

RedTape



Public Service Association of NSW

www.psa.asn.au

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February/March 2013

PSA soothes compo journey pain

The PSA has finalised arrangements to ensure that members are once again covered if they suffer an injury or are killed while travelling to or from work.

The move was essential after Barry O'Farrell slashed workers compensation in June 2012 including – except in extremely limited circumstances – the ability to lodge a claim for an injury suffered while travelling to or from work.

Given most members travel some distance to work and back each day and cross paths with a countless variety of possible risk factors – from being hit by a car while crossing the road or being in a car accident to falling down stairs on a train or slipping on a wet footpath – protection and coverage for loss of income is vital.

The PSA Journey Protection Scheme aims to provide income support and lump sum payment for those who are full financial members of the union at the time of the incident.

It will provide income protection up to 85% of salary or \$1500 per week for up to two years.

Due to the Association's group buying power we have been able to purchase the insurance at a significantly discounted rate.

The PSA will absorb the cost of the insurance from surplus funds so no additional contribution from members will be necessary.

This may change in the coming years if injury rates increase.

Coverage will take effect from March.

The PSA scheme will provide peace of mind for fatigued shift workers and those who live in outer metropolitan or regional areas where longer travel times to and from work are involved.

The Government has attempted to peddle the falsehood that in the event of a car accident while travelling to or from work, coverage can be provided by compulsory third party insurance.

This is totally untrue.

On many occasions, if at fault, you are not covered for medical expenses and loss of income resulting from a car accident.

And CTP insurance certainly does not offer coverage if an injury occurs on public transport or on a footpath.

The PSA Journey Protection Scheme is in addition to the existing accident insurance coverage for members – and if they choose, their families – which may provide a lump sum for permanent injury or death.

The PSA's Provident Fund also provides a benefit of \$3,500 to a nominated beneficiary in the event of the death of a member.

"While it is a disgrace that it was necessary to provide insurance cover for members for travel to and from work, I am pleased that the PSA has secured such a worthwhile benefit," said PSA General Secretary, Anne Gardiner.

"In 2013, the PSA will be continuing the fight to regain all of the entitlements that

the NSW Government stripped away with the changes to workers compensation.

"The Government's amendments will not result in a reduction of worker injuries or illness and nor will they do much to improve the return to work experience following an injury.

"The Government's focus should be on the prevention of illness and injury."

Details and conditions of the insurance scheme will be posted on www.psa.asn.au/resources/value-added-services as soon as they are available.

Information regarding the Accident Insurance Scheme and Provident Fund are currently on this site.

Go to www.nswforall.org.au and join the fight against O'Farrell's cuts to workers compensation.



The silent cuts campaign
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Anne Gardiner

From the General Secretary

Time to change the conversation



The PSA Executive: Steve Turner, Assistant General Secretary; Sue Walsh, President; Anne Gardiner, General Secretary; Shane O'Brien, Assistant General Secretary; Cassandra Coleman, Senior Vice President; Wendy Hurry, Vice President and Nicole Jess, Vice President.

Hello PSA members.

As I take up the role of PSA General Secretary, I am very conscious of the fact that thousands of you, our members, are losing their jobs.

The scale of this attack on workers is unprecedented and the lack of an overarching plan from the NSW Government makes mounting a defence very difficult.

However, the PSA's new management team and staff are united in their determination to fight these cuts and the Government's privatisation agenda.

Our recent win with the Conditions Award shows what can be achieved with the strong backing and involvement of members.

As we know, there is currently an international assault on workers' rights and conditions.

Even in prosperous countries like Australia, flawed arguments about the need for continual increases in productivity are being used to push the privatisation agenda.

The NSW Government/SOCs (State Owned Corporations) and higher education employers need to acknowledge that workers are human beings, not machines, and that at a certain point increases in work pressure will not result in higher productivity just higher rates of illness, injury and dissatisfaction.

It is our role as union members to "out" the NSW Government and any other employer who tries to use job cuts and privatisation as lazy, short term methods of balancing the budget or reducing costs.

The people of NSW are gradually starting to understand that privatising public sector services only results in increased costs and reduced service quality in the long term.

As the new PSA General Secretary I see part of my role as linking our union with the broader community to explain the importance of good public services and public education.

As the first public servant to be elected as PSA General Secretary in more than 10 years, I am acutely aware of the need for us

to promote the work being done by our members.

We are important people.

We keep the machinery of government going.

The fact is that you don't know what a good public service is or does until you no longer have one.

A good public service provides the type of response we saw recently with the bush fires and the floods - heartfelt thanks to our members in the Rural Fire Service, SES, National Parks, Forests and all our members who are volunteers.

In addition, a good public service also prepares for disaster and the recovery afterwards.

A good public service thrives on preparedness. That means policy preparation, logistics, purchasing, planning and meetings between people in different government departments to decide who does what so that resources are properly allocated and responsibilities understood.

Yes, it means "bureaucracy".

My role will be to explain why bureaucracy isn't a dirty word. Without bureaucracy you end up with the type of response

Americans saw during and after Cyclone Katrina. That is, no proper response at all.

In NSW, the community hasn't yet really noticed that the public sector is being gradually chipped away. That they have not is a tribute to your efforts, plugging the holes as best you can. But this can't go on forever and we need to articulate exactly what it is that the community loses each and every time public sector jobs are cut or privatised.

As PSA members we need to change the community discussion in this regard. We need to point out that the public service cannot be directed by profit.

A good strong public service is an integral part of a civilised society.

We understand that there are budget constraints which must be met. But before decisions are made we ask that our employer talks to us and listens to us. If this process doesn't occur poor, short sighted decisions will continue to be made. Then in the not too distant future when a disaster occurs, instead of feeling confident that there will be a co-ordinated professional

response, the people of NSW will be left wondering.

In addition to communicating our role, another part of my job as General Secretary is to ensure that the day to day running of the union is undertaken in a transparent and accountable manner.

To do this, the PSA requires clear documented systems and a structure which supports and adapts to the needs of members.

It also requires documented policies and procedures as well as codes of conduct and these are currently being developed.

Whilst policy changes such as the need to remit Board fees back to the union may not be universally popular, they are necessary to ensure that we have a union which will stand up to external scrutiny.

In an effort to improve transparency, this edition of *Red Tape* includes the salaries of elected officials.

I look forward to working with members and staff to strengthen our union so that we can protect public sector jobs and conditions.

**Anne Gardiner
General Secretary**

PSA library an open book

The PSA has a library available for use by all members of the Association.

The Library has a significant collection of resources in both paper and electronic formats, including a book and journal collection in industrial relations, public sector management, industrial law, work organisation, NSW politics and government, and women's studies.

It also contains unique historical collections of NSW – and some Commonwealth – industrial and law reports, gazettes and unreported judgments; a complete set of NSW legislation dating from 1826; a comprehensive collection of our own industrial instruments (awards, agreements and determinations, etc), as well as access to a range of online databases and services.

The Library is open to all members of the PSA and can be visited in person or contacted by phone or email during business hours.

Appointments can be made for specific requests or assistance.

Members can borrow from the library's extensive collection with the permission of the librarian, Martin Stott.

Access to computer facilities for internet browsing, email, office software, scanning and imaging is also available.

The Library is located at:

Level 9, PSA House, 160 Clarence Street, Sydney

PHONE (02) 9220 0962 FAX (02) 9262 1623 EMAIL psalibrary@psa.asn.au

Delegate meetings

Delegate meetings and training are currently being organised for mid March.

The initial locations will be in Newcastle, Wollongong and the Sydney CBD.

Further information regarding venues and dates will be advised soon by email.

Public sector conditions saved NSW Government backs down

In a major first round victory for the PSA, on 12 February, the NSW Government withdrew its application for a new, downgraded Conditions of Employment Award and their intention to slash the hard won conditions in up to one hundred other public sector awards.

The Government's move follows the strong opposition to the conditions cuts that were demonstrated by members at the state-wide meetings on 8 October.

The demand that the Government withdraw its conditions application was top of the list of concerns in the resolution passed by members at the stop work meetings.

Had the Government not withdrawn its application, conditions such as sick leave, leave loading, parental leave and family and community service leave would have been cut or overhauled.

Last year's High Court decision found that the Government's 2.5

percent wage cap on public sector salaries was legal.

However, nothing can change the fact that this is bad law.

The PSA will continue to campaign to fight the wages legislation and have this law repealed.

With the conditions issue dispensed with, the PSA will now continue to fight against public sector job cuts and demand that the NSW Government unveil its overarching plan and rationale for these cuts which are having an enormous negative impact, particularly on regional areas.

Members should be proud of the action they have taken and the determination they have shown in defending their conditions.



PSA General Secretary, Anne Gardiner outside the Industrial Relations Commission on 12 February with solicitor, Nathan Keats

Barry to break back of the land

A restructure forced by a \$30 million budget cut to the Department of Primary Industries will see the heart torn from rural NSW by slashing hundreds of jobs in what is expected to be just the first stage in the introduction of Local Land Services (LLS) in January 2014.

LLS will cut a wide range of agricultural services to the state's farmers, slash a vast storehouse of knowledge and experience and disband Catchment Management and Livestock Health and Pest Authorities which have provided expert services to their respective areas.

The move is the latest example of the NSW Government's push to quietly remove themselves from the cost and responsibility of providing proper services while, in this case, increasing DPI related charges for farmers and greatly reducing services.

The Department's prized research capabilities will be crippled under the proposals.

The cuts associated with the Local Land Services will not only impact heavily upon workers and their families but also the economies of rural communities.

Local farmers will be taking a double hit; to both the services they require for their livelihood and to the region in which they live.

Plans for the proposed LLS show:

- 90 Agriculture NSW staff and 110 Catchment Management Authority staff will be sacked

- job losses from Biosecurity NSW, which researches and screens for serious stock diseases, and NSW Agriculture Business Services Division

- 120 Agricultural Advisory positions will be cut to just 45 staff without specialist technical expertise

- 51 District Agronomists will be slashed to just 14 Senior Land Services Officers (Pastures and Crops)

- 19 District Horticulturists cut to 3 Senior Land Services Officers (Horticulture)

- 13 Sheep and Wool Officers slashed to zero.

The associated Catchment Management Authorities will also suffer a 40% reduction in staff, with 257 positions slashed to just 147.

Once again, farmers will be the losers as they rely on experienced CMA staff to assist them with Property Vegetation Plans, for approval to clear native vegetation, and in gaining grants for sustainable land and water management.

In another blow to the scientific management of the environment and biosecurity, the Total Catchment Model is being abandoned and the new LLS

boundaries moved to rate payer boundaries.

We are still waiting to see the Government's plans for the Livestock Health and Pest Authorities.

We do know that with the boundaries of LLS covering just 11 areas there will be an impact on the 14 General Managers in LHP.

A massive amount of corporate knowledge will go out the door.

The PSA is similarly concerned about Senior Rangers and Senior Veterinarians.

And what of the level of LHPA administrative staff in the new structure? CSOs are often the backbone of these offices.

Further, the positions of administrative staff at Head Office in Orange may also be under threat.

The PSA commenced member meetings across the state in December to ascertain their views as well as having discussions with DPI management and local farmers.

While we have been supplied with a draft of the proposed new structure, we still do not know:

- who will be affected

- their current position and location

- options proposed for those affected; and

- proposed classifications and gradings.

The PSA has requested these details but it is quite obvious that despite regular meetings, the Government have no intention of engaging in genuine consultation with the PSA.

The PSA firmly believes that there should be no movement towards implementing the proposal until the following is determined:

- the services that will be provided by the new organisation
- where those services will be provided and by whom
- whether staffing cuts to LHPAs will be introduced after the establishment of the new organisation
- the detail of new working conditions.

Annual Conference

**Thursday 30 May &
Friday 31 May**

Country Conference

**Wednesday 29 May
Level 10, PSA House**

PSA Annual Conference is the largest gathering of PSA delegates and an advisory body to Central Council.

Workplace groups, Departmental Committees and other advisory bodies are encouraged to submit resolutions to Annual Conference, and workplaces to call meetings to elect delegates, by the deadlines below.

Places for delegates are based on workplace groups or combined workplace groups.

A list of constituencies and number of delegates per constituency will be posted on the PSA website:

www.psa.asn.au

Nomination forms can be downloaded from the PSA website or obtained from the PSA Secretariat on **(02) 9220 0935**.

An election is held where there is more than one nomination per position. (A postal ballot is held for the Western Areas Network).

Nominations close with the PSA's Secretariat at COB Friday 19 April.

Notices of motion or suggestions for discussion to be submitted to the General Secretary by **Friday 19 April**. Phone **(02) 9220 0935** for a copy of the relevant form(s).

Two days Special Leave is available to attend the Conference.

Expense forms are sent to country delegates along with their confirmation of nomination.



Sue Walsh

From the President

New year, new fight against O'Farrell

The PSA election in October resulted in a new leadership team at the PSA.

Congratulations to Anne Gardiner, the new Central Councillors and the members of the Executive on their success in the election.

I look forward to working co-operatively with Central Council, and delegates for the benefit of every member and campaigning for quality public services across the state.

As this is my first column since the election, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge John Cahill's contribution to the PSA and the wider union movement.

John worked at the PSA for 34 years and in that time shared his vast experience and understanding of the public sector and industrial relations with members, delegates and staff to enhance the position and strength of the union.

This resulted in successful outcomes for PSA members in what was often a difficult industrial environment.

I wish John all the best for the future and thank him for his loyal support and friendship over many years.

Industrially, we begin 2013 as we ended 2012, that is, fighting the cuts and relentless negative attitude of the NSW Government toward the public sector.

March will mark the Government's second anniversary in office and also the mid-point of their term.

At that time the next state election will be just two years away and presents us with an opportunity to collectively make a difference.

The sea of PSA signs at the rallies across the state on 8 October 2012 which declared 'enough is enough' sent a clear message to the Government that public sector workers are far from happy.

In 2013 we must back up that slogan with further action.

Central Council has recommended that member/delegate meetings be held in February to continue the campaign against the cuts to jobs and services.

Enough really is enough.

Redundancy protection won for SAS Staff

The PSA has forced the Department of Education and

Communities to introduce a new policy to provide redundancy provisions for school administrative and support staff.

The Managing Excess Employee Policy for School Administrative and Support Staff was put in place by the Department on 29 October 2012.

No such policy existed previously.

For some time, the PSA has argued that SAS Staff should be entitled to redundancy measures as are other public servants in NSW and that such provisions be enshrined in an award.

The Department disagreed, preferring to simply amend an existing policy which is not legally binding and can be changed at any time without consultation or agreement with the PSA.

The matter was heard in the Industrial Relations Commission in late October and President Boland handed down his decision on 16 November 2012.

It was ruled that the NSW Government's recent changes to the Industrial Relations Act – which excluded policies regarding the management of excess public sector employees from inclusion in awards – prevented the



Commission from amending the SAS Staff Award to include the redundancy clause sought by the PSA.

Following legal advice the PSA is appealing the decision.

School Principals do not have the authority to offer redundancies or nominate individuals for transfer as the transfer process is set out in the staffing operation procedures.

Redundancy is only offered when a position is abolished. It is not available for staff who resign or retire from their jobs.

The Managing Excess Employee Policy for School Administrative

and Support Staff can be viewed at www.psa.asn.au/resources/awards.

The PSA is continuing to fight for redundancy for SAS Staff and our appeal application before the Commission seeks to ensure:

- the redundancy protections apply to long term temporary staff as well as permanent staff;
- that protections are contained in the SAS Staff Award so that the Department will not be able to make changes to the provisions without first consulting with the union.

**Sue Walsh
President**

Cronulla Fisheries move

(or never let the facts, science or proper procedure spoil a flawed decision...)

The findings of the Parliamentary Inquiry into the closure of the Cronulla Fisheries Research Centre of Excellence concluded that "there is an overwhelming case to retain the scientific staff, facilities and support personnel at the CFRC location".

The findings made a mockery of the NSW Government's self-proclaimed fiscal responsibility and belief in proper process.

The Inquiry – which was convened after a tireless multi-faceted campaign by the members involved – found that there was no consultation, no business plan and no proper rationale for the decision,

which incredibly was not even considered by Cabinet before it was announced.

The Inquiry's report did however glowingly note that "the scientists at the CFRC are a special kind of public servant who cannot be easily replaced."

The Committee made 13 recommendations, most notably that the Government:

1. reverse the decision to close the Centre.
2. give all staff moved to other locations the opportunity to return to the Centre.

The NSW Government responded by thumbing its nose, and declared that it was pressing ahead with the closure and the relocation of 150 specialist jobs to Coffs Harbour, Port Stephens and Nowra.

Their reasoning? Essentially, they've already begun implementing a

lousy decision and it's too late to stop now.

Here are just some of the concerns raised in the Committee's report:

"The Committee is especially concerned that organisational change was commenced before a comprehensive economic appraisal was conducted to determine whether the closure would be supported by robust economic argument. This approach is in direct conflict with the Government's own policies including in particular the NSW Government Guidelines for Economic Appraisal."

"The three page [cost benefit] analysis does not include sufficient detail for meaningful conclusions to be drawn from it."

"...the cost benefit analysis...was unprofessional, rushed and created only for the purpose of forestalling the anticipated line of questioning at the Committee's hearing."

"...the Minister appears to have undertaken no consultation whatsoever before determining the closure of the Centre."

"Some projects would have to be 'redesigned' if they are to continue and because key senior scientists are unable to relocate, others may halt entirely."

"Such a loss may have implications not only for marine science generally but for the monitoring and assessment of fish stocks to ensure sustainable fisheries management."

And tragically, there was this, which summed up the plight of many workers involved in the whole sorry episode:

"In Chapter 4 [of the report] we described Professor Kennelly's distinguished and lengthy career as a world leading marine scientist. Because he is unable to relocate, his career is coming to an end."

Professor Kennelly's circumstances exemplify the unique problem of this closure; that is, the loss of highly specialist knowledge possessed by the scientists at the Centre. His situation is illustrative of the type of special consideration that should be given to such unique public servants."

While the battle for the Centre didn't result in a victory, the fight for it did produce something of a template for future battles against the NSW Government's agenda.

The member driven exercise brought the community into the fight and saw protests at Cronulla and outside Parliament House, a highly active website (www.savecronullafisheries.net), the securing of 19,000 signatures on a petition to have the matter debated in Parliament, three unsuccessful formal attempts to meet with Primary Industries Minister Katrina Hodgkinson and even a bus trip to her electorate in Yass by 50 members in an attempt to seek some answers.

The members' push brought about the damning Parliamentary Inquiry and its report makes for disturbing reading for anyone even vaguely interested in good government.

The report can be found at: www.psa.asn.au/?p=1956

The PSA would like to thank the Reverend Fred Nile for his support on this issue.





Workers comp win for firefighters

While the fight continues on behalf of all workers to reverse the cuts made to workers compensation, in November 2012, the PSA and the Australian Workers Union (AWU) won a victory in the Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) for members in National Parks and Forests NSW who are involved in fire fighting.

These workers were left high and dry under Barry O'Farrell's changes to workers compensation.

In his judgement, the President of the Commission found in favour of the unions' applications to have workers in National Parks and Forestry NSW recognised as firefighters for the purposes of worker's compensation when undertaking certain duties.

As a result, the definition of 'firefighter' was broadened to include a range of workers engaged in fire fighting activities so the more generous workers compensation arrangements that existed previously will once again be available to this group.

The employer had argued that our members only be considered firefighters when engaged in a declared incident. The unions opposed this and fought to have members recognised as firefighters during the entire course of their employment.

While the Commission's decision was complex and places members somewhere in the middle of the positions being sought by the parties to the dispute, members are definitely now better off than they were following the NSW Government's amendments to the workers compensation legislation.

Our delegates, Arthur Willis from the National Parks and Wildlife Service and Julian Armstrong from Forestry NSW provided excellent expert evidence to support the case.

Rewind of policy to consult

The NSW Government has unilaterally issued a new consultation policy that significantly waters down the previously central role of unions in the process.

The former policy, which had been in place since 1997, was negotiated between the Government and the PSA as part of the settlement of the Crown Employees (Public Sector Salaries 1995) Award.

It reflected the commitment of both parties to broad consultation at all levels on matters that affected public sector employees.

Central to the former policy was the clarity of the definition of consultation: "consultation enables employees, through their union(s), to participate in and influence decisions which directly affect them" – a statement which clearly acknowledged that workers should be participants in the decision making process.

Implicit in this was the assumption that this consultation should take place prior to decisions being made or implemented.

Crucially, the former policy also recognised the central role of unions in a formal consultation process.

More than just lip service, it clearly spelt out that in order for unions to fully participate, they required access to all relevant information.

It further held that consultation was to be a joint process that involved the development of appropriate mechanisms to properly facilitate such arrangements.

By deliberately winding back these measures, the NSW Government have again clearly indicated that their agenda isn't about engaging others but rolling over the top of them – just as they have done on every major issue since gaining office.

The new policy is in effect an official statement of that position, with a flawed and exclusive definition of what consultation now means and a diminished role for unions with no mechanism to force agencies to engage in the consultation process.

To make matters worse, all the crucial details regarding the actual process have been left for individual agencies to determine.

The PSA is looking at the legal remedies that may be available in the light of the new policy.

Legal advice suggests that the old policy may still be applicable despite the Government's assertion that it has been superseded.

The Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment Award) 2009 contains a reference to the Consultative Arrangements Policy and Guidelines which may indicate that the 1997 policy is in fact incorporated in the award.

If so, it could only be replaced by agreement with the PSA or by a decision of the Industrial Relations Commission.

The PSA is now considering testing this question in the Commission.



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Environmental cuts not science fiction

The NSW Government has taken an axe to front line environmental science positions crucial to the sustainable management of natural resources in NSW.

The impact of the cuts is far greater than the numbers involved with even a slight loss having an enormous effect on their vital work.

Front line Government scientists are the impartial thin green line between the interests of the community in relation to environmental protection and the excesses of the economic and development sector that the NSW Government is courting.

With the job losses go an enormous store of accumulated knowledge and experience unequalled in the private sector on a broad range of environmental sciences that cover such areas as conservation, agriculture, forestry, planning, development, and legislation.

The vast majority of useful ecological information is generated by Government Scientists who have the resources to undertake long term research – something that university students and consultants are unable to do as it is not research acceptable in a post-graduate degree and won't be funded by the private sector.

Workers who directly use science, or have a science background fill a multitude of roles that are focused on natural resource management (NRM) across the public sector.

They can be found in CMAs, the DPI (Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry and Crown Land management), the Department of Planning and Infrastructure, Local

Government, NSW Office of Water, the EPA, NPWS and the Office of Environment and Heritage.

Some of their roles include:

- researching and monitoring the effects of human activity on the environment (eg, the recovery of threatened species, the management of pests)
- providing expert advice on the potential environmental, social and economic impact of development proposals
- monitoring and reporting on environmental variables (eg, air and water) to ensure local communities are kept safe from polluting industries (eg, Orica and the rise of coal seam gas exploration)
- researching and managing natural resources (eg, broad scale monitoring of fauna/habitats)
- undertaking assessments, preparing expert witness reports and participating in prosecutions for environmental harm
- providing advice and support to local and regional community groups (Bushfire Management Committees – fire ecology; Declining Frog Working Group and Royal Zoological Society)
- implementing legislation and providing impartial advice to Government and the community on major threats such as climate change.

The Office of Environment and Heritage is losing about 350 jobs across the board, with the Science Division to be hit by a cut of approximately 15% or 30 jobs from a total of 200.

This is in addition to the previous cuts and losses through natural attrition.

Significant numbers of experienced front line scientists involved in projects such as the development and recovery of threatened species have been lost.

There are also fewer providing the basic research needed to properly manage water, forests, coast and estuaries, agriculture, land, planning and development.

O'Farrell's attack on state forests has already cut a number of the best forest scientists in Australia.

The dumping of the entire research division of Forests NSW is a possibility within the next two years, from nearly 100 positions in 1995 to potentially zero by 2015.

Forestry research in NSW would cease – a catastrophic loss in the context of cut backs in Queensland and Tasmania.

This is in addition to a cut to other science staff across NRM agencies of at least 15% in the current round of job losses.

The consequences of these losses will quite literally be felt for generations to come.

There will be less scientific scrutiny of dodgy development applications; reduced sound advice to Government; lessened capability to warn local communities about pollution and habitat destruction; and an academic loss to teaching capacity and research leadership of post-graduate students.

But then why on earth would we need to know more about how to manage our increasingly fragile environment effectively?



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Prison Officers real people with a tough job

This year the PSA is launching a campaign to enhance the image of NSW Correctional Officers.

The focus of this campaign will be on the physically and psychologically demanding work that Correctional Officers – for whom the slogan “we face what you fear” is no overstatement – undertake each day out of the public eye behind razor wire and towering walls.

Some officers believe their out of sight, out of mind position in the workforce is one of the factors behind them being ‘forgotten’ when exemptions were afforded to police and firefighters in the changes to workers compensation.

The result is that Correctional Officers are expected to respond to emergencies and critical incidents – even riots – knowing they have grossly inadequate workers compensation coverage in the event that they are injured in the course of their duties.

In most situations, Correctional Officers are not armed and due to staffing cuts, it is now common for one officer to manage a wing of around 95 inmates.

The threat of violence is part of every minute of their daily working environment. NSW Correctional Officers experience an appallingly high rate of workplace assault.

The need for a campaign to focus on this situation and the real people behind the role was sharply highlighted recently when derogatory remarks about Correctional Officers were made on radio.

The references were in relation to accusations that Correctional Officers work excessive overtime – despite the fact overtime is worked at the direction of the Department, not at the whim of the officers concerned, many of whom reluctantly do so due to inadequate staffing levels.

“It is no coincidence that the media attack on Correctional Officers immediately preceded ‘reforms’ including centralised rostering, privatisation and closures,” said new PSA Central Councillor, Jenny Singleton.

“It was clearly part of a political agenda and had nothing to do with improved efficiency. It has damaged morale”.



Staff at the Department of Corrective Services had to just wear the allegations as they are unable to respond thanks to the Department’s media policy which prevents staff from making public comment without permission.

This year’s campaign for the recognition of the work and role of Correctional Officers will be an ongoing effort aimed at building relationships with the community – many of whom have never entered

a prison or correctional facility – and making them aware of just what these workers have to contend with each day to keep the community safe.



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The state the public sector is in...

“I am delighted to talk about the state of the New South Wales public sector because, whether people realise it or not, it affects everyone in this state every day. Whether it is the train they catch to work, the great teaching they get in education, the hospital emergency department they turn up to, the State Emergency Service they ring in Penrith when another hailstorm goes through, or the Legislative Assembly attendants who assist people into the gallery, in each and every way those people provide service on behalf of the Government of New South Wales.”

– Barry O’Farrell, Legislative Assembly, 13 November 2012, clearly speaking of some parallel universe in which his Government actually values the public sector.

How it is, is the title of the Public Service Commission’s State of the Public Sector Report 2012.

But perhaps the 49-page document which was released in November 2012, should have been retitled *The State We’re In*.

After announcing 15,000 job cuts, slashing workers compensation and capping public sector wage rises at 2.5%, it was never going to be a glowing snapshot from an employee perspective. The report focuses on what the PSC believes to be the three key drivers of public sector performance: values and ethics, capability and productivity.

The data in the report will be used as a baseline measure and was drawn from four major sources:

- People Matter Employee Survey
- Workforce Profile
- NSW Public Service Ethics Stocktake which was undertaken by the St James Ethics Centre, an organisation long supported by the PSA.
- Senior Executive Services Executive Development Program.

More than 60,000 people – 16% of the public sector – took part in the *People Matter Employee Survey* which will be undertaken every two years.

The *Workforce Profile* indicated that the NSW Government is the largest employer in Australia, representing more than 11% of the state’s total workforce.

The public sector comprises 332,555 full-time equivalent employees, 37% of whom work outside Sydney with women accounting for 60.9%, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders 2.7% and those with a disability 3.8%.

The statement in the foreword of *How it is* from Commissioner Graeme Head that “the PSC is seeking to understand and report on the factors that will improve the public sector’s productivity” was a clear sounding of things to come.

As were the assertions later in the report that with an ageing population, “public sector employees will need to have strong capabilities to redesign services and work within fundamentally changed service models” and “...financial constraints require new approaches by the public sector to improve productivity”.

Little wonder that the *People Matter* survey found only 51% feel that their job is secure.

Despite this, there were diamonds in amongst the findings – such as 86% indicated in the survey that they are proud to work in the NSW public sector, while 94% believed that their workgroup strives to achieve customer/client satisfaction.

And there were some other interesting stats spread across the reports. For example, 86.6% of the public sector workforce provides frontline services which according to Barry O’Farrell’s original assurances means they should be quarantined from the axe.

Further, the lower paid (less than \$55,000) and higher paid (\$115,000 and more) are “significantly more engaged” than those in the \$75,000–\$95,000 range.

And women (65%) are more engaged than men (61%) and only 65% believe that they are fairly paid for what they do.

...and the state of public sector bullying

The following definition of bullying was provided to assist respondents to the People Matter survey.

“Workplace bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed to an employee or a group of employees that creates a risk to health and safety. Types of behaviour that could be considered bullying include: verbal abuse, excluding or isolating employees, psychological harassment, intimidation, assigning meaningless tasks unrelated to the job, giving employees impossible assignments, deliberately changing work rosters to inconvenience particular employees, deliberately withholding information that is vital to effective work performance. Bullying should not be confused with legitimate feedback given to staff (including negative comments) on their work performance or work-related behaviour; or other legitimate management decisions and actions undertaken in a reasonable and respectful way.”

Even with the Government’s get out of gaol free tone in the final paragraph, the response was damning.

Almost half (48%) of respondents reported witnessing bullying at work in the last 12 months with 29% personally experiencing bullying at work during that period.

Interestingly, the *How It Is* report states that “The PSC believes it is likely that a proportion of what people perceive as bullying arises from the absence of good performance management practices and organisational culture. A priority area of work for the PSC over the coming year is a new, sector-wide approach to performance management, mandated in recent amendments to the Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002.”

Hmmm....

The following tables from the main findings of the *People Matter Employee Survey* 2012 spell out the sorry story.

Witnessed or experienced bullying at work (% total respondents)		
	% NSW 2012	% Victoria 2011–12
Witnessed bullying at work in the last 12 months	48	36

Personally experienced bullying at work in the last 12 months		
• Experienced in last 12 months, but not currently	19	15
• Currently experiencing this behaviour	10	5
Have not personally experienced bullying at work in the last 12 months	66	76
Not sure experienced bullying at work in the last 12 months	5	4

If personally bullied in last 12 months, have you submitted a formal complaint?

	% bullied staff NSW	% bullied staff VIC
Yes	21	16
No	79	84

	% total NSW respondents	% bullied staff NSW	% bullied staff VIC
Bullied by			
A fellow worker	12	40	39
Your immediate manager/supervisor	11	38	30
A senior manager	10	35	32
A group of fellow workers	4	14	10
A client/customer	3	11	7
A subordinate	2	8	6
A member of the public	2	8	5
Prefer not to specify	2	6	11
Other	1	3	
Nature of bullying			
Intimidation	17	59	58
Exclusion / isolation	13	43	40
Verbal abuse	12	43	39
Psychological harassment	11	39	32
Deliberately withholding information vital to your effective work performance	9	30	26
Prefer not to specify	5	17	10
Being assigned meaningless tasks unrelated to the job	5	17	13
Other	4	14	11
Given impossible assignments	3	12	11
Deliberately changing work rosters to inconvenience you	3	12	9

The three reports – *How it is*; *State of the NSW Public Sector Report 2012*, the *Main Findings of the People Matter Employee Survey 2012* and the *Workforce Profile – Companion Report* are available in full from www.psa.asn.au/publications.

Bullying fightback

One of the most popular training courses that the PSA conducts is how to deal with workplace bullying. For further information contact the PSA’s Training Unit on (02) 9220 0900, 1800 467 932, or email training@psa.asn.au.

The silent job cuts – O'Farrell's quiet campaign



In the 2011 budget, the NSW Government announced 5000 public sector job cuts.

That was only round one.

It was followed in the 2012 budget with a declaration of a further 10,000 cuts arising from the Labour Expenses Cap.

Since this slash and burn process began, the PSA has been trying to keep track of exactly where and when the cuts are being made.

This – by deliberate strategy and design – has not been easy.

The Government has been doing its best to keep that information hidden from the media, public sector unions and the

Opposition, basically anyone who could raise a voice in dissent.

One particularly devious tactic that has been employed is the removal of staffing numbers from the budget papers.

While the 2011–12 Budget papers (*Budget Paper No.3*) provided FTE (full-time equivalent) employee data by program group for most agencies, an examination of the Budget Papers for 2012–13 reveals that all information on employee numbers has been omitted.

Elsewhere, the devil is in the detail. Or lack of it.

In a number of instances where departments have actually announced their intention to cut jobs it is unclear whether this is to be achieved through redundancies or natural attrition.

It is often also unclear whether the cuts are being made through the abolition or non-filling of vacant positions.

The major problem with this approach is that agencies can claim to be maintaining a staff establishment at a certain level while the actual number of staff delivering services may be significantly lower than the stated figure.

This approach – again quite deliberately – creates a statistical void with no real way of determining which functions, services and positions actually continue to be staffed adequately or even exist.

It also creates enormous strain on those staff left behind to cover the work of the vacancies.

In short, as far as the NSW Government is concerned, public sector workers don't even count as statistics.

Cuts creep

What the NSW Government announce in relation to job cut numbers is one thing...

The real figures however are emerging as an entirely different horror story.

It's a little like core and non-core promises.

Department and agency heads have been given the power to make cuts as they see fit in their respective areas and with that process an unofficial 'cuts creep' has emerged.

There are no big announcements, at least, not on a daily basis, or sudden movements that will attract attention, spook the electorate that depends on public services or cause unpleasant poll-damaging publicity.

It's all about slow burn, a gradual but determined erosion of jobs and services along with a critical loss of scientific and technical experience and knowledge.

This 'cuts creep' process only works because it occurs out of plain sight and that's the situation the PSA wants to change.

We want to shine a light onto those silent moves to get a more complete view of the Government's attacks so we can mount a strong united defence.

If you have specific information that we have missed about cuts that have been made or are to be made in your department or agency report them to research@psa.asn.au.



Members at Maitland take a stand on 8 October.

Warning!

Your personal safety is at risk

From March 2013 – Hunting is allowed in NSW National Parks

The NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell will allow recreational hunting in 79 NSW national parks and reserves from March 2013. After a trial period, this may increase to over 700 national parks and reserves.

The government's own risk assessment on recreational hunting states that park visitors, parks staff and hunters will be at risk of death or injury. It found:

Recreational hunting in National Parks is a major risk

“Most projectile injuries to people are likely to cause serious injury or death”

“...for this risk, it is not possible to reduce the consequence below major” and:

Risks will be difficult to control

“This is particularly the case on relatively flat terrain, with medium to sparse vegetations, where lines of sight over medium distances are obstructed.”

Given the level of risk, **community groups are warning people not to use any park or reserve where recreational hunting will take place.**

It simply is not safe. The NSW Government can not guarantee the safety of park workers, visitors, neighbours, wildlife, and biodiversity from stray bullets and arrows.

www.nohunting.com.au

NO HUNTING in National Parks



Central Coast training day

The PSA is conducting a training course for Central Coast members and delegates at Ourimbah TAFE on 26 February.

The course is open to both new and experienced members, and will address current issues facing workers on the coast.

It will also be an opportunity to meet new PSA General Secretary, Anne Gardiner.

Special leave is available for the course.

The course will run from 10.00am to 4.30pm.

Participants can register online by going to www.psa.asn.au and clicking on training and then General Training Courses.

Members interested in the course can also enquire at training@psa.asn.au.

The training day is to be followed by the launch of the Central Coast Community Union Alliance at 6:30pm at the Preview Restaurant, Ourimbah TAFE.

Come along and join local unions
and community members for the launch of



...our local community voice

Central Coast

COMMUNITY UNION ALLIANCE

Date:

Tuesday 26th February 2013

Time:

6:30pm for 7:15pm start
9:00pm finish

Venue:

Preview Restaurant at
Ourimbah TAFE Campus, Ourimbah

SPEAKERS WILL INCLUDE:

Local people from the Central Coast,
Mark Lennon, Secretary Unions NSW.

Finger food and drinks will be
provided free of charge

PSA scholarship

University Undergraduate Scholarship

CONDITIONS

1. The Scholarship is available at any Australian university in any course.
2. The Scholarship is restricted to students entering 1st year of a full-time course.
3. The Scholarship is restricted to children of members of the Association at the time of application who have been continuous financial members for the previous five years;
4. The Scholarship will have a value of \$850 per annum.
5. The Scholarship will be awarded in the first instance for one year and will be re-awarded annually for a maximum period of three years. A scholar's tenure shall be subject to a satisfactory report as to his/her progress and conduct.
6. The Scholarship will be awarded on results obtained in Higher School Certificate Examination and Assessment or equivalent and the award will take into account whether or not the applicant is the holder of a scholarship, traineeship, etc.
7. Subject to the provisions of Condition No. 6, the highest marks and assessment and/or aggregate will be the deciding factor in the award.

APPLICATIONS CLOSE LAST WORKING DAY OF FEBRUARY 2013

Application forms are available from Sandra Lockety, Executive Assistant at the PSA on telephone (02) 9220 0982

New Mac Gen agreement

After more than 20 bargaining meetings, approximately 40 sub-committee meetings and countless hours of discussion, members at Macquarie Generation have voted to accept a new enterprise agreement.

The vote was taken in December 2012 and while privatisation is looming, the four-year agreement which took effect from 31 December 2012 provides a 3.5% increase per year.

The agreement also contains a 2.5% sign on increase effective from 1 July 2012 to 30 December 2012.

Plus after three months with productivity measures shown to have been met:

- an additional 1% increase effective from 31 December 2012 paid as back pay
- new annualised salary arrangements commencing in March 2013 including additional GPA and new salary levels
- new annualised salary arrangements for many shift workers (including a 'safety net' arrangement for Bayswater Operators)
- an increased GPA (General Purpose Allowance)
- journey to and from work accident insurance (journey coverage was removed from workers compensation legislation)
- the introduction of a voluntary redundancy package
- improved career development packages and improved salary ranges

- medical certificates to be accepted from chemists and dentists (or statutory declarations in some cases) for personal leave
- the opportunity to 'cash out' a portion of accumulated annual leave.

Agreed productivity initiatives:

- Showers will no longer be taken during work time (exceptional circumstances will apply).
- Leave in lieu of working on public holidays replaced with additional hours of annual leave.
- Reduced instances of personal leave without evidence (Policy) – from 12 down to 4 instances – 8 days maximum – entitlement not changed.
- Working flexibly – such as cross siting, working on all plant or acting in higher grade for a duration, subject to training, competence, skills and OH&S considerations.

The PSA is moving to a new website: www.psa.asn.au

A year of enterprise bargaining across NSW

This year members across higher education are entering into negotiations for new enterprise agreements.

Those getting an early start are from the University of Sydney, University of New England, University of Western Sydney and Charles Sturt University.

In addition, TAFE NSW members will also begin negotiations mid 2013 with a number of other universities commencing the process towards the end of the year.

Discussions, listenings, meetings and consultations have been held with members and will continue

during the bargaining process to ensure all views are heard and properly represented at the bargaining table.

The input of members at each site is valuable as this information is used to compile logs of claim and steer negotiations and discussions with management.

Logs of claim have been lodged on behalf of members at the University of Sydney, Charles Sturt University, UWS College and the University of New England.



Family friendly conditions won at universities

The right to work part time for family friendly reasons has been fought and won for two members at two locations – one at UWS, and the other at UNSW.

Both cases involved women who had been working part time after having children, and were under pressure from the employer to return to work full time.

Both also involved protracted negotiations, with the union citing the universities' stated family friendly policies and their status as workplaces of choice for women, in our arguments.

The members involved were empowered by the support and advice of their union representative to persist in their fight to be able to continue to work in the job of their choice while balancing the needs of their family and life.

In the UNSW case, the manager initially stated that she had no desire for staff to work part time or job share on a continuing or permanent basis as this did not suit the needs of the work unit.

However, with determination and persistence on the part of the member and her CPSU representative, the desired outcome was won, and she is now able to work two days per week on a continuing basis.

The similarly empowered member at UWS sought the support of the Equity and Diversity Unit, and was able to cite a family friendly policy which tipped the balance to achieve the desired outcome.

She is now able to work three days a week in a continuing position.

In each case, teamwork between the member and the union won the day and paved the future for other working women and families.

TAFE NSW workplace change?

TAFE NSW is seeking to conduct a number of 'reviews' across most institutes prior to the introduction of formal change management processes as a result of NSW budget and policy adjustments.

The CPSU/PSA is very much aware that some of these 'reviews' are simply mechanisms to allow managers to avoid their legal responsibilities under the enterprise agreement and is responding accordingly to protect members' interests.

The CPSU/PSA will not allow these 'reviews' to be used as an excuse to limit, reduce or avoid their legal obligations to provide full and transparent information about proposed changes, to consult fully and broadly and take into account the views of members' when developing the final change proposal.

Members' are strongly advised to inform their delegates and organisers about any reviews, change processes and other relevant details so we can monitor TAFE NSW's compliance and the impact on you, our members.

Public interest disclosures – free training

The NSW Ombudsman is providing free training for professional staff across NSW, including members in NSW higher education, regarding new changes to the Protected Disclosure laws and processes.

All universities and TAFE Institutes are required to implement anti-corruption measures and ensure NSW public officials (ie: all professional and support staff) are protected when disclosing allegations of corruption.

Many matters may be properly dealt with by the local workplace but the onus is on institutes and universities to ensure a high level of integrity amongst the workforce.

Even minor issues need to be addressed to ensure broader corruption and serious incidents don't develop.

For training to be held at your workplace, suburb or regional area, there needs to be between 12–25 interested staff.

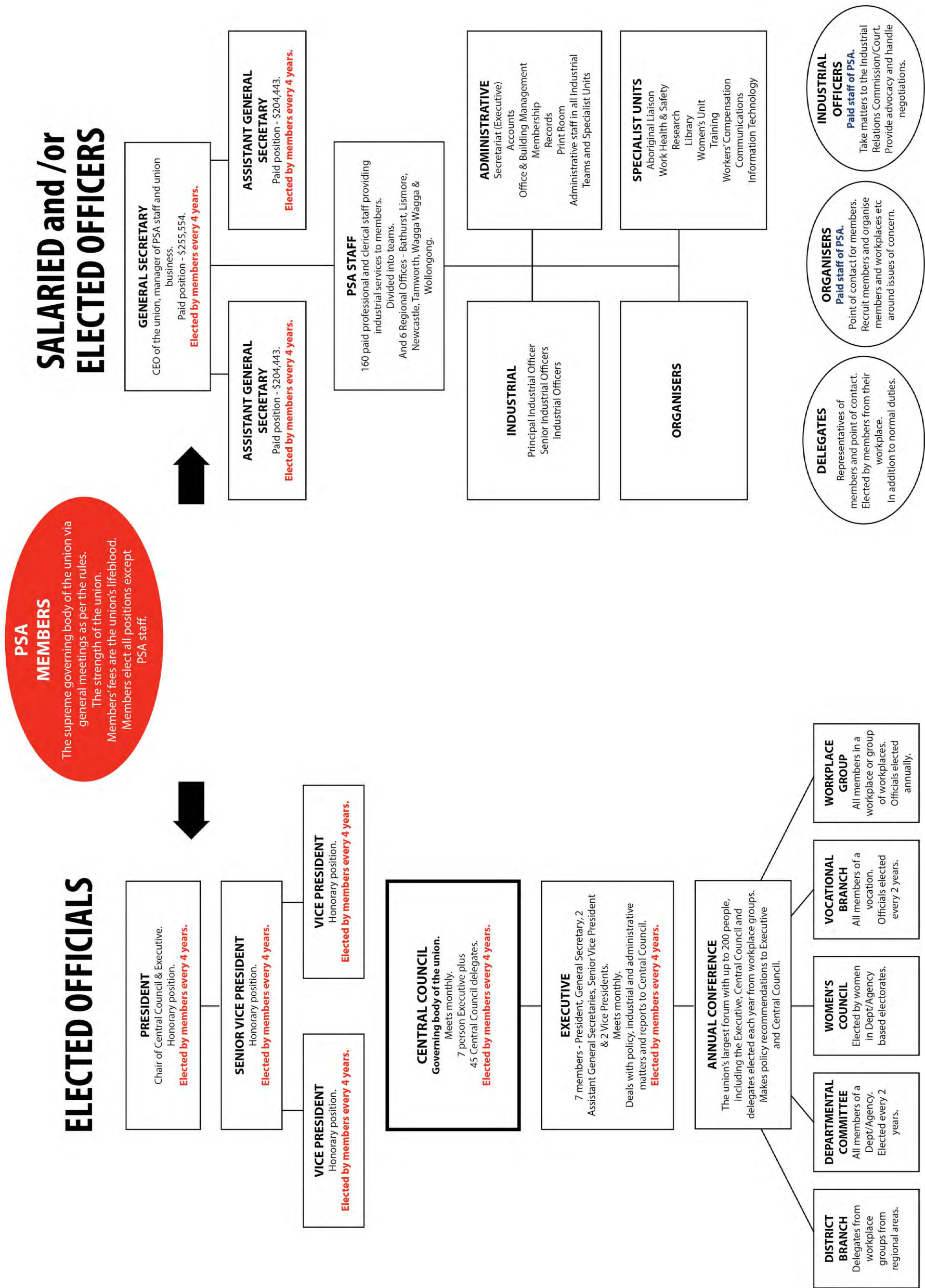
If you would like to undertake training, contact the CPSU/PSA so we can gather together interested staff across a number of workplaces to ensure the

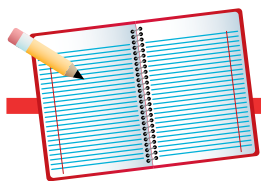
attendance requirements for the training is met.

Training is also available for managers or supervisors seeking to further their careers and covers the basics while also addressing other matters such as how to manage disclosures and the responsibilities of nominated officers and senior executive staff.

Contact the CPSU/PSA for more information.

How the PSA works – as at February 2013





PSA election results

The following is a full list of the results of the PSA's 2012 election.

The election is held every four years for positions on the PSA Executive and Central Council.

The following information was published by the NSW Electoral Commission.

GENERAL SECRETARY

Anne Gardiner

PRESIDENT

Sue Walsh

ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARIES

Steve Turner
Shane O'Brien

3 VICE PRESIDENTS

Cassandra Coleman (Senior)
Wendy Hurry
Nicole Jess

45 DELEGATES TO CENTRAL COUNCIL

Listed in order of seniority of election

Paul Petersen	Trade and Investment
Adrianne Harris	University of New South Wales
Jenny Singleton	Corrective Services
Kirsten Cameron	Legal Aid NSW
Margaret McLoughlin-Fullick	TAFE
Lindsay Hawkins	Ageing, Disability & Home Care
Boyd Kellner	Education and Communities
Leon Parissi	TAFE
Jeffrey Walters	Attorney-General and Justice
Lisa Webb	NSW Police Force
Dianne Alchin	Education and Communities
Mark Hutchinson	Corrective Services
Anabel Morales Nogues	Family and Community Services
Nicholas Neenan	Catchments and Lands
Sadie Spencer	Attorney-General and Justice
Margaret Jarosz	Health
Christine Lloyd	Rural Fire Service
Kelly Marks	NSW Parliament
Michelle Bogatyrov	Housing
Michael Carpenter	Attorney-General and Justice
Robyn Ferguson	Education and Communities
Josh Aldridge	Primary Industries
Cate Lowe	Australian Museum
Dot Heath	NSW Police Force
Stephen O'Brien	TAFE
Andrew Anthony	Education and Communities
John Moratelli	Legal Aid NSW
Andrew Brooks	Office of Water
Peter Devine	Corrective Services
Max Callaghan	University of Technology (Sydney)
Colin Fraser	WorkCover
Judy Greenwood	Environment and Heritage
Trish Leen	State Library
Rebecca Reilly	Family and Community Services
Jose Alvarado	Corrective Services
Tundi Albrecht	Health Care Complaints Commission
Danielle Castles	Legal Aid NSW
Mitchell Neal	Education and Communities
Joan O'Dwyer	Attorney-General and Justice
Heather Jackson	Trade and Development
Mark England	Independent Liquor & Gaming Authority
Renee Kinimaka	Ageing, Disability and Home Care
Trevor Snoxall	Corrective Services
Jan Rorie	Juvenile Justice
Kate Doherty	Roads and Maritime Services

Retirement age & injured at work?

Now get angry as well

One of the most insidious elements of the workers compensation changes rammed through by the NSW Government was a reduction of compensation available to those who continue working past retirement age.

Retirement age is currently 65 and is expected to rise to 67 over the next few years so the changes will place those who work on past age 65 at risk of significant financial hardship due to a lack of cover.

If you are injured prior to reaching retirement age, the WorkCover scheme will only provide coverage for weekly payments up to your retirement age birthday and medical expenses for 12 months after reaching retirement age.

However, if you are injured after reaching retirement age then you will only be given up to 12 months of weekly payments and up to a further 12 months of medical expenses.

In short, medical expenses for all workers, except those with over 30% permanent impairment, will now be stopped one year after weekly payments from WorkCover cease.

Medical expenses formerly continued until the worker recovered or died, and all workers received weekly payments up to one year after retirement age.

Older workers in such high physical risk occupations such as Prison Officers - who have been inexplicably left high and dry under the new laws in the event that they are injured at work - will need to be doubly careful and may well think twice about exposing themselves to body contact situations such as breaking up fights or other disturbances.

Go to www.nswforall.org.au and register your anger.

Also see www.psa.asn.au/resources/awards

Job losses in the Public Works

A series of restructures have been announced in NSW Public Works which will result in the loss of some 73 positions.

Members from the North Coast, South Coast and Sydney Metropolitan, where the job losses will occur, are outraged not only at the reduction of services in these areas, but also the refusal of management to conduct a voluntary redundancy program.

Such a process would allow workers who wish to accept a redundancy to do so and minimise the need for forced redundancies to take place.

The PSA has made direct representations to the Director General and will canvass members' attitudes towards escalating the matter should the DG not agree to a VR program.

The PSA has been successful in having a number of procedural elements of the restructure and appointment process amended in response to the concerns of members.



International Women's Day 2013

International Women's Day is held annually on 8 March and this year is being celebrated with two events.

The first is a rally and march in the Sydney CBD on Saturday 9 March starting at 12.30pm.

The second is a picnic and performance on Sunday 10 March from 11am-2pm at Parramatta Park which is being organised by UN Women Aust, Unions NSW and various Parramatta community groups.

For more information contact women@psa.asn.au.

Tough exam at Board of Studies

The Office of the Board of Studies is required to find budget savings over the next four years that equate to 35 full time positions.

The first phase has resulted in a restructure and the deletion of five Clerk 1/2 positions.

The PSA attended a meeting of members to discuss the restructure at which we proposed writing to management formally requesting information on the process undertaken to identify the deleted positions and a commitment to regular consultation meetings.

Board of Studies management responded promptly and the

first of these meetings was held on 6 December.

The PSA raised the issue of skills matching and placement through direct appointment and was provided with detail of the process of position deletion that had been undertaken and the assistance offered to affected staff.

The PSA was briefed on the four year plan and annual review process and alerted to a pending decision on the Senior Secondary curriculum which may impact future decisions.

As more information on this will be available in March or April 2013, the next consultation meeting will be scheduled for early April.

PSA on Facebook & Twitter

Members can now follow the PSA on Facebook and Twitter.



The Facebook page is Public Service Association of NSW.



On Twitter follow the PSA @psansw and join the conversation #psansw.

May Day 2013

May Day on Sunday 5 May is shaping up as the biggest in many years fuelled by Barry O'Farrell's destructive agenda in NSW and the spectre of a possible Abbott Government federally.

The PSA will be playing an active role in this year's event. So start talking to your workmates about attending May Day 2013.

Further details will be on the PSA website as they come to hand.

Your new year's resolution: maximise your super

Members would have received their annual superannuation benefit statement in early November.

It's tempting just to glance at it and not look at the detail, but a little time taken to check your statement may result in many thousands of dollars extra when you exit your scheme.

Often members wait until they are ready to retire before they try to understand their scheme benefits by which time it may be too late.

If you had understood the rules of your scheme earlier, you may have been able to obtain a higher benefit.

Which scheme are you in?

You may think of yourself as belonging to State Super. However this is simply the brand name used to cover all the schemes run by the SAS Trustee Corporation (STC).

These schemes are:

- State Authorities Superannuation Scheme (SASS – your annual statement is green) and
- State Superannuation Scheme (SSS – your annual statement is red)

First State Super Trustee Corporation

There are also those in the NSW public sector who are members of First State Super (FSS) whose trustee is the FSS Trustee Corporation (FTC) – their bi-annual statement is a blue colour.

For SASS members

Maximise your benefit by understanding your points.

SASS has a flexible contribution system which lets you select a personal contribution rate from 1% to 9% of your salary each year.

However, if your contribution rate is less than an average of 6% for each year

of your membership, you will not have accrued your maximum available employer financed benefits.

You could be missing out on many thousands of dollars in employer contributions.

If you are working full-time, each 1% that you contribute each year from your salary up to an average of 6% for each year of membership entitles you to 1 benefit point which represents 2.5% (for some members 3%) of your final average salary at retirement up to a maximum of 180 points.

In addition to this employer financed benefit you will get back your own contributions plus earnings.

The first paragraph of your annual statement shows you the maximum available benefit points (employer) and how many contributed benefit points (yours) are available to you at the end of the statement period.

If your statement shows that you have contributed for fewer than the maximum available employer points, then you could miss out on benefits that your employer would otherwise have paid you at retirement.

You can make up for some if not all of these points by contributing 7%, 8% or 9% of your annual salary.

The higher your contribution rate, the faster you will catch up.

If you are behind don't leave it too late to catch up!

The fastest you can catch up is by paying 9% which will close the gap between your contributed and maximum available points at 3 points per year.

If you have already reached the 180 maximum available points, the full

Pre-retirement seminars, March 2013

Your Trustee Board provides **SSS and SASS members** with the opportunity to attend a free retirement preparation seminar which provides information on scheme options and entitlements, legislative changes and financial planning. **The seminars are as follows:**

Revesby	SSS/SASS	7 March	4:30pm – 8:30pm
Sydney	SASS	11 March	9:00am – 1:00pm
Grafton	SSS/SASS	13 March	4:30pm – 8:30pm
Coffs Harbour	SSS/SASS	14 March	4:30pm – 8:30pm
Sydney	SSS	18 March	9:00am – 1:00pm
Dubbo	SSS/SASS	26 March	4:30pm – 8:30pm
Broken Hill	SSS/SASS	27 March	4:30pm – 8:30pm

If you would like to book for a seminar please ring **(02) 9238 5931** or email **stcseminars@statesuper.nsw.gov.au**. It's important you advise in your email which scheme you're in when making a booking and which seminar you would like to attend.

percentage you are contributing will close the gap.

The very most that the employer will pay is based on 180 points – an average of 6 points per year over 30 years.

- Where possible don't leave the service just before a pay rise.
- Retire at the start of the month to attract the employer contribution for the previous month.
- Retire in the early part of the year because of the way Final Average Salary is calculated.
- Have you applied for the Additional Benefit Cover?

For SSS members

Will you owe contributions when you retire at or after age 60 (age 55 for women who elected to contribute to retire at that age)?

On normal retirement aged 60 or 55 (for some women) you may have an outstanding balance of personal contributions to be paid as follows:

- instalment units – spread over 5 years
- new units acquired since your annual review date and recalculated at your salary on your last day of service
- any abandoned units you may choose to pay for.

These amounts are referred to as 'outstanding contributions' and, along with any contribution arrears that may have arisen from a period of leave without pay or any other reason, must be paid within one month after your last day of service.

Outstanding contributions are not payable on Early Voluntary Retirement.

Make sure your superable salary is correct. For example, does it include a loading for shift allowances?

Review your unit entitlement. Do you have any abandoned units?

Consider salary sacrifice, spouse contributions and topping up into another super fund.

For FSS members

- Visit **www.firststatesuper.com.au** and download the fact sheets
- understand how the 9% (super guarantee) is calculated on your ordinary time earnings
- understand the investment options you have; and
- if you can afford it, make voluntary contributions to boost your super account.

Ron Davis
Full-time Trustee Board Member
SAS Trustee Corporation

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Steve Turner, Branch Assistant
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Kirsten Cameron,
Branch Assistant Secretary
Ron Davis, Branch Assistant
Secretary for "POA" Sub-Branch
Wendy Hurry, Branch Vice President
Boyd Kellner, Branch Vice President
Nicole Jess, Branch Vice President

You don't still pay your PSA fees by payroll deduction do you?

Really?



Switching from the payroll deduction of your union fees to direct debit from a bank account means peace of mind.

It locks in your membership of the PSA.

It also ensures the strength of your union into the future, making it financially independent of any government – state or federal, Labor or Liberal – at any time.

If payroll deductions were cut not only would our service to you be reduced but our membership would shrink with a corresponding loss in all important bargaining power.

So switch to direct debit at <https://membership.psa.asn.au>

or talk to your PSA organiser, delegate or email membership@psa.asn.au.

Prison Officers (Vocational Branch)
Advisory Group

Election of State Executive 2013 – 2015

Nominations are hereby called from financial members of the above branch for the positions on the State Executive.

Chairperson	1
Vice Chairperson	1
Country Vice Chairperson	1
Honorary Secretary	1
Assistant Secretary	1

Persons nominated must be financial members of the PSA.

Nominations must be on the prescribed form available from the 5th Floor Enquiry Counter, PSA House, 160 Clarence Street, Sydney or from regional offices.

The nomination form can be downloaded from the PSA website www.psa.asn.au/election-nomination-forms and click on election of delegates.

Candidate information should be completed and supplied with the nomination form. The nomination must be seconded by six financial members of the Branch.

Closing date for nominations is 5pm Friday 22 March

Nominations must be returned to:

The Deputy Returning Officer
Public Service Association of NSW
GPO Box 4767, Sydney, NSW 2001

They may be hand delivered to the PSA reception desk on the ground floor, or faxed to (02) 9262 1623.

Letters



Something on your mind?

Send a letter to the editor of *Red Tape*. The most interesting will be printed each issue depending upon space. Send your letter to redtape@psa.asn.au.

PSA Training Program

March – April 2013

1 March	Speaking in Public	Sydney
5 March	Regional Workshop	Tamworth
7 March	Women in the Union – Day 1 of 2	Sydney
8 March	Women in the Union – Day 2 of 2	Sydney
12 March	Delegate Case Studies	Sydney
19 March	Meeting Skills	Sydney
22 March	Dealing with Bullying in the Workplace	Sydney
25 March	Role of the Delegate – Day 1 of 2	Sydney
26 March	Role of the Delegate – Day 2 of 2	Sydney
12 April	Negotiation	Sydney
19 April	Regional Workshop	Sydney
30 April	Delegate Case Studies	Sydney

*There is no charge for these courses for financial members.


For further information contact the PSA's Training Unit on (02) 9220 0900, 1800 467 932, or email training@psa.asn.au. A training program and registration form is also available on the PSA website www.psa.asn.au/training/general-training-course.

Expression of interest for future courses

Members can register their interest in attending future PSA/CPSU training on: www.surveymonkey.com/s/traininginterest2011

Where possible and when there is sufficient interest, additional courses will be scheduled in local regions.

Check out our website for online training: training.psa.asn.au/moodle/index.php



Election of PSA delegates
Provincial Trades and Labor Councils

Members are invited to nominate to be a delegate to the following Trades and Labor Councils.

Unions NSW	18 delegates
Newcastle Trades Hall Council	8 delegates
South Coast Labour Council	9 delegates

Delegates will be elected by Central Council. The term is 12 months.

Nominations should be sent to:

Sandra Lockey
Public Service Association of NSW
GPO Box 3365
Sydney NSW 2001
Or fax (02) 9262 1623

Nominations close 5pm Friday 22 March.

RedTape

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– with significant input from members

Copy deadline for next issue of *Red Tape* is 22 March 2013

Contact the PSA

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Fax (02) 9262 1623 | Email psa@psa.asn.au
or redtape@psa.asn.au | Visit www.psa.asn.au



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