

5 April 2018

Relocation of Ausgrid employees – Roden Cutler House to Pymont Substation – On hold!

The CPSU NSW raised members concerns on the proposed relocation to Pymont with SafeWork NSW. SafeWork NSW (former WorkCover) provides information and regulatory services to help workers and employers manage health and safety at work.

In December 2017, Ausgrid notified affected employees at Roden Cutler House of the proposed relocation to Pymont. Meetings were held in early 2018 where employee's concerns were identified and discussed. These concerns included, possible high levels of Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF) in the office above the substation. On the 21 March, at a consultative committee, and then again via email on 27 March, the CPSU NSW requested the following additional information and processes before affected employees were to relocate:

- » a site inspection of the proposed Pymont Site, with a meeting after to assess findings,
- » additional EMF readings (different times of the day, days of the week, weather patterns etc); and
- » copies of the Asbestos Assessment report and the Hazard Assessment report including the EMF issues.

Yesterday, an Inspector from Safe Work attended Ausgrid, Roden Cutler House, to determine if the legislative requirements to consult with employees had been appropriately undertaken with Ausgrid employees on the proposed relocation to Pymont.

The Inspector requested and examined numerous Reports and documentation from Ausgrid and spent a significant amount of time to discussing the issue with affected employees and management.

Employers, under the WHS Act, have a duty of care to share information with anyone likely to be directly affected by a work health and safety matter – and give them the opportunity to express their views and contribute to any decisions relating to the matter.

Under the WHS Act, Health and Safety (H&S) concerns are to be raised through the following communicative mechanisms:

- » HSR's (Health and Safety Representatives)
- » H&S Committees (Health and Safety)
- » Other agreed arrangements.

The Inspector deemed that there was no evidence that the abovementioned communication measures had been initiated/conveyed to employees to assist with the raising of their H&S concerns. Subsequently, the Inspector found that some affected employees missed out on the opportunity to express their concerns with the relocation; they feared reprisal from the Management. Hence, the communication processes have not been complied with.

Therefore, the Inspector has placed an "Improvement Notice" onto Ausgrid and the relocation to Pymont has been put on hold.

Ausgrid have a 3-week window to improve on the Inspector's findings.



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Ausgrid is in the process of having an independent provider conduct additional EMF readings at Pymont.

Ausgrid have requested employees identify the list of issues of concern.

A site inspection at Pymont is being organised for affected employees.

The SafeWork Inspector will return to conduct a follow up and review.

The CPSU NSW wishes to thank Delegate David King for his initiative and persistence on this matter. If you wish to contact David King, you can email him on: davidking@ausgrid.com.au or CPSU NSW Industrial Officer, Maryanne Stuart, on mstuart@psa.asn.au.

Alternatively, you can contact SafeWork to report an incident or injury on 131050.

