. My own recent experiences have made clear that the public discourse, elevated profile or any of the increased scrutiny regarding sexual harassment in Parliamentary workplaces over the past few months is still not enough to change people's behaviour and internal action has to be taken. Whether this means establishing induction processes and training, a more equal representation of the genders in the workplace, or cultivating a culture where men are equally responsible for making change, it is crucial that inappropriate behaviour has real consequences or women will continue to be targeted.

I hope that this is of some assistance and thank you for your time.