



COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC
SECTOR UNION

SPSF GROUP NSW BRANCH
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In Reply Please Quote GW:rr:A17/0771

8 September, 2017

Donna Wilcox
Head of Workplace Relations
TAFE NSW People and Safety
Building C
Mary Ann Street
ULTIMO NSW 2007

By email: Donna.Wilcox@tafensw.edu.au

Dear Ms Wilcox,

RE: Group 4 Restructure TAFE NSW – Submissions for ETG, Regions and TAFE Digital

Proposed placement process for Group 4 TAFE Restructure.

One of the main concerns raised by members of the *Community and Public Sector Union of NSW* (CPSU NSW) is the placement process and how it leaves many, primarily TAFE Worker Level 2's and employees from the North Coast impacted by the CLEAR Restructure, without an opportunity to find a position before the positions "go to market".

With the complete loss of TAFE Worker Level 2, a loss of 102 FTE Employees as per Appendix 1B of the ETG Proposal, and an overall loss of 472.7 FTE, the impact of this restructure is massive. Considering the large majority of the positions lost are in places of student and stakeholder interaction.

By not providing an opportunity prior to Step 6 in the placement process, TAFE would leave many current, skilled and knowledgeable TAFE employees competing with people who may have never worked for TAFE.

The North Coast TAFE are particularly disadvantaged as they underwent a restructure in late 2016, which has left many staff outside the 2-year rule to be matched. These people assisted North Coast TAFE by changing positions to Education Planning and Retention Officers from varying other positions. Due to the timing of this restructure, it has left those who were restructured into EPRO positions, without the 2-year required time in current position.

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The CPSU NSW is the Federal Counterpart of the Public Service Association of NSW. CPSU NSW members are also members of the PSA.

So many Long Term Temporary (LTT) employees have assisted TAFE in changes made, without hesitation or thought of the discrimination, that by encouraging and supporting current, experienced and knowledgeable LTT employees to find permanent positions in the new structure, TAFE will benefit with their retention.

Financial impact of training and supervising new employees can be extensive. Promoting secure, long term employment and maintaining the continuity directly impacts the ability of employees to pass on their knowledge to people entering into TAFE. Ongoing employment allows TAFE to work better as a whole as well as train and integrate new staff. By keeping current staff with knowledge and experience, new employees learn from a wider base and become more informed, secure and valued employees.

By increasing the opportunities in the placement process, the current staff of TAFE to find and be placed into position in the proposed structure for ONE TAFE. This will reduce the overall cost of the restructure by a reduction in training and recruitment costs as well as maintaining the high standards of education and support that NSW has come to expect from TAFE.

The CPSU NSW proposes the following changes be made to the placement process as a means of maintaining the skills, knowledge, experience and staff that have assisted TAFE to become the institution it is and will grow to be.

Step 1 and 2 As per TAFE proposal, with following amendments,

LTT Employees totalling service with TAFE of 2 years or greater and in their current position 6 months or longer.

Higher Graded temp appointments totalling service with TAFE of 2 years or greater and in their higher graded temp appointment of 6 months or longer.

Step 3 Include a Step 3a to allow current permanent and LTT to self-match to a higher classification after initial self-matching at classification i.e. TAFE Worker Level 2 to self-match to a TAFE Worker Level 3.

Step 4 Allow TAFE workers displaced from Groups 1,2 and 4 Restructure access priority to all remaining positions not filled through Steps 1-3 prior to positions going to excess employees from other agencies.

Step 5 no Changes

Step 6 Open unfilled positions to all TAFE Employees prior to the positions being externally advertised.

The CPSU NSW believes that by implementing the proposed changes, TAFE will be a stronger, more adaptive and competitive organisation by maintaining the largest number of its current high calibre employees.

The CPSU NSW has received a large number of submissions from members around this proposal and has the support of its members and delegates in its determination to have as many people placed prior to the positions going to market at Step 6.

Community and Aboriginal positions

With the alignment to a more business centric model, there is a concern around the loss of the connections TAFE has with Community, Not for profit and Indigenous groups. Our members are informing us that the many positions that connect with community, migrant and other social support groups are being downsized, removed or having a change in focus. Some current Indigenous members are finding themselves mapped to areas outside their community and they are concerned that identified positions may not be filled.

TAFE has been a big supporter of different types of organisations to help get people back into study and to reconnect with the community. With changing from Community, Outreach and Multicultural Coordinators to TAFE Services Coordinators, there is a creation of a dual role position, from a primarily community based position to a position that's based around campus issues and student support experiences. This will have a detrimental effect on the relationships TAFE has with the community groups and will see decline in students, as many who start in the outreach programs go on to further study.

TAFE is seen as an entry point for migrants as it often includes language and literacy in its short courses and its Multicultural positions bring groups of non-English speaking students together to assist each other through the learning experience. These short courses are designed, created and initiated through consultation with local community groups and by removing the connection by changing the focus of the position, these courses will not be implemented. Not for profit organisations help youths and adults with drug and alcohol, domestic violence and criminal backgrounds to become reconnected with education and society. By working closely with the local groups, Outreach positions, many in low socio-economic regions, identify and support their students through enrolment, learning and accessing any help needed to graduate.

Keeping Indigenous employees within their communities allows for stronger and culturally correct connections. An increase in the number of identified positions is a good change, however they need to be culturally sensitive with those who are already in community liaison positions. Converting Non-identified positions to identified positions may be, in itself, a positive move forward and will allow greater connections, especially in the regional areas. There are positions that are currently filled with non-indigenous employees in areas where, our members have advised us, TAFE may struggle to fill. We would suggest that in this case, non-indigenous employees be continued in these roles, in a temporary capacity.

The CPSU NSW and its members would like to see a clear distinction between campus coordination and management and community connection positions. By maintaining the separation, TAFE will allow its employees to focus and provide better support to both the campus and the wider communities.

With the increase in indigenous positions, the CPSU NSW suggests TAFE find a way of maintaining the staff currently placed in any position that is being changed to identified, perhaps in a mentor/trainer position to support the development of the prospective identified employee. This would provide a greater link between TAFE and the local communities.

Proposed qualifications for Position Descriptions

As per the *TAFE Commission of NSW Administrative, Support and Related Employees Enterprise Agreement 2016* (the Agreement), the qualifications required for positions are already outlined.

The CPSU NSW advises TAFE to review and amend the proposed Position Descriptions to keep in line with the Agreement. The CPSU NSW is concerned that the current proposed Position Descriptions are in breach of Schedule C – Classification Descriptions and Definitions of the Agreement, in particular TAFE Worker Level 3 positions with a certificate IV.

For any enquiries regarding the issues in this letter please contact the CPSU NSW Industrial Officer Graydon Welsh at gwelsh@psa.asn.au or on 0407 952 652.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Blake Stephens
FOR STEWART LITTLE
STATE BRANCH SECRETARY