

# RedTape



September/November 2014

www.psa.asn.au



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## SAS Staff step up



**Every year, SASS Recognition Week provides an opportunity for everyone in the NSW school community to acknowledge the vital work performed by School Administrative and Support (SAS) Staff in the public education system.**

SAS Staff play a central role in school life, working tirelessly – often behind the scenes – to ensure our children receive the quality education they deserve.

A diverse range of roles fall under the SAS Staff banner, including Aboriginal Education Officers, General Assistants, School Administrative Managers, School Administrative Officers (SAO) and School Learning and Support Officers (SLSO). SAOs work across many different areas, including in science, food technology and the library. Likewise, SLSO responsibilities span the whole education sector, from preschool through to primary and high school.

Just some of the duties performed by SAS Staff include the enrolment of students, assisting with parent enquiries, office and financial management, assisting with class prep, library work, implementing individual learning programs and upkeep of school grounds.

This year SASS Recognition Week ran from 1–5 September with the theme 'School Administrative and Support Staff: Stepping up to the Challenge'.

Many schools used the week as an opportunity to demonstrate to SAS Staff that their hard work and dedication is appreciated by

hosting a morning tea or other event to mark the occasion.

Bonnyrigg Public School in Western Sydney hosted a lunch for its SAS Staff as well as those from surrounding schools – a tradition now in its 11th year. The School Administrative Manager, Lindy Trevena, invited 20 schools from the region, with staff from Busby West Public School, Cabramatta Public School, Cabramatta West Support Unit, Canley Vale Public School and Smithfield Public School all attending and contributing a plate of home-made food to the celebrations.

Teachers supported SAS Staff by answering phones on the day, while Acting Principal of Bonnyrigg Public, Narelle Nies, gave a speech to thank the assembled SAS Staff.

Photo: Darren Galea

## Shot in the back while doing his job – what next?

**The tragic shooting in July of Glen Turner, a compliance officer from the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), highlighted the need for better protection for public servants.**

It also served as a sobering reminder of the many ways in which government workers put themselves at risk every day to provide a service to the community.

Early reports stated the 51-year-old was serving a notice for illegal land clearing to 79-year-old Ian Turnbull when he was allegedly shot dead by the farmer at Croppa Creek in NSW.

Although Mr Turnbull reportedly has a long history of illegal land clearing, later accounts indicated that Glen was in fact attending to a separate matter on public land.

The PSA was appalled by some political and media commentary on the tragedy that painted this senseless killing as somehow inevitable.

Moree Plains Shire Mayor Katrina Humphries, Coffs Harbour National Party

MP Andrew Fraser and some media outlets claimed that violence over land clearing was unavoidable, portraying alleged attacker Turnbull as a man pushed to his limits by an unnecessarily restrictive Native Vegetation Act.

The PSA wrote to *The Daily Telegraph* to condemn the coverage and called for National Party MP Andrew Fraser to be rebuked.

"If shooting someone in the back can be portrayed as reasonable because you don't like the law, what is next?" said PSA General Secretary Anne Gardiner.

The General Secretary also condemned a Shooters and Fishers Party bill that seeks to water down native vegetation laws, as well as reduce the penalty for "obstructing an authorised officer in the

exercise of the officer's investigative functions". The proposed bill would see the maximum penalty for obstructing the work of compliance officers decreased from \$11,000 to just \$1,100.

"We are appalled by attempts to reduce protections for public servants such as the late Glen Turner," said Ms Gardiner.

"This bill shows breathtaking disregard for the welfare of compliance officers – men and women who put their own safety on the line every day to uphold the law."

It was a sentiment echoed by Jeff Angel of the Total Environment Centre, who called the Nationals' support for the bill "disgraceful opportunism of a tragedy".

Speaking to *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Angel said, "It's completely unacceptable to send the message that you can murder a government employee who was just doing his job to protect the environment – and then have the law changed."

There has been an outpouring of support for Glen's family, with many members writing to the PSA to express their sadness over the loss or to remember a beloved colleague and friend.

"No one should go to work and have to wonder if they'll see their family at the end of the day," said PSA Assistant General Secretary Steve Turner.

An account has been set up to accept donations for Alison, Alexandra and Jack, Glen Turner's family. Those wishing to donate can find details at [www.psa.asn.au/glen-turner-trust](http://www.psa.asn.au/glen-turner-trust).

**More on environmental compliance on page 5.**

**Stop the Ageing Disability & Home Care sell-off!  
Join the rally**

**13 November, 12pm-1pm  
Parliament House, Sydney**

See pg 6 for details



Anne Gardiner

From the General Secretary

# Public servants must be respected

**Over the past few months, it seems everywhere we turn public servants have been under attack.**

And this time I am not referring to the approach of the Baird Government to the sector, although that, of course, remains an enormous concern.

Firstly, there was the Shooters and Fishers Party's Native Vegetation Amendment Bill 2014 which proposed a reduction in penalties for "obstructing an authorised officer in the exercise of the officer's investigative functions" from \$11,000 to just \$1,100.

After the horror of Glen Turner's death, surely we should be looking at toughening laws to better protect public servants, not slashing the only protections they currently have.

Then there was the remark by Robert Brown of the Shooters Party likening National Parks rangers to "toilet cleaners," which was ignorant in the extreme.

The fact is that as a minimum qualification National Parks rangers must have a degree in natural sciences.

As part of their day to day duties these officers not only care for flora and fauna,

but are called upon to perform many other services, such as bushfire fighting, often at great risk to themselves.

Recently, the Government announced that it will move staff from the Licensing Branch at the Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing (OLGR) from Parramatta to Castlereagh Street in Sydney – the exact address staff were forced to leave for Parramatta only last year.

Staff from the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority (ILGA) were told that they would be relocating from Castlereagh Street to Parramatta at the same time.

No consultation took place prior to either decision, showing disrespect to these public servants and a flagrant disregard for the impact such a move could have on staff and their families. It also shows a lack of foresight and planning which has become a hallmark of this Government when it comes to decision making.

The PSA has taken this matter to the Industrial Relations Commission.

## Financial transparency in the PSA

The summary of Financial Accounts for the PSA ending December 31, 2013 is included in this edition of *Red Tape*.

Despite significantly reduced income during the financial year, PSA management and staff were able to reduce running costs so that there was still an overall profit. I would like to thank the PSA staff who actively participated in identifying areas where savings could be made.

Their efforts will continue to ensure members' money is being directed to critical areas despite less overall income.

**Anne Gardiner**  
General Secretary

# Performance management needs to be two way street

**Under the Government Sector Employment Act (GSE Act) 2013 there is an enhanced requirement of all public sector departments and agencies to develop and implement performance management systems.**

This has led to a recent surge in activity by departments implementing various performance management tools without considering the full suite of requirements set by the Public Service Commissioner.

This has caused a great deal of angst among members and has led to the intervention of the PSA in workplaces, such as FACS, where management has attempted to roll out unfair performance agreements.

The Performance Development Framework produced by the Public Service Commission describes the aspects of employee performance agencies must consider when developing systems.

This includes the need to:

- set and clarify expectations for employees
- monitor employee performance
- plan and review performance
- develop employee capability
- recognise employee achievements

- resolve unsatisfactory performance.

Performance indicators must also be balanced and reasonable.

They should contain actual measurable targets rather than subjective descriptors and be:

- realistic and achievable
- relevant to the role and not arbitrary
- transparent and objective
- consistent across similar or like roles.

Most important from the PSA's perspective, is the requirement to recognise and reward strides made by employees as well as monitoring and assisting with performance that is below par.

Performance management is not a legislative licence for employers to target certain people.

The PSA will not tolerate any behaviour of this nature.

The Capability Framework in each agency must be satisfactorily in place before performance management is considered.

There are several other issues which are to be considered.

The extensive, sector-wide guidelines under the old Public Service Employment and Management Act 2002 have been replaced with only core requirements. This may lead to a situation in which divergent standards develop across the sector and give rise to unequal and unfair treatment of employees between agencies.

Roads and Maritime Services and Family and Community Services have initiated the process of implementing performance agreements.

Unfortunately, both appear to unfairly impose expectations upon employees without first having developed adequate performance management systems or role descriptions in line with the Capabilities Framework.

Ultimately, performance agreements may not really be binding 'agreements' at all, but simply an expression of the

employer's expectations and managerial prerogative.

There is plenty of scope for abuse, particularly given incremental salary progression is subject to satisfactory performance, which is measured against an agency's performance management system.

As far as the PSA is concerned, the enforcement of performance agreements must be contingent upon agencies demonstrating that they have successfully implemented adequate training and methods of recognising employee achievements.

We will be looking at using the grievance and dispute settling procedures in the Crown Employees Award in relation to performance agreements to ensure that they genuinely contribute to employee development.

Rest assured the PSA will remain vigilant on the issue of performance management.



# Two years in the making: RMS Combined Award arrives

**The consolidation of seven Roads and Maritime Service (RMS) industrial instruments into one award has been finalised, enshrining some important wins for members and bringing to an end two long years of negotiations.**

The Roads and Maritime Services Consolidated Salaried Award 2014 was successfully agreed upon by the PSA and other RMS salaried staff unions in June this year, with only the 'no extra claims' clause still being disputed.

The PSA engaged members and delegates in widespread, ongoing consultation throughout the process.

No existing conditions were lost or traded away, despite RMS's indications last year that it would try to remove a number of conditions from the award and turn them into policy. On the contrary, some important improvements were made to existing entitlements. These include a defined payment for disturbance

allowance (now an award entitlement); the expansion of some crib break entitlements to include staff assigned to safety stations and enhanced sick leave provisions.

RMS threw up a number of roadblocks throughout negotiations, including an unsuccessful attempt to reduce PSA representation to just one official and one member. The PSA objected and was able to involve one official and three members, as we had initially intended.

An appeal against the 'no extra claims clause' has been lodged by the PSA. The imposition of such a clause may have sector-wide implications, as it may flow on to other public service awards.

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Sue Walsh

From the President

# A few good women

**At the PSA's annual Women's Conference, President Sue Walsh spoke about the lack of female representation under conservative Governments. This is an edited version of her speech.**

When Prime Minister Tony Abbott unveiled a cabinet containing just one woman in September last year, it provoked outrage and ridicule. Not just from the Australian community at large, but from overseas and within Abbott's own party. "If you think David Cameron has a 'woman problem', meet Tony Abbott," wrote the UK's *Telegraph*. "How embarrassing," said the Liberals' own senator, Sue Boyce, in *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

Though the move was breathtaking in its lack of gender diversity, or diversity of any kind, in many ways it was just business as usual when it comes to conservative governments.

In 2010, not only did we see Labor led to victory by a woman, ushering in our first female PM, but we saw Julia Gillard flanked by a cabinet that was 20% women. \*

When a Liberal government was returned, we got a male Prime Minister who doubles as a self-appointed Minister for Women and a cabinet that is 5.3% female – despite Tony Abbott's claims that there are "some very good and talented women knocking on the door".

This trend is replicated across the rest of the party too.

A report published in late 2013 by the federal Parliamentary Library's Politics and Public Administration

Group showed the combined number of women MPs across Liberal, National, Liberal National and Country Liberal parties amounted to only 101 out of 474, or 21%.

Compare this to Labor, where of 277 MPs, 116 (or 42%) were women.

The Greens were also shown to be making strides toward gender equality, with women accounting for 13 of their 29 state and federal MPs, or 45%.

If you need additional proof of the attitudes conservative governments harbour toward women, look no further than the parties' differing approaches to regulating gender equality.

In 1994, the ALP National Conference passed an Affirmative Action Rule requiring women be pre-selected in 35% of winnable seats at all elections by 2002. The target has since been lifted to 40%. In 2012, this rule was enshrined as ALP policy.

Senator Judith Troeth tried and failed to introduce a similar target in the Liberal Party just four years ago, telling *The Sunday Age* that the response had been "luke warm, to put it mildly".

When women are excluded from decision-making processes, we disadvantage women at every level – not just those involved in politics.

"Decisions are being made mostly by men, with little concern for their impact on women," wrote Julie McKay, executive director of the National Committee for UN Women and Dr Helen Szoke, chief executive of Oxfam Australia, in *The Sydney Morning Herald* recently.

They singled out public service cuts as one of the gender-blind policies that arise from unequal representation in government.

"The G20's fiscal consolidation and austerity policies have resulted in cuts to the public sector. While this may have achieved desired savings, it

did not consider the impact that cuts to the public service would have on women, who are the majority of users for public services," they wrote. "The cuts also had ramifications for women's employment, given the public sector has made significant progress towards equal employment of men and women."

Sadly, with a conservative PM peddling outdated gender roles and a state government intent on destroying the public sector, one of the few areas in which the gender pay gap is closing, a fair go for women is likely to remain a pipedream.

**Sue Walsh  
President**

\*As of June 13, 2013, according to Anne Summers in *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

Parliamentary Library's Politics and Public Administration Group statistics drawn from 'Ladies' choice: secret Labor doc shows affirmative action gains', Andrew Crook, *Crikey.com.au*, 7 Nov 2013.

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# Environmental compliance – the hidden dangers



## The sad shooting at Croppa Creek highlights the risks many public servants face in protecting the environment.

The PSA represents compliance and enforcement staff in many areas, however, environmental compliance officers are found primarily in natural resource management and the regulation and management of industry.

Some of these agencies include NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEHL Regulations Compliance Officers), National Parks & Wildlife Service (Rangers and Pest Management Officers), NSW Environment Protection Authority (Environment Protection Officers), Local Lands Services (Catchment Management Officers), NSW Office of Water (NSW Office of Water Officers) and the NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW Fisheries Officers).

Compliance and enforcement officers across all these departments have reported various acts of intimidation, including death threats, verbal abuse and in some cases, physical violence. Unfortunately, not all are reported and very few lead to a criminal conviction.

"There's always an element of risk or danger associated with property visits," said Chair of the National Parks and Wildlife Service Professional Officers Vocational Branch, Kim de Govrik. "I think it's a matter of people thinking, 'This is private property so as the owner I make the decisions on how it's to be managed'. And this may be without due consideration of the laws. But we're all here on the one planet and we've got to look after it, irrespective of the tenure of the land."

Even on public land, members can find themselves in hostile situations. National Parks employees have discovered trip-wired cannabis plantations, drug labs and have been called on to investigate illegal hunting in parks.

"The riskiest stuff we do locally is confront pig hunters," says Kim.

"It's after hours, you're unarmed and you know that the hunters may have been drinking, so they may become more aggressive. They're carrying weapons that they use to kill the pigs." One EPA compliance officer told the PSA that he'd been threatened on a number of occasions when inspecting commercial properties. "When you're talking about fines of up to a million dollars and potential jail time, there's a threat to your safety. Often you don't know the background of the situation, so you don't know what you're walking into."

The NSW Government must accept responsibility for the health, safety and well-being of compliance officers and the PSA will continue to push for better resourcing, training and protection for members.

If any member feels that they are being pressured to put themselves in dangerous situations, that safety standards are not being met or that management has not taken threats to members' safety seriously, please notify the PSA immediately.

# Remembering Glen

**Ben Hanks from NSW Water pays tribute to his former colleague and friend.**



Glen and I first met back in 2000, when we both started with the Department of Land and Water Conservation. I was in Moree and Glen was in Tamworth. We did a fair bit of work in the sticks together, and a few years later played on the same touch footy team with the other blokes from our level of the office block.

I never heard him brag about it, and in fact I doubt anyone outside our team would know, but the whole idea for the touch footy club came from Glen. I remember watching him rush off to the tea room more than ten years ago with a piece of paper for interested parties to write down their names. At the time, I thought to myself, this looks like it's going to be a lot of fun. Many years later, it still is.

That was typical of Glen – sociable and community-minded. He was also an incredibly thoughtful, empathetic person. He could talk effortlessly to anyone in any social situation. No matter who they were, Glen always put the other person at ease and made them feel special. I always marvelled at that. Of course, it was a priceless skill when it came to his work in veg compliance.

Glen had a real affinity for the environment and understood the importance of managing our impact upon it as he had grown up in a family of farmers.

For that reason, he knew what it was like on both sides of the fence, so to speak.

Glen wore a lot of different hats – environmentalist, aspiring farmer, family man, teammate, friend, gourmet chef and mad craft brewer, but whatever he turned his hand to was always done with great infectious passion and enthusiasm.

His thoughtfulness, warmth and generosity will be sorely missed by all who knew him.

# PSA fees

1 July 2014 – 30 June 2015



PSA fees increased from 1/09/14 in line with the Public Service pay rise applied from 1/07/14.

These figures include 10% GST. The salary ranges indicated below are based on the new Crown Employees Award rates.

Salary	NEW PSA FEES			
	Yearly	Monthly	4 Weekly	Fortnightly
\$53,823 >	\$701.60	\$58.45	\$54.00	\$27.00
\$37,892 – \$53,823	\$539.40	\$44.95	\$41.50	\$20.75
\$9,473 – \$37,891	\$335.55	\$27.95	\$25.80	\$12.90
Less than \$ 9,473	\$173.40	\$14.45	\$13.30	\$6.65
	<b>Annual</b>			
Leave without pay (LWOP more than 3 months must be notified)	\$32.45			
Retired officers	\$32.45			
Retired officers with Provident Fund	\$38.20			

Previously, your fees were:

Salary	Yearly	Monthly	4 Weekly	Fortnightly
\$52,628 >	\$686.95	\$57.25	\$52.80	\$26.40
\$37,051 – \$52,628	\$528.20	\$44.00	\$40.60	\$20.30
\$9,263 – \$37,050	\$328.70	\$27.40	\$25.30	\$12.65
Less than \$ 9,263	\$169.95	\$14.15	\$13.10	\$6.55

Members proceeding on Leave Without Pay in excess of three months need to advise the PSA so as to maintain their financial membership of the Association and the Provident Fund at a special rate of \$32.45 p.a. However, members on Leave Without Pay for a lesser period than three months pay the usual rate.

PSA fees are tax deductible.



# World Ranger Day

**31 July marked World Ranger Day, an opportunity to acknowledge the valuable work carried out by park rangers around the world.**

In honour of the occasion, the PSA's National Parks Professional Officers Vocational Branch (NPWS POVB) donated \$1000 from their 'fighting fund' to The Thin Green Line – a charity established by Australian ranger Sean Willmore (pictured right) to support wildlife rangers in developing nations. The charity also supports the families of those rangers killed in the line of duty, of which there were more than 100 just last year. These tragedies often occur as a result of anti-poaching efforts.

The PSA also held an internal fundraising morning tea for The Thin Green Line (bottom right). Those wishing to donate can do so at [www.thingreenline.org.au](http://www.thingreenline.org.au).

The PSA's National Parks POVB is open to rangers and professional officers for National Parks and Wildlife Services who are also PSA members. If you're interested in joining please contact peter.clark@environment.nsw.gov.au.





# Disability and Home Care sell-off rallies hearts in Newcastle & Wollongong

Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) workers in the Illawarra and Hunter regions have held stop work meetings to protest against State Government plans to privatise ADHC.

A lunchtime rally of more than 200 ADHC workers from across the Newcastle region was held at the quadrangle of 670 Hunter Street on 23 July.

ADHC workers in the Illawarra region also stopped work for one hour on 1 August, with 100 staff and concerned parents gathering at the Porter Street Group Home, North Wollongong.

A second action took place in Wollongong on 19 September at Albion Park.

The stop works did not impact upon the delivery of local services.

14,500 experienced care providers across the state will be severely affected by the privatisation of ADHC.

The Government's decision to withdraw from the Ageing, Disability and Home Care sector entirely shows it plans to wash its hands of the state's most vulnerable in the largest ever sell-off and sell-out of NSW Government services.

The PSA believes that the Government must retain a key role in delivering this vital human service to ensure clients have genuine choice and control.

"The Government's rhetoric focuses on increasing choice of care, but the hard reality is that choice and quality services will be dramatically cut by completely removing ADHC – the largest and most experienced disability service provider – from the picture," said PSA General Secretary, Anne Gardiner.

"Government services, which provide some of the most high-level, expensive care, will not simply continue in the private sector. Instead, they will be based on cost and business models rather than the specialised needs of clients.

"We are already aware that the private sector is talking of employing university students and retrenched workers as casual or temporary workers to support people with disabilities."

In addition to reduced quality of care and less experienced staff, this move is likely to threaten current service levels in regional areas.

The NSW Government has passed a law to force the mass transfer of experienced care providers in Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) to private employers.

To make matters worse, the Government so far has failed to make a commitment to protect the job security, conditions, entitlements and pay of the public servants who are to be transferred, like it or not.

"Many experienced carers, whose pay and conditions are to be slashed under privatisation, are leaving the sector," said Anne Gardiner.

"The other great concern is that with the proposed privatisation of ADHC, the Government has created a template that it will use to sell off many other public services. This is just the beginning of a totally privatised NSW."

On 22 September, the Minister for Ageing and Disability Services, John Ajaka, announced that the Government expects the Home Care Service of NSW to be completely sold off by mid-next year.

Home Care provides essential services to the community such as personal and domestic assistance, respite support for carers and social support to both younger clients with a disability and the aged.

When *Red Tape* went to print, the PSA had entered into negotiations with the Government to protect members working in Home Care NSW.

## Join the fight!

**Rally on Thursday 13 November 12pm-1pm Parliament House, Sydney**

Help us present Parliament with a petition of more than 20,000 signatures against the privatisation of ADHC.

All members are encouraged to attend. Please apply for flex or other leave if required.

The more people who join us, the stronger our message.



**Illawarra mother Sonia Facey, whose 12-year-old son Nathan has autism, explains why ADHC is her choice.**

"Nathan usually spends one long weekend a month at Illawarra Respite Centre. He has behavioural problems and can be difficult, but the staff at the centre are really good with him. They play with him on the trampoline, do activities. It gives him a different outlook from being at home and he's always in a good mood when he comes

back. It's so important that we get a break from each other and some time to re-energise.

Nathan adjusted fairly quickly to the centre but I know many other kids took a year or more to be comfortable. It's going to be a hard thing for them if they have to go elsewhere when ADHC is privatised.

The Government says that the NDIS is about choice, but I keep telling them that if I had my choice Nathan would stay where he is. Where's my choice?"

## \$25K higher duties win in Community Services

**The PSA has forced Community Services to back pay more than \$25,000 to a number of members who were receiving the incorrect higher duties rate for extended broken periods of acting in a more senior position.**

The win followed the release in October 2013 by NSW Industrial Relations of the *Guide to Broken Periods of Relief Greater than 12 Months*.

The guide outlined relevant sections of the *Personnel Handbook* and provided the Public Service Commission's interpretation of these clauses.

The PSA agreed with that reading of the provisions.

In December 2013, the PSA contacted Community Services and provided them with the details of those members who were believed to have been incorrectly paid according to the terms of the guide.

Due to a subsequent lack of action from the Department, the PSA lodged a dispute in the Industrial

Relations Commission. The matter was heard by Commissioner Newall on 16 May.

During the proceedings, the Commissioner berated the Department for their inaction in resolving the matter, particularly in light of the release of the guide by NSW Industrial Relations.

The Department indicated that each of the five members concerned would receive back pay.

The Commissioner directed the Department to provide the higher duties allowance calculations for the members involved to the PSA to confirm the accuracy of the figures.



PSA General Secretary Anne Gardiner accepts the keys to a new Toyota Prius "C" from Ricky Germain, Government Sales Executive of Sydney City Toyota. The model was chosen because it is more environmentally and economically friendly than other vehicles (it uses 50% less fuel) and it will be used by PSA staff travelling to work engagements.





**Members have raised concerns about the introduction of psychometric testing to the public service recruitment process.**

As part of the Government Sector Employment Act (GSE Act) reforms, the Public Service Commission (PSC) has reworked the recruitment process to reflect the newly established capability framework. Psychometric testing has been a focus of the Public Service Commission since the GSE Rules were finalised earlier this year. Although it has been used in the public service previously, the Commission has now formalised its application. As such, psychometric testing will be used in conjunction with the traditional application process of resumé and face-to-face interview. The intention is to use psychometric testing for establishing talent pools, bulk recruitment of external applicants for roles and for promotions

within the public service. The stated purpose of psychometric testing is to assess if a candidate is 'fit' for a role. The testing may be conducted online or within a testing centre.

**What is psychometric testing?**

Psychometric testing measures a broad range of psychological attributes such as a person's knowledge, abilities, attitudes and personality traits. Within this, testing can be divided into two categories:

- cognitive ability tests
- personality questionnaires.

**Cognitive ability testing - why use it?**

The Public Service Commission believes the conventional recruitment process is an incomplete indicator of future job performance and claims that psychometric assessments give a more accurate prediction. The PSC specifies that tests should be relevant to the core capabilities

of the role an individual is being assessed for.

There are three types of cognitive ability test:

- verbal reasoning – tests understanding of written material and comprehension skills
- numerical reasoning – tests ability to interpret and analyse numerical information
- abstract reasoning – tests ability to identify patterns presented in diagrams or other visual formats.

**Personality testing - why use it?**

These tests are used to determine two things:

- personality traits
- work preferences

Personality tests are often used in bulk recruitment, such as in the formation of a talent pool. Responses supposedly help employers to make predictions about how a candidate will respond to different work-

related activities and assess whether a candidate is 'fit' for a role.

The PSA is wary of the fact that tests do not measure an individual's ability to perform a role, merely their preferences for how work is done.

The PSA believes that psychometric testing should only be used when appropriate and will continue to push to ensure that the nature of the testing is appropriate for the role in question.

The PSA has intervened in the recruitment process in the past to ensure that members are not unfairly affected. Recently, the PSA successfully opposed the use of psychometric testing for many employees moving from other agencies to Service NSW. In this case it was agreed that employees did not need to be tested where they were transitioning into roles substantially similar to ones they had been performing for years.



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# Commission to hear reinstatements after medical retirement

**The Industrial Relations Commission has determined for the first time that it is able to hear an application for reinstatement for an injured worker who has received common law work injury damages.**

But of course, as is the case with each and every one of the PSA's victories, the Government has lodged an appeal.

As it stands, the decision by Commissioner Newall further removes any grey area that previously existed in relation to Medical Dismissal and Medical Retirement under section 241 of the Workers Compensation Act 1987.

The matter was determined as part of a case run by the PSA for a Senior Correctional Officer with Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW), who in 2011 was 'retired' on medical grounds after injuring his knee and back at work in 2008.

The member sought compensation for his injuries and successfully settled with CSNSW and signed a deed of release.

Following an intensive rehabilitation and fitness regimen, he believed he was fit to return to the workforce and obtained

medical assessments from an accredited exercise physiologist and a professor of orthopaedic surgery declaring him fit for pre-injury duties.

Accordingly, in September 2013, the member wrote to Commissioner Mr Peter Severin of CSNSW seeking reinstatement pursuant to Section 241 & 242 of the Workers Compensation Act 1987.

Mr Severin responded stating that the former Senior Correctional Officer didn't qualify for reinstatement under the Workers Compensation Act as the member had been medically retired, not medically dismissed.

Medical retirement and medical dismissal are actually one and the same.

The member sought the assistance of the PSA.

The union investigated and determined that the member did in fact qualify under

Sections 241 & 242 of the Workers Compensation Act.

With the matter before the Industrial Relations Commission, Commissioner Newall ordered CSNSW to have the member medically assessed for his fitness to perform pre-injury duties.

Although this assessment took place, neither the PSA nor the member concerned were informed of the outcome.

This was due to CSNSW, through the Crown Solicitor's Office, filing an application to have the Industrial Relations Commission strike out the case on the basis that the Commission had no jurisdiction to hear the matter. They argued that the member no longer qualified as an injured worker, having received a lump sum payment and signed a deed of release. This was the first time an employer had filed a motion to strike out an application on such grounds.

PSA General Secretary Anne Gardiner sought legal advice from McNally Jones & Staff and decided to challenge CSNSW's application.

This matter was again before the Industrial Relations Commission on 9 July,

where Crown Solicitors engaged counsel at no small cost to the tax payers of NSW.

The main argument from CSNSW was that as our member had received a lump sum and signed a deed of release, the matter had been finalised. Allowing him to return to work would be 'double dipping'.

Senior McNally's Associate Nathan Keats argued, on behalf of the PSA, that the deed did not include any words that prevented the member from seeking reinstatement at any time within the two-year period set down by the Workers Compensation Act.

On 25 July, Commissioner Newall handed down his decision. He found that he was able to hear an application for reinstatement for an injured worker who had received common law work injury damages. Neither the deed nor the settlement were a bar to returning to work.

The case sets an important precedent for future matters and the PSA will do everything within its power to ensure that Commissioner Newall's original finding is upheld.

# PSA restructure – a better service for you

**The PSA's Member Support Centre (MSC) aims to provide an efficient and effective central point of contact for members and act as a repository of their issues.**

The MSC is designed to meet increasing PSA member needs and enable us to identify and address emerging cross-sector issues.

The increasingly unmanageable load of individual matters was taking organisers away from organising. That is, supporting and building the capacity of delegates, campaigning, analysing trends, building relationships, recruiting and educating members.

The MSC frees up organisers to undertake that vital work.

All initial enquiries from members go through the MSC, which is a structured work environment that responds in a timely manner to high demand from members and delegates.

Trained Advocacy and Case Management Officers (ACMOs) assist members and delegates by empowering them to identify solutions and actions they can take to resolve issues at the local level.

They also provide guidance and industrial advice as required.

Part of this assistance involves identifying when a member enquiry requires an

individual response, is a collective issue and/or an organising opportunity.

Key to this process is the referral of matters that require a higher level response to industrial staff.

Accordingly, the ACMO seeks the advice of their Team Leader, Manager Industrial Support and other industrial staff as required.

The MSC should have carriage of industrial matters until they are the subject of a dispute or at least close to that stage.

Where an issue cannot be resolved by an ACMO it will be referred to one of our Industrial Managers (there are two senior managers in the Industrial Directorate) who will assess the case and allocate the matter to an Industrial Advocate.

Since the MSC went live on 3 March 2014 it has received nearly 20,000 calls.

## What do Industrial Advocates do?

Industrial Advocates (IAs) primarily provide PSA members and delegates with high-quality support including expert advice, research, representation and advocacy that strengthens members' positions in the workplace.

This includes negotiating awards and agreements, handling more complex individual and collective industrial cases and disputes referred from the MSC, and preparing and conducting cases before the Industrial Relations Commission, Fair Work Commission and other tribunals.

Industrial Advocates work with four Senior Industrial Advocates and two Industrial Managers.

## What is a Principal Point of Contact?

A Principal Point of Contact (PPC) has been designated for employer consultative arrangements. Each Industrial Advocate, Senior Industrial Advocate and Manager will be a PPC for one or more organisations covered by the PSA.

This officer will attend any Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) or similar meetings, and will be the contact for information related to your organisation.

## Will my PPC handle all industrial matters in my organisation?

If an industrial matter is referred from the MSC, the PPC may deal with the matter or it may be assigned to another advocate.

In this case, the PPC will ensure that industrial matters relating to all organisations within our coverage are dealt with by the appropriate Industrial Advocate who will be responsible for managing the case until it is finalised.

This is a significant departure from the old PSA model.

Previously, Industrial Officers were allocated a set number of agencies/employers and had responsibility for all industrial issues within those areas. There was no limit to the number of issues that could arise in a particular portfolio with little opportunity to share a workload.

Disputes often emerge in a random manner and under the old model, Industrial Officers in some portfolios often carried an unmanageable workload.

For example, the workload of an Industrial Officer could be arbitrarily increased by the occurrence of a dismissal in their portfolio that would then impair their ability to plan or manage the rest of their workload.

The new model adopted by the PSA provides flexibility to more effectively and fairly distribute workloads across all Industrial Advocates, and in doing so ensures that all members, irrespective of where they work, will get equal, professional and effective representation.

It also means Industrial Advocates can identify cross-sector issues such as performance management and privatisation more easily.

The above details how the restructure presently functions but will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.



# Housing privatisation under construction

The day PSA members addressed the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Outsourcing of Tenancy Management of Social Housing, it was announced that the NSW Government plans to expedite the transfer of public housing to community providers, thereby predetermining the outcome of the Inquiry.



Michelle, Sonia and Leonie prepare to give evidence at the Housing Inquiry.

On 8 September, PSA delegates from Housing NSW (Sonia Rhodes and Leonie Donohue, accompanied by Industrial Advocate Michelle Bogatyrov) gave evidence to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Tenancy Management Services.

The evidence supported the PSA's written submission to the Inquiry, which included extensive input from members.

The Inquiry received a total of 34 submissions from interested stakeholders. The PSA's submission can be read on the PSA website, [www.psa.asn.au](http://www.psa.asn.au), as well as at [www.parliament.nsw.gov.au](http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au).

The Inquiry panel was interested in the evidence provided by the PSA and requested that additional information be produced regarding the manner in which costs are borne by the public system to the advantage

of private community housing providers.

Toward the end of the proceedings, a member of the panel, Legislative Assembly Member for Maroubra Michael Daley, advised that the Legislative Council had just handed down its report into Social, Public and Affordable Housing.

Recommendation 21 of that report stated:

"That the NSW Government expedite the transfer of public housing properties to community housing providers via long term leases to:

- ensure further growth in the supply of social and affordable housing
- promote the expansion of 'wrap around' services.

"That the NSW Government also review the target that

the community housing sector comprise at least 35 per cent of all social housing and assess the performance of property title transfers and leveraging."

This recommendation demonstrates that the outcome of the Inquiry had already been predetermined by the Government's ideological preference for outsourcing public services.

The PSA and delegates will continue to gather further evidence and documentation to support their stance that outsourcing tenancy management or any service provided by Housing NSW is detrimental to the complex needs of clients.

## New award at your Service NSW

The first award for Service NSW has been made by the Industrial Relations Commission, enshrining conditions that were soon to expire under the previous determination.

When Service NSW first came into operation, staff transitioned from existing agencies and departments, including Roads and Maritime Services and Births, Deaths and Marriages.

During this period, conditions of employment were covered by an interim determination of the Industrial Relations Commission while a specific Service NSW award was being negotiated by the PSA.

Given Service NSW was a new entity, the PSA knew how important it was to have a collective industrial instrument that enshrined the working conditions that were available to members before they moved across from another area of the public sector.

As is often the case when awards are being negotiated for new areas, the negotiations moved slowly and after 18 months, despite some progress, the award was still not finalised.

The PSA was concerned that the interim determination was due to expire and without reaching agreement for a new award, the employment conditions covered by the determination may have been lost.

Once the new award was in draft form, the PSA sent it to members. The response was overwhelmingly in favour of the new award.

The PSA then went to the Industrial Relations Commission which agreed to the award for a period of one year.

The award is now known as the Service NSW (Salaries and Conditions) Employees Award 2014. It protects members'

conditions and ensures they receive the public sector pay rises.

### Conditions in the new award

The Service NSW (Salaries and Conditions) Employees Award includes:

- rostering for a 9-day fortnight
- sick leave
- annual leave
- overtime and allowances
- the establishment of the Joint Consultative Committee to discuss issues of concern
- provision for the annual public sector pay rises.

Also included in the award is a clause that allows the employer and/or the PSA to make an application to include Sunday work at contact centres.

The PSA will not apply for such a provision without the consent of members.

If, however, Service NSW attempts to activate such a provision, the PSA will consult in the first instance.

### What next?

The award runs for 12 months with negotiations for the next award to commence in early 2015.

Those members transitioning to Service NSW should notify the PSA by contacting Member Payment via the MSC on 1300 777 679. This will ensure they receive relevant updates and continued membership.

# People Matter Employee Survey 2014

**Bullying, job security and resources remain the main concerns of public servants, according to the results of the 2014 People Matter survey released by the Public Service Commission.**

Almost 20% of the sector completed the survey, with 73,550 employees taking part. The results show some positive trends in the NSW public sector. However, bullying, job security and resources remain concerns for staff.

The PSA has requested a briefing on the results from the Public Service Commission at the sector-wide consultative committee.

## Key findings

### The good

- Indicators of employee engagement with agencies have improved.
- Levels of bullying are slowly declining.
- 71% of respondents are satisfied with their total benefits (up from 62% in 2012).
- NSW respondents were more likely to feel a strong personal attachment to their organisation than those in Victoria or Queensland.

### The bad

- Levels of bullying are still worryingly high, with 23% of respondents reporting that they had been subjected to bullying.
- The process for lodging formal complaints does not appear to have improved, with no change in the percentage of people who have experienced bullying making a complaint (21%).
- Only 53% of people feel secure in their job.
- A third (34%) of people believe their workload is unacceptable.
- 30% believe they do not have the tools to do their job effectively (up from 26% in 2012).





# 2014 PSA Women's Conference

**“I’m being recorded.  
It won’t stop me  
saying things.”**

– Eva Cox, Feminist, Activist and Sociologist



## On 9 and 10 September, PSA House hosted more than 130 women for the union's annual Women's Conference.

Members were addressed by a number of excellent speakers and attended workshops on topics from super to online campaigning. First day guest speakers included Michelle Burgess, Director of the Workers Health Centre on bullying as a work health and safety issue; the CPSU's Jess Nelson on using online and social media for campaigning and Karen Batt, Federal Secretary of CPSU/SPSF on how the CPSU/SPSF and PSA fit together.

Day Two saw Dr Mehreen Faruqi, NSW Greens MP, deliver an inspiring talk on the role of women in climate change activism, followed by a panel discussion on domestic violence by Pauline Nolan from Domestic Violence Helpline and Michelle Jones, Manager at the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program at Legal Aid NSW.

The closing address was delivered by noted feminist and academic, Eva Cox.

### The following is an edited version of Eva's speech:

I'm being recorded. It won't stop me saying things.

I've been to a few PSA conferences, but probably not at a time when I felt quite so desperate about what's happening with feminism as I do at the moment.

Basically, feminism has stuffed up over the past few years. We've done a very bad job of trying to provide the sort of leadership we should be providing. It's about time we started to go back and start thinking about what the hell it was all about.

In the 1970s, we were very optimistic about the sorts of changes that we could make. Back then – and I got reminded of this by Germaine Greer when we were both on the same platform at some stage – we didn't use the term 'feminism'. We talked about ourselves as the 'women's movement' or the 'women's liberation movement', because what we were about in those days was trying to change society, change what was valued, and move away from the idea that men, masculinity and the patriarchy determined what was valued.

We tried to think through what it would be like if we had a society where things were re-valued, where the private and the public were not so separated, where the public was not just about men and the private was not just about women.

Domestic violence is a really good example. We took that out of the home and we put it on the public agenda. Unfortunately, we haven't been able to do very much over the past 40 years about improving the rates of domestic violence. We set up a lot of services, but what we still need to change are the gender inequities that actually create domestic violence.

In the 1970s, we really wanted to change what was important. We went for equal pay and we got it technically in the early '70s. People started accepting the idea of equal pay for doing the same job. But what we didn't change was the fact that those jobs that are defined as feminine are still totally undervalued. That's why we still have an 18% wage gap. That wage gap doesn't exist because we work shorter hours. The wage gap is calculated on an hourly rate, which means we get paid less for the work we do.

I can never work out why a childcare assistant gets paid less than a person who parks cars. Parking cars doesn't do nearly as much damage to children if you don't do it well. But we somehow ignore those sorts of things. If it's done by a bloke, it must be more valuable.

We moved into the '80s and something happened which unfortunately most of us have really not acknowledged. We had one of the biggest shifts in terms of public policy that we'd had

probably since the 1930s and '40s: Neo-liberalism.

Neo-liberalism appeared and everybody shifted the agenda. We set up to try and have debates based on economics.

Economics is an appallingly sexist discipline. It doesn't deal with relationships, it doesn't deal with feelings, it doesn't deal with values, it doesn't deal with any of those things that make life important. It only deals with the exchange of goods and services. It narrows the field of what's important in a very odd way. It has managed to bugger up almost everything that we did in the 1970s because it moved the political agenda out of the public sphere and into the privatised market model. Even the public sector has picked up the market model.

I hate to tell you this, but market models suck. It's just fantasy that there's a relationship between the need of the client and the need of the provider.

Economics is a social science, and most of the social sciences have a very poor rate of predicting the future. Economics can predict what firms do because firms operate on the idea that they are a corporate identity that is there to maximise profit. But it doesn't work for human beings because we're not corporate identities who maximise profits. So, unfortunately, when economists try to predict

what people will do they get it wrong to a fair degree.

We actually do not have a progressive movement which is opposing the way the discussion has gone.

Somewhere along the line, the women's movement lost its mojo, lost its sting. Around the late '70s, early '80s, we were still pushing quite hard for change. But in the '80s, things changed in the women's movement.

We moved – and think about this – from trying to change society to trying to change the status of women. They're not the same thing. We pushed for the status of women on the basis of some loony idea that if we got women into senior positions that they would change the system. I've always maintained that organisations have an infinite capacity to protect themselves against change; that the cultures of organisations make sure that the people who are progressed are not the ones that are going to change [things]. In any organisation – public, private and not-for-profit – the survival of the organisation tends to

**“I can never work out why a child care assistant gets paid less than a person who parks cars.”**



CPSU's Jess Nelson conducting an online campaigning workshop



NSW Greens MP, Dr Mehreen Faruqi



Members of the audience



“Women are being nice. We’re politely asking the Government for things, or we might be rudely asking the Government for things, but we’re asking.”

take control. You’re not going to promote stirrers; you’re not going to promote activists; you’re not going to promote people who have ideas for change, unless the change fits into the current major concern, which appears to be increasing profits.

Demonstrations don’t work. For those of you who were not around in the ‘60s, ‘70s and ‘80s, yes, we had demonstrations. Yes, they were effective. But do you know why they were effective? Because we were lobbying people on the inside.

We were inside Parliament House; we were in ministers’ offices; we were in political parties. We were behind the scenes with the alternatives. We weren’t hanging around Hyde Park and feeling it was nice being there with a whole lot of other people.

I know I sound fairly bitter about this, but I’m really getting pissed off with the idea that just because you go and catch up with your mates you’re going to change the world. What we did to change the world in the 1960s and ‘70s was the hard work of putting up the alternatives. Nobody is proposing alternatives now.

The Labor Party isn’t. Most of the unions are fighting just to retain things, and they’ve never been terribly good at being innovative about alternatives. Even the equal pay stuff, we did a very strong push long before the unions

picked it up with any sort of solidity and pressure. So we are stuck at this point with women basically going backwards. And we are not getting very far with trying to create change because there aren’t organisations out there that are doing serious campaigning.

Women are being nice. We’re politely asking the Government for things, or we might be rudely asking the Government for things, but we’re asking. We’re not offering the alternatives, we’re not engaging people and we’re not doing the things that need to be done.

We allow the things that we talk about to be classified as ‘women’s issues’ which diminishes the issues. We’re very good at fundraising for particular things like pink ribbons, but we’re not nearly as good about pushing for things which are really radical and different. And we need to. Why? Because basically the blokes have screwed it up. It’s not that I think women will necessarily do it better, but at least we should have our own chance to screw it up before we let them get back to having another go.

It’s time we provided leadership. It’s time we started thinking, “What can we change? What do we need to change? How do we put child care back to being a community service and not an economic service?” I’ve found women saying things like,

“Why should women who don’t have jobs get access to child care?” Well, why not? They need a break from the kids, the kids need a break from them. In most European countries you get all sorts of children’s services from the ages of two and three. Here, they give you 15 hours a week in term time for the year before you hit school and they think they’re doing very well.

In the 1970s, we pushed very strongly for women’s right to work. But we have gone, particularly if you look at the situation of sole parents, from the right to work to the obligation to have a paid job. We don’t have the community services we need to back that up.

We don’t have the other thing that we expected in the ‘70s, which has disappeared off the agenda: shorter working hours. If you go back to the 1970s, we went from the 40-hour week to the 38-hour week, to the 37½-hour week and to the 35-hour week for certain areas. And then the debate stopped.

It went to the same place as the paperless office, I think. That was another one of the predictions.

There are women out there talking about wanting flexible working hours. No, you want shorter working hours for everybody so you don’t get penalised for being the woman asking for flexible working hours.

Holland has got the highest per hour productivity and the shortest

working week in Europe, so why don’t we actually say, 10-hour working days are crap?

There’s a group in England that is pushing for 6-hour working days. Now, if you had a 6-hour working day, it would be much easier to deal with the fact that you’ve also got kids and an ailing mother and you actually really would like some time to have a walk and to live like a human being. We’ve forgotten that. We place such an emphasis on paid jobs for identity, money, contribution etc, we’ve forgotten that some of the things that are most important are those things we do for nothing.

One of the things we [women] miss out on sometimes is the fact that we should be providing leadership, and women feel uncomfortable being leaders. They feel uncomfortable taking risks.

I’m a risk taker. I stand up and say the sorts of things that most women wouldn’t say. I do that because I think if we’re going to get change, we need to push the boundaries wide so that the people who come up through the middle look reasonable compared to the ratbags on the fringe. I’m perfectly prepared to be a ratbag on the fringe, but I want to recruit some more ratbags because at the moment there is no fringe.

We need to sit down and work out the content of the world that we want to live in and put optimism back on the agenda because that’s what’s missing.

In the 1970s we were expecting World War 3, we were expecting atom bombs, we were expecting destruction. In many ways, it could have been very gloomy. But in the 1970s we thought we could change the world. We had some utopian idea about the changes that were possible. Somewhere along the way, we’ve lost that.

The progressive movements have become very unprogressive. They’ve lost their soul. They’ve lost their sense of the possibilities.

We need to set up a debate. Feminists need to be the ones to start setting up that debate because most blokes are too tied up in [the system] to do it. The men can come in with us, I hope they do. But I think we need to provide the leadership, we need to stick our necks out, we need to think up the new ideas. There’s not an awful lot happening out there that makes us feel good about who we are, and what we are, and what we want to be. I think we’ve got to put that back on the agenda and I think feminism has some responsibility for doing so.



Questions from the floor



Michelle Jones, Manager at Women’s Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program



Michelle Burgess, Director of the Workers Health Centre



# Public Service Association and Professional Officers' Association Amalgamated Union of NSW

ABN 83 717 214 309

## Summary of Financial Accounts for 2013

The Financial Accounts of the Union have been audited in accordance with the provisions of the New South Wales Industrial Relations Act, 1996 ("the Act"), and the following summary is provided for members in accordance with Section 517(2) of the Industrial Relations Act 1991, preserved as regulations under section 282(3) Industrial Relations Act 1996.

A copy of the Auditor's Report, Accounts and Statements will be supplied free of charge to members on request.

Certificates required to be given under the Act by the Accounting Officer and the Committee of Management have been completed in accordance with the provisions of the Act and contain no qualifications.

In accordance with the requirements of the Act, the attention of members is drawn to the provision of the Sub-Sections (1) and (2) of Section 512 of the Industrial Relations Act 1991, preserved as regulations under section 282(3) Industrial Relations Act 1996, which read as follows:

1. A member of an organisation, or the Industrial Registrar, may apply to the organisation for specified information prescribed by the regulations in relation to the organisation.
2. An organisation must, on the making of such an application, make the specified information available to the member or the Industrial Registrar in the manner, and within the time, prescribed by the regulations.

## Public Service Association of NSW

### Statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 31 December 2013

	2013 \$	2012 \$
Revenue	23,826,449	24,587,185
Other income	32,746	5,363
Employee benefits expense	(14,432,116)	(14,328,760)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	(547,744)	(602,594)
Finance costs	(432,231)	(428,820)
Other expenses	(7,539,907)	(8,468,436)
<b>Profit before income tax</b>	<b>907,197</b>	<b>763,938</b>
Income tax expense	-	-
<b>Profit for the year</b>	<b>907,197</b>	<b>763,938</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income:</b>		
<i>Items that will not be reclassified to profit or loss:</i>		
Gain on revaluation of land and buildings	-	2,725,429
Actuarial gain (losses) on defined benefit pension plans	7,809,798	(562,742)
Income tax relating to these items	-	-
<b>Other comprehensive income (loss) for the year, net of tax</b>	<b>7,809,798</b>	<b>2,162,687</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income (loss) for the year</b>	<b>8,716,995</b>	<b>2,926,625</b>

## Public Service Association of NSW

### Statement of financial position as at 31 December 2013

	2013 \$	2012 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	3,366,324	3,133,849
Trade and other receivables	637,108	618,786
Financial assets	16,327,735	15,630,107
Other assets	587,822	309,926
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>20,918,989</b>	<b>19,692,668</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Trade and other receivables	60,954	74,500
Financial assets	10,015,196	10,015,196
Property, plant and equipment	24,013,776	23,842,076
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>34,089,926</b>	<b>33,931,772</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>55,008,915</b>	<b>53,624,440</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Trade and other payables	2,934,899	3,547,937
Provisions	4,420,928	4,339,100
Retirement benefit obligations	6,290,777	13,111,428
Other financial liabilities	15,350	18,409
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>13,661,954</b>	<b>21,016,874</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Provisions	284,300	261,900
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>284,300</b>	<b>261,900</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>13,946,254</b>	<b>21,278,774</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>41,062,661</b>	<b>32,345,666</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Reserves	19,444,858	19,444,858
Retained Earnings	21,617,803	12,900,808
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>41,062,661</b>	<b>32,345,666</b>

**WESTON  
WOODLEY  
ROBERTSON**  
*Chartered Accountants  
& Consultants*

### INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF PUBLIC SERVICE ASSOCIATION OF NSW

We have audited the accompanying concise financial report of Public Service Association of NSW ("the Association"), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2013, and the comprehensive income statement, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year ended on that date, and related notes, derived from the audited financial statements of the Association for the year ended 31 December 2013.

#### Central Council's responsibility for the concise financial report

The Central Council of the Association are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the concise financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standard AASB 1039: Concise Financial Reports, the Industrial Relations Act 1996, the provisions of the Industrial Relations Act 1991 and the Industrial Relations Regulation 1992 and for such internal control as the Central Council determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the concise financial report.

#### Auditor's responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the concise financial report based on our audit procedures which were conducted with Auditing Standard ASA 810 Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements. We conducted an independent audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards of the financial report of the Association for the year ended 31 December 2013. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report for the year is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the concise financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the concise financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Association's preparation of the concise financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Association's internal control. Our procedures included testing that the information in the concise financial report is derived from, and is consistent with, the financial report for the year. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the concise financial report complies with AASB 1039: Concise Financial Reports.

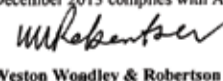
We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

#### Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncement.

#### Opinion

In our opinion the concise financial report of Public Service Association of NSW for the year ended 31 December 2013 complies with Accounting Standard AASB 1039: Concise Financial Reports.

  
Weston Woodley & Robertson

  
Michael Payne

Date: 14th of July 2014  
Sydney

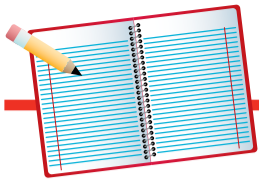
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## Recreation leave reduction not open licence for managers



**A circular issued by the Treasury directs public sector agencies (including related entities and State Owned Corporations) to make all “reasonable attempts” to reduce the recreation leave balances of employees to 30 days or fewer by 30 June 2015.**

This is not, however, an open invitation for managers to direct staff to take leave whenever they see fit.

Awards and agreements negotiated by the PSA set out the circumstances in which employees can be directed to take leave.

For members covered by the Crown Employees (Public Sector Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2009, such a direction can only be given when the balance exceeds 30 days.

In this case, the leave should be taken within three months of the employee receiving written notification, or within six weeks if the balance exceeds 40 days.

The award states that whenever possible, the staff member's wishes should be accommodated as to when leave is taken.

The PSA can assist members in making sure this intention is respected when measures are put into practice by agencies and employers.

In a climate of ongoing job cuts, a major reason for high leave accrual across the sector is that large workloads prevent staff from taking time off.

The general sense of insecurity that hovers over the public sector can also make absences more stressful than restful.

If you feel that you are being treated unfairly because of your agency's approach to reducing leave balances or approving leave, or if you have any questions regarding your entitlements, please speak with your union delegate or contact the PSA Member Support Centre (1300 772 679).

It's worth noting that the Crown Employees Award and other awards and agreements negotiated by the PSA allow members to purchase additional annual leave by reducing their salary by a proportionate amount. Some also allow for higher accrual rates.

These arrangements may assist members looking to plan for longer periods of leave.

## Division bell for staff of Members of Parliament

**The State Government has taken unprecedented aim at employees working for Members of Parliament.**

In May 2013, the State Government's Members of Parliament Staff Act 2013 became law at the same time as the Government Sector Employment Act.

The difference between the two pieces of legislation was that the Members of Parliament Staff Act effectively cut access to the Industrial Relations Commission for staff of Members of Parliament.

The Act was followed by the Members' Staff Conditions of Employment Determination of the Presiding Officers, which was released on 4 December 2013, allowing members minimal opportunity to examine the measures before the Christmas break.

It included major changes to existing conditions.

Electorate Officers (EOs) are now required to perform higher duties for a minimum of five days instead of the previous minimum of one day before being eligible for payment.

In the offices of Independent Members, the Research Assistant (RA) position has also been abolished.

The salary of current Research Assistants, which does not include an annual allowance as with EOs and Senior Electorate Officers' salaries, remains unchanged.

However, under the determination, when the incumbent vacates the position, their replacement will be classified as a Senior Electorate Officer (SEO) at considerably less than the existing RA salary.

Although Electorate Officers (EOs) are eligible to claim higher duties for acting in the SEO role after the minimum five days, SEOs are denied an increase for acting up in the Research Officer position.

To top it all off, staff may now be dismissed without grounds, on just two weeks' notice and with no avenue of appeal.

This situation should set off alarm bells right across the NSW public sector.



## Vale Jim Plummer

**It is with great sadness that the PSA announces the passing of delegate Jim Plummer.**

Jim was a General Assistant in Schools.

He was an active, caring and supportive member of the General Assistants Working Party and always available to help PSA staff and members when called upon.

Jim was also a great mentor to many other GAs across the state.

Everyone will miss Jim's smiling face and positive attitude.

## Vale Glen Turner

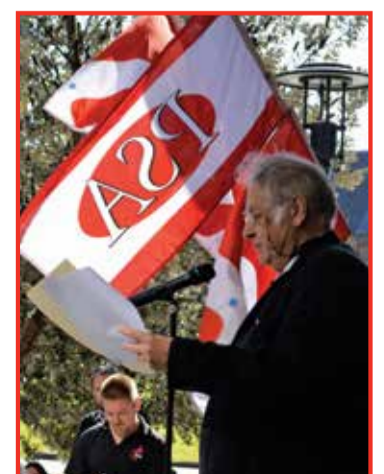
On behalf of all Enforcement Operations Inspector members, the PSA's RMS Inspector Vehicle Regulations Advisory Group sends its condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of Glendon (Glen) Turner, a Senior Compliance Officer with the Office of Environment and Heritage who was tragically killed while on duty in the Moree area.

## Sydney Uni rally for library to remain open book

A rally was held at the University of Sydney Fisher Library on 13 August at 1pm following the release of a Revised Change Proposal and Draft Implementation Plan for the University Library.

Included is a proposal to make 140 positions redundant.

Speakers at the rally of several hundred people included Bob Ellis, Grant Wheeler (President, University of Sydney Branch of the CPSU) and David Malouf.



## SES Departmental Committee

**The new State Emergency Services PSA Departmental Committee was elected on 5 August.**

The first gathering of the committee was followed by a meeting with management at the Joint Consultative Committee.

**Pictured from left to right:**

Daren McDonald (Acting PSA Industrial Advocate), Craig Ronan (DC Assistant Secretary), David Rae (SES Director Human Resources), Mark Morrow (Acting SES Commissioner), Anthony Day (DC Assistant Chairperson), Garry Zuiderwyk (Manager SES Work Health & Safety), Kaylene Jones (DC Chair Person), Jenelle Owen (DC Secretary), Ian Braithwaite (PSA Organiser) & Michael Langley (DC Communications Officer).



# Superannuation binding nominations

**When you joined First State Super or any other superannuation fund, you would have been provided with a 'binding death benefit' nomination form which binds the trustees of the super fund to follow your wishes in the event of your death and distribute your benefits to those nominated.**

Unless you have a current binding nomination, it is the trustee of the super fund who will ultimately decide on who receives your benefits.

Your superannuation and any associated insurance payout does not form part of your estate and so cannot be disposed of in your will.

Generally, a super fund's trust deed provides that a death benefit is paid to a dependant or anyone who was financially dependent in any way on the deceased member.

While the deed may reflect your intentions, the super trustees must also go through a claim staking process, which involves notifying any person who may be entitled to claim on your super.

This may encourage people to make a claim purely because it has come to their attention that they may be entitled to a benefit.

The distribution of a super death benefit can become a time

consuming and sometimes costly process.

Beneficiaries can appeal the trustee's decision through the Superannuation Complaints Tribunal, which can take months, even years to resolve.

The only way to prevent this situation from arising is to complete a binding nomination.

Please keep in mind the following:

1. You need to keep your nominations up to date, as they are only good for three years.
2. You will need to update your nomination if you marry, remarry or have children.
3. The Family Court of Australia can, before and after the death of a fund member, overturn a binding nomination if it is contrary to a Family Court order. It is not automatically revoked if you divorce.
4. If your binding nomination expires and is not properly

renewed, the trustees of your superannuation fund have the discretion to pay your benefits as if you never had a binding nomination. You can also revoke or change a nomination at any time by sending the superannuation fund a new binding nomination.

The formal requirements of a valid binding nomination are that the notice:

- is in writing
- is signed and dated by you in the presence of two witnesses, who are both over the age of 18 and are not mentioned in the notice; and
- contains a declaration signed and dated by the witnesses that you have signed the notice in their presence.

Trustees are required by law to follow up on a nomination that does not satisfy these requirements.

If you are interested in making or amending a binding nomination contact your superannuation fund manager without delay.

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**Deceased estates**

**Superannuation & disability claims**

**General legal advice**

As members of the PSA you are entitled to the first consultation free of charge upon presentation of a letter of referral from the PSA.

*Note: Work related matters must be referred to PSA industrial staff in the first instance. They will advise if a lawyer is required.*

## Member Profile

**Mohammed Alamgir, Hydrogeologist  
NSW Office of Water**



**What is a hydrogeologist?**

A hydrogeologist is primarily a geologist who specialises in groundwater. Groundwater aquifers are underground reserves of water that are pumped by water users for town water, for use in irrigation and for mining and other industries. My job is basically to do groundwater resource assessment and management. This means monitoring the water level and quality, as well as ensuring that usage throughout the year remains within the limits set by water sharing plans.

**Why is this important?**

Australia is the second driest continent on earth. If aquifers are managed properly they are a renewable water resource. But if the water level gets too low, water users will be unable to pump. Likewise, if the salinity of the water rises too much that can kill the trees and the crops. Three or four hundred irrigators rely on the local aquifer where most of my work is concentrated.

**What is the biggest challenge?**

The most challenging part of the job is during drought, when everyone is relying on groundwater as there is little or no surface water available. The community has the pressure of needing more water from the aquifer, but of course we have to make sure that we also manage the groundwater so it continues to be available in years to come.

**What is a typical day for you?**

In addition to groundwater resource management, we are also the authority that assesses groundwater licence applications for water users. On a typical day I might assess and facilitate applications to trade or transfer groundwater from people who want to sell their water to others who need it. Other days I'll be offering farmers advice about where on their property to drill and putting conditions on a works approval to drill a new bore. I've been working in this area for 16 years so I've acquired good knowledge of the region. It's really rewarding to be able to use this knowledge to help the people who live in the area.

*This is the first in a series of Red Tape profiles highlighting the diversity of public sector roles performed by your fellow members.*

# Science Week under the microscope

**National Science Week took place 16–24 August, offering a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the important work of the PSA's scientific and technical members.**

The PSA/CPSU has members working in scientific, engineering and technical roles in nearly every cluster – whether they're protecting the environment, making sure our air, food and water is safe, improving infrastructure and agriculture, inspiring the next generation of scientists or doing any one of the countless jobs that help make our world a better place to live.

At a time when the State Government is making deep cuts into jobs and services in this area, the PSA has established a Science, Engineers and Technical Working Group to canvass the concerns and goals of this diverse group of public servants. That group met in May and developed a charter. The aim of the group is to collect relevant data and provide reports on the environmental and community impact of Government cuts at a state and federal level.

PSA members were involved in a number of events taking place to mark Science Week, including special programs at the Australian Museum, Taronga Zoo, Botanic Gardens, Jenolan Caves, Powerhouse Museum and science labs in schools and universities across the state.

Each not only put a public face to the sciences but also highlighted the efforts of our members who work tirelessly behind the scenes to improve our future.

We encourage any members interested in joining the Science, Engineers and Technical Working Group to please contact Margaret Fullick at [mfullick@psa.asn.au](mailto:mfullick@psa.asn.au).



The public gets hands on with science at the Powerhouse Museum.

Photo: Jayne Ion, courtesy Powerhouse Museum Sydney.



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Secretary for 'POA' Sub-Branch  
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Boyd Kellner, Branch Vice President  
Nicole Jess, Branch Vice President

# Bullying – moving forward at WorkCover

**In the wake of the damning Parliamentary report into bullying at WorkCover, PSA officials and Return to Work and Support (SRWS) delegates met with John Hubby, Acting Chief Executive, Office of Finance and Services, on 9 September to discuss how to move forward and create a safer working environment for staff.**

The report was handed down in June and contained 13 recommendations.

The Government had until 19 December 2014 to consider the report and respond.

John Hubby advised that he had set up a Steering Committee to work through the recommendations and assist the Government with its response.

He agreed to consult with the PSA regarding its views on the recommendations and provide that feedback to the Steering Committee.

The PSA acknowledged the positive gesture made by the new CEO of SRWS, Vivek Bhatia, who on 15 September sent an email to all staff offering his personal apology for past harm caused and his commitment to improving the culture at WorkCover.

Mr Bhatia indicated he was committed to ensuring that the organisation operates as a workplace free of harm.

The parties discussed the Dignity and Respect Charter and the benefit of having it displayed in

all business units throughout the organisation.

Mr Hubby committed to improving communication between WorkCover and the PSA, with the parties working together to implement the Government's response once it was finalised.

He also agreed to ongoing consultation on all matters with the PSA as well as attending the next SRWS Joint Consultative Committee.

The PSA requested that Office of Finance and Services set up a website to keep staff and members of the public updated on the Government's response to the report and recommendations.

The union also raised the issue of consultation on handling complaints of bullying.

Mr Hubby said that all complaints investigated would go through the OFS and that the person lodging

the complaint had the choice of which channel to go through.

There was further discussion on policies for managing workplace grievances and how the PSA is to provide feedback and input as WorkCover begins implementing a policy to combat bullying.

On Friday 17 October, the PSA received the Government's positive response to the Parliamentary Inquiry.

PSA delegates and members in WorkCover should be very proud of what they have achieved and for the way in which they have supported their fellow member Wayne Butler.

It is worth noting that this matter has been actively pursued and supported in Parliament by Greens Upper House MLC, David Shoebridge.

## 'Decade of Decentralisation' a road to nowhere

**The Government's so-called 'decade of decentralisation' policy has been met with understandable angst by PSA members.**

In March 2014, the Government announced to the media that more than 3,000 public servants were to be relocated to Sydney's west and south-west. This decision was based on the report delivered by the NSW Decentralisation Taskforce, appointed by the Government in November 2012.

The list of relocations announced or currently underway is long:

- Sport and Recreation shifting from Olympic Park to Penrith
- Corporate service functions of Family and Community Services to go from the CBD to Ashfield
- The CBD offices of the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages to move to Hurstville in 2015, bringing to an end more than
- 150 years of tradition in the centre of the city
- Roads and Maritime Services considering moving out of North Sydney to Rozelle, Parramatta or Kirribilli
- WorkCover staff from Sydney CBD South, Blacktown, Parramatta, Liverpool and Hurstville to be consolidated in new offices in Baulkham Hills and Liverpool
- National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) plans to close its Picton office and relocate to Mt Annan
- Some staff from the Department of Planning and Environment (formerly Department of Planning and Infrastructure) to move from CBD to regional locations
- Office of Environment and Heritage and Environment Protection Authority to move from Hurstville and CBD to Parramatta at end of leases (2016 and 2017)
- Staff from the Licensing Branch at the Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing (OLGR) to move

from 2-10 Valentine Avenue Parramatta to 323 Castlereagh Street in Sydney

- Staff from the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority (ILGA) to be relocated from 323 Castlereagh Street Sydney to 2-10 Valentine Avenue Parramatta.

The Government says the policy is all about better service and support for regional communities as well as cost efficiency.

After three years of ongoing job and service cuts, however, PSA members and the community know jobs transferred under this policy will not plug the gaps left by positions that have already been slashed from these regions. Analysis by the PSA shows that of the 15,000 public sector jobs this Government plans to cut – or has already – 4276 will come from Western, South and South Western Sydney.

While the Government promotes the savings that will be made through cheaper rent, it fails to take into account the cost imposed on the workers forced to move.

Unlike employees transferred from metropolitan to regional areas, people relocated within the large boundaries of the metropolitan area are not eligible for compensation under the Transferred Employees Compensation Award (TECA). They receive no compensation for the detrimental impact the move may have on their finances or family life. Workers with children or caring responsibilities will be especially hard hit. Relocations can cause major disruptions to patterns of care, childcare arrangements and reduce overall flexibility for staff. If the Government was genuine about creating jobs in Western Sydney, or any other region, it would invest in the services most needed in those communities – not cut the jobs that are already there and apply a band-aid solution by transplanting jobs from elsewhere.

**Are you affected by a relocation we don't know about? Contact the Member Support Centre to arrange a visit from your PSA organiser.**

## Health and Safety Representative (HSR) training

Unions NSW will be conducting the following Health and Safety Representative Training Course (5 days) from 9am to 4.30pm at Unions NSW Training Rooms, Ground Floor, 377 Sussex Street, Sydney.

- Monday 10 November, Tuesday 11 November, Wednesday 12 November; and Monday 24 November and Tuesday 25 November

This course enables elected HSRs to exercise full rights under the Work Health Safety Act 2011.

**Cost is \$800 (inclusive of GST) to be paid by the employer.**

A discount may apply for group bookings or trade union staff HSRs.

To make a booking, please visit <http://psa.asn.au/health-safety-representative-hsr-training>.

## Red Tape

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