

APRIL-
JUNE
2020

RED TAPE



**FIGHTING A
SILENT KILLER**
COVID-19 and
our workplaces

OFF THE AGENDA
Have we seen the
end of privatisation?

**Low fees and
strong long-term
performance,
so our members
retire with more**

The right support and advice to help you feel future ready

An industry fund

 **first state super**

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state super



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All members of CPSU NSW are also members of the Public Service Association. The PSA is the associated body that manages and resources CPSU NSW.





DISASTERS SHOW THE VITAL ROLE PLAYED BY PUBLIC SERVICES



THESE LIFE-SAVING ROLES ARE JOBS NO PRIVATE COMPANY CAN REPLICATE



Can you imagine if all the responses to COVID-19 and the bushfires came from the private sector?

The brave army of workers and volunteers fighting last summer's blazes were hired and organised by an array of government bodies, including the Rural Fire Service, the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), Fire and Rescue, the State Emergency Service, Police and Forestry Corp, which ironically enough has been saved from a sell-off by the very blazes its staff members fought.

NSW Health is at the forefront of the battle against COVID-19, while Corrective Services NSW worked on how to protect inmates, staff and visitors in NSW prisons.

These life-saving roles are jobs no private company can replicate. There is no profit motive in keeping a ready supply of well-trained staff on hand to fight an outbreak of disease. The

free hand of the market doesn't have a place for conducting controlled burning. Replanting and building up depleted native animal populations won't win kudos on the stock exchange floor.

Away from the fires and disease, public services were again at their peak. Australia's trusted ABC proved its worth, regularly updating locals about the coming blazes and giving accurate information about the causes of the fires and their effects. Norman Swan is the voice of reason as COVID-19 unleashes a confusing variety of opinions.

The commercial media played a role, but just could not match the ABC's depth of coverage.

Many small businesses depending on a summer splurge from visitors now face empty tills, while farms have lost stock that will take years to replenish. Cuts to boots on the ground in government bodies such as the NPWS mean communities were inadequately prepared for the disaster and, as a result, there will be firms closing their doors for the last time and valuable jobs lost throughout the state.

In its frenzy to cut the public sector, the Government has let the private sector down.

Our public institutions may be flavour of the month, and public employees and volunteers lauded, but as the memories of the fires and COVID-19 recede, the Coalition and groups like the privatisation-obsessed Institute of Public Affairs will soon start beating the drum on sell-offs. It's in their DNA.

Sydney is rapidly losing its government-run bus services to cut-price operators who, going on previous form, will start slashing off-peak routes. The last public vestiges of disability services are slipping away and, although it won a reprieve, Forestry Corp may return to the auction block once the green shoots appear in its plantations.

Too often the companies that swoop in for these assets have no intention to integrate with the communities from which they profit. They often dodge tax, pay lower wages and centralise services rather than using local businesses. Too often it is a one-way street of cash going from the community into their coffers.

The PSA/CPSU NSW will always oppose privatisations and sell-offs. We know the work our members do gives the people of the state excellent value for money and, when properly funded, peace of mind. We know not every part of the economy's obsession with flogging off the assets that belong to us all has gone too far and we are all worse off as a consequence. ■



I was on the phones as the Member Support Centre opened on the weekend to field calls about COVID-19. For more on this development, go to page 23.

RMS members vote for better flex agreement

Nearly 90 per cent of PSA's RMS Work Support Officer (WSOs) members voted to negotiate a local arrangement to transfer their hours of work to the *Transport for NSW, Sydney Metro & Roads & Maritime Services Flexible Working Hours Agreement 2019*. The terms and conditions of the members' working hours were set down in the *RMS Consolidated Salaried Award 2019*.

However, in a number of areas there were local arrangements with managers whereby WSOs have been working in a manner that included flexitime.

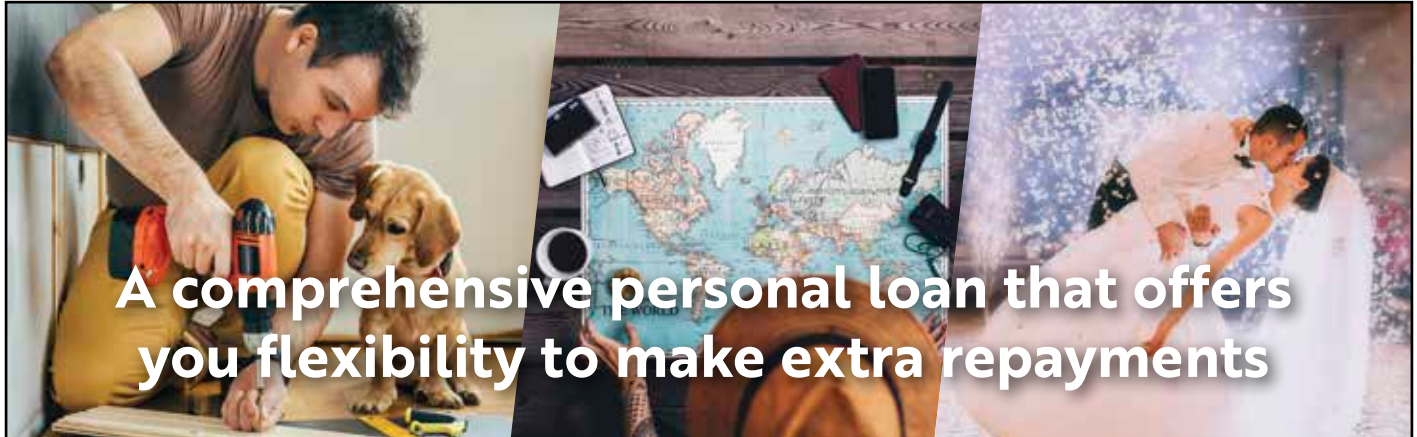
Prior to Christmas, the PSA and RMS Group began discussing the issues surrounding those unratified 'local arrangements'.

Since the vote, the PSA has written to the Department seeking the relevant paperwork so an agreement can be ratified and signed off. ■



PLAYING IT SAFE

Bega RMS lab members Dean Clapson (left) and Ryan Deen (centre) talk to PSA Organiser Shane Elliott. Playing a vital role in public safety, the lab tests the materials used in road construction.



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From the President **Kylie McKelvie**

BETRAYING THE COUNTRY

Unless you are a big-shot shareholder, chances are you are the loser whenever privatisation rears its ugly head. And if you live in a regional centre, the pain is even more acute.

Jobs leave, wages drop, local contracts are torn up and communities suffer. Privatisation sucks money from regional NSW, funnelling it not just to banks and companies based in Sydney but also to overseas tax havens.

The Government's intention to flog services shows it cannot be trusted with rural-based assets.

As we saw with the recent privatisation of the once-government-owned Pillar superannuation scheme, any of

Macquarie Street's promises sweetening sell-offs are worthless. When the sale was mooted in 2015, the Government swore the jobs would remain in the Illawarra region, a part of NSW still adjusting to the loss of steel jobs. Last year, the new owners began the push to move operations to Melbourne.

The unconscionable privatisation of disability services in NSW has had a devastating effect on rural communities. Along with the usual cuts to the amount of money in local economies, the move has created trauma for some of the most vulnerable families in the state. As providers such as Australian Unity pulled out of the provision of services, hundreds of people with disability and their parents and guardians, many of whom are elderly, were forced to look for alternative care and clinical arrangements, despite often being great distances from other providers.

It is little wonder three of the four seats lost by the Government in last

year's election were in the regions and that parties such as the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers are displacing the Nationals in the bush.

The regional areas of NSW don't need more cuts to local pay rates. They don't need global companies wielding too much influence over 'one-company towns'. And they don't need economies at the mercy of boardrooms in state capitals. They need local, well-paid jobs, providing local, well-resourced services. ■

LITTLE WONDER THREE OF THE FOUR SEATS LOST BY THE GOVERNMENT IN LAST YEAR'S ELECTION WERE IN THE REGIONS





UNION GOES SOUTH

To boost local economies and morale, the PSA/CPSU NSW held its Central Council in the South Coast town of Batemans Bay in March.

Three years ago the PSA/CPSU NSW Executive made a commitment to hold at least one Central Council meeting a year in a regional centre. After the devastation of the bushfires last summer, the union moved forward its planned regional conference to March and decided to hold it in the South Coast region.

The meeting also gave members in the area the chance to see their union's democratic structures in action and put questions to the Executive and Central Councillors.

Also present was Arthur Rorris of the South Coast Labour Council, who spoke about the important role public services play in the region. He mentioned the effects staff and budget cuts had on fire-fighting efforts and said the State Government needed to take some of the blame for the destruction wrought over the devastating summer.

"The South Coast is one of finest parts of the state," said PSA General Secretary Stewart Little. "Its economy suffered badly through the fires and now COVID-19 and I am happy that we can do a little to keep people in work. We are proud of the work our members do down here."

The PSA/CPSU NSW is offering assistance to members affected by the recent bushfires. Turn to page 24 for more information about how to apply. ■

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



From the Assistant General Secretary Troy Wright

PRIVATE IS BETTER? YEAH, ABOUT THAT

You can be sure next time the State Government and its supporters in the Murdoch press prepare our members for yet another sell-off, the old “the private sector is more efficient” mantra will be let out of its cage for its regular walk round the block.

So, just how efficient is the private sector at delivering public services? We could knock on the door of a stationary tram carriage in Sydney and ask the passengers trapped inside how the privately run light rail system, nicknamed The Red Snail, is going. In some parts of the route, we’d have to speak loudly to be heard over the sounds of government-run trains running past on time and at a speed faster than a three-legged donkey.

If you need a bus ride out of peak hours, you may have a tough time in those parts of the city where private providers have cut services at quiet times of the day. Little wonder so many of us drive – and pay tolls – on privately run motorways.

We could visit a privately run gaol and see lower-paid Officers struggling with insufficient staff-to-imate ratios and a work environment so bad even the State Government has torn up an operator’s contract.

We could ask some of the customers giving evidence at the recent royal commission into bank and insurance companies what they think of this shining example of private-run

enterprise. Some of them might even recall fondly the days the Commonwealth Bank was run by the state and not a board that allowed the once venerable institution to be used by drug syndicates for money laundering, one that ignored statutory reporting responsibilities for more than three years on more than 750,000 accounts.

Of course, you might need to take out a mortgage at one of these banks if you are required to park your car more than twice a month at Sydney’s privately owned – yet conveniently monopolised – airport. Or you can shell out a fortune to take a train via its privately run rail link – sending your money to the British pension scheme that owns the service.

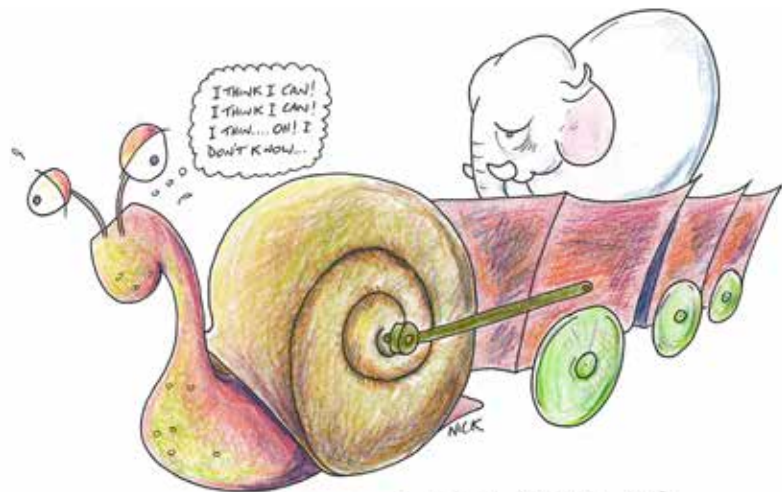
We’re sure people forced by tax laws into paying ever-increasing health insurance premiums that return a pittance on every claim are doing cartwheels of joy at this forced intrusion of the private sector into their lives.

Hapless students conned with gimmicks such as free laptops to enrol in courses must feel elation as the receivers are called into their colleges midway through degrees they suddenly realise they will never complete.

SO, JUST HOW EFFICIENT IS THE PRIVATE SECTOR AT DELIVERING PUBLIC SERVICES?

The PSA/CPSU NSW has seen numerous calamitous privatisations, state and federal alike, that have simply not delivered the efficiencies promised. The only real efficient thing they have done is move the proceeds of the state sector into boardrooms, banks and overseas tax havens.

One of the best parts of my job is working with members and Delegates and seeing the excellent work our members do for the people of this state. We help educate, transport, protect and serve NSW in a professional, efficient and cost-effective manner. And the people who want to sell off your services are not doing it so you do your job more efficiently, they are doing it for their own financial gains. ■



RED SNAIL RAIL OR WHITE ELEPHANT... OR BOTH?

FLEX WIN IN NEWCASTLE

The CPSU NSW got into action when library staff were left in the dark over flex provisions.

On 2 September 2019, after the *Professional Staff Enterprise Agreement* (EA) had come into force, the University of Newcastle, Library Management decided to attack the flex time provisions that were fought for, and won, in the EA.

A Committee had been formed to outline guidelines. However, many library staff were completely in the dark about what was going on. Some managers even decided to represent staff without even letting them know. CPSU NSW members believed there was a complete lack of transparency.

Not only was library management in complete breach of the EA and going against the advice of its own HR department, but its decision also meant that part-timers were ineligible for flextime. This has never been the case in the library before.

The CPSU NSW organised meetings, listened to feedback and empowered members to work together to solve this issue. This led to growth in membership at the campus.

“Because we worked with the union, we grew our membership, and we were able to show our union strength to management, they took us seriously,” said Librarian Lyn Keily in a bulletin to members.

“It was a bit of a fight but because we all stood together and worked in union, we won. I have been a union member for the past 26 years. I’ve always been proud to be union and now I can say, without a doubt, being in the union is having strength. It’s having camaraderie with your colleagues and standing together.” ■



VIRUS EXPOSES A FUNDING FLAW

It has taken a worldwide pandemic to expose the folly of turning a great education system investing in Australia's future into one dependent too much on overseas students.

The CPSU NSW has called on the Federal Government to provide urgent financial assistance to universities affected by a downturn in international student numbers created by the Coronavirus pandemic.

In February this year, credit agency Standard & Poors estimated Australian universities may forfeit billions in lost revenue as international students are kept out of the country due to restrictions on people entering Australia.

“For decades Governments have pushed our public universities to build business models based on expanding their international fee-paying student numbers to supplement cuts in public funding,” said CPSU NSW Assistant State Branch Secretary, Troy Wright. “We’ve turned our public universities into businesses and in doing so exposed them to market vulnerability.

“Many of our universities are now either highly dependent on revenue from international students or cash-strapped to the extent they can’t easily sustain a further decline in income.”

These cuts are not only harming the state’s universities, but regional communities that depend on the students living in them.

THESE CUTS ARE NOT ONLY HARMING THE STATE'S UNIVERSITIES, BUT REGIONAL COMMUNITIES

“Universities have become among the most important employers in our regions and generate enormous economic activity in other parts of the economy,” he said.

“The Prime Minister must step in and ensure adequate funding is available to universities experiencing, or likely to experience, significant losses in revenues.” ■

Anthony wins permanent status at TAFE

CPSU NSW TAFE organiser Shane Jobberns congratulates Anthony Dabboul, who was recently made permanent after working as a casual at Miller TAFE College for 11 years.

The union has made great efforts recently getting full-time status for an army of members such as Mr Dabboul, who works in security at the campus in southwest Sydney.

“Any union members who reckon they have been employed in a casual capacity for too long should talk to their Organiser or Delegate or call the CPSU NSW on 1300 772 679,” said Mr Jobberns.

“We have fought long and hard for conditions for our members. To see them be ignored in favour of cost-cutting casual status is infuriating.”



WAR ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION CONTINUES

The roll-out of the latest One TAFE reforms again focuses the state's attention on the neglect of vocational training in NSW and the burgeoning spectre of privatisation.

As the state deals with years of neglect, and the resulting skills shortages, the Berejiklian Government has floated the idea of more “private sector involvement” in the TAFE system, which may be a Trojan horse-style way of introducing privatisation by stealth.

The Premier was put on the spot in Parliament, initially refusing to rule out a wholesale sell-off of the TAFE system. It was only later, through a media statement, that she ruled out privatising TAFE.

In a letter to the Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education, Geoff Lee, State Branch Secretary of the CPSU NSW, Stewart Little demanded the State Government not only rule out privatisation but also end plans to introduce a Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS)-style repayment plan, and instead provide “free TAFE courses in areas of skills shortages”.

“TAFE funding, from both Canberra and Macquarie Street, needs to be restored,” said Mr Little. “Rather than carrying around the hat to the private sector this vital part of our country’s future needs to be fully funded by governments.”

The State Government is reviewing the performance of the TAFE sector, and has released terms of reference to ensure “VET is to be regarded as a genuine and desirable option for school leavers”.

“The Government needs to scrap the Smart and Skilled reforms that have gotten us here and instead return TAFE to the central role it once had in vocational education, rather than having it compete with cut-price private providers,” said Mr Little. ■



BROOK HEADS DOWN THE COAST

Brook Down, Chair of the TAFE Delegates Committee, drums up support for the CPSU NSW on a trip to the Ulladulla campus.

Mr Down and CPSU NSW staff also visited members in the Wollongong West and Nowra campuses.

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POVB MEMBERS GET THE GONGS

Three Prison Officers received thanks for their work on both sides of the wire to mark National Corrections Day this year.

Couple Liz and Graeme Reid, from the South Coast Correctional Centre, shared the Outstanding Achievement Award for a Delegate or Member for their work during the recent bushfires in southern NSW.

"On 3 January 2020, Liz and Graeme worked tirelessly coordinating donations of food, water, female products, nappies and baby formula to the people of Lake Conjola and Manyana," said Nicole Jess, Chairperson of the Prison Officers Vocational Branch (POVB). "During this time, they also offered their house to people affected."

"They did not do this to be recognised but because it is in their soul to help others and to do what they can. They are true Australians and true Prison Officers whose motto is always 'look after everyone and get home safely'."

"Graeme and Liz have always been active delegates wherever

they work. Their relationship will go down in PSA/POVB history as one of the best union partnerships. The union bought them together and they make a formidable team working tirelessly for the membership and the centres they work in."

Delegate of the Year is Mark Hutchinson (pictured above) of the Metropolitan Reception and Remand Centre (MRRC).

"Mark is nothing but committed and determined to represent his membership with honesty, integrity and conviction," said Ms Jess. "His phone is never off to his members and he comes in on his own time for meetings at the centre and at Henry Deane."

"The support, compassion and dedication he showed the members during a recent criminal matter at MRRC was nothing short of amazing."

"He still continues to represent the members. He attends all workers' compensation, disciplinary, legal and PSA meetings, mostly in his own time." ■

PSA pushing for redeployment in the Clarence Valley

As Grafton Gaol prepares to shut its doors for the last time, the PSA is pushing for staff certainty about their futures in the service.

NSW Corrective Services Assistant Commissioner Kevin Corcoran has announced the existing prison will close in August.

Despite assurances from the local National Party member, Chris Gulaptis, the private operator Serco has not replied to job applications submitted by Officers employed at the Government-run facility.

"Are they looking at a shiny new prison without skilled staff?" said PSA Industrial Manager Julie-Ann Bond. "We are hearing that people with experience in hair-dressing and fitness instruction are getting interviews

but not long-standing trained Officers."

Ms Bond was critical of Mr Corcoran, who has not returned to Grafton to offer support to Officers since the announcement. Commissioner Peter Severin is also notable for his absence.

She added Serco was being secretive about wages on offer: "Our members applying for jobs there know it will be less than they are earning now: but how less is less?"

Officers at Grafton Gaol feel let down by the organisation. Many Officers have worked with Corrective Services up to 30 years. Ms Bond added the uncertainty was wreaking havoc with families not knowing if they were staying in town or moving to places with better employment opportunities than the Clarence Valley. ■

Local jobs locked out

The PSA is working against an indifferent Minister to get the best result for members who are impacted by the five prisons hit by closures.

The State Government last year announced it was also closing correctional centres in Brewarrina, Ivanhoe, Illawarra and Berrima. "We have spoken with the Minister but to no avail, despite the Government's rhetoric on protecting local jobs," said PSA Industrial Manager Julie-Ann Bond. "We will not give up in protecting our members impacted by this Government decision."

Employment opportunities in Ivanhoe and Brewarrina are almost non-existent, which will mean Officers will have to leave the areas. This affects local services such as Meals on Wheels, which is a key service provided by Ivanhoe Gaol. Businesses dependent on the two gaols will also suffer.

Ms Bond along with the members of the Prison Officers Vocational Branch (POVB) State Executive have visited members in Ivanhoe, Brewarrina and Grafton, while the POVB's Vice-Chairperson Jason Charlton and PSA Industrial Officer David McCauley have been in regular contact with members in Illawarra and Berrima.

PSA AND POVVB DIG IN FOR DIGGERS

The PSA and Prison Officers Vocational Branch (POVVB) are among the sponsors of the Dogs for Diggers program which has been developed at Bathurst Correctional Centre.

The organisations have donated \$1000 each to the program, which uses dogs trained by inmates at Bathurst Correctional Centre to aid injured veterans.

As part of the course, inmates learn animal-handling skills through TAFE.



Nicole awarded for 30 years' service

Prison Officers Vocational Branch Chairperson Nicole Jess was recently recognised for her 30-year career in the NSW correctional system.

The award was presented by Minister Anthony Roberts on National Corrections Day in January. General Secretary Stewart Little, who was in attendance at the event, said it was "a real honour representing the PSA at the presentation".



MEMBERSHIP GOES UP AS DRIVERS GET ORGANISED

The PSA has built up membership among Correctional Services Industry (CSI) logistic drivers, from 20 per cent to what is now a totally unionised workplace.

The drivers, pictured here at a union meeting at John Moroney Correctional Centre in north-west Sydney, elected new Delegates in December, then met with management to discuss issues such as awards, WHS and a better workplace. As workers saw their Delegates taking up issues with management, membership increased.

"I believe the industrial and organising plan for the group has turned a low-unionised workshop into a unionised one," said the group's Organiser, Latu Sailosi. "They are empowered and have real hope they have the power and strength to negotiate and influence meaningful outcomes that affect them and their colleagues."

"The drivers' primary role is to transport and deliver food, clothing, perishables, supplies, furniture and everything in between, to gaols and government facilities across NSW. Although a relatively small group numerically, the importance of their role and services they provide means they hold considerable power. If the drivers stop or remove their labour, gaols and supported facility cannot operate and will come to a grinding halt."

CSI is a Government Business Enterprise. With locations throughout the NSW prison system, it gives offenders the chance to develop work skills as they fulfil orders for a variety of government and private-sector clients. The work performed includes furniture manufacture, packaging, laundry services and Aboriginal arts programs.

Profit from its operations contribute to the cost of running the state's correctional system. ■

THE INDUSTRIAL AND ORGANISING PLAN FOR THE GROUP HAS TURNED A LOW-UNIONISED WORKSHOP INTO A UNIONISED ONE



GALLERY GETS ORGANISED

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**“THE MEMBERS
FEEL VERY
INSECURE ABOUT
THE FUTURE
OF THE ART
GALLERY”**

”

The newly elected Delegates of the Art Gallery of NSW have secured a crucial victory – the formation of a Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) between the PSA and the venue’s executive.

“A Joint Consultative Committee at the Art Gallery of NSW has been years in the making,” says the facility’s PSA Organiser Davis Murphy. “Within three months of getting elected, the Delegates met with management and got it done.”

The decision comes off the back of a rapid membership boom at the venue.

“Our first meeting of 2020 was packed with new members and those considering joining,” said Mr Murphy. “The Delegates were amazing – they heard the concerns and told it straight – ‘the only way we can work on these issues is if you join the PSA.’

“Membership boomed, and off the back of the membership boom a Joint Consultative Committee was secured.”

The first items raised at the JCC were varied. They included suspected maternity leave overpayments, to concerns that the Sydney Modern Project will increase members’ workloads.

And of course – funding cuts to the Art Gallery.

“The members feel very insecure about the future of the Art Gallery,” said Mr Davis. “There is an anxiety, yes. Thankfully, there’s a security in the PSA Delegates – members know the PSA Delegates are in their corner. Members trust the PSA Delegates.”

The gallery has closed its doors temporarily due to COVID-19. ■

WHS: Delegates pose in front of *Fire’s On*, Arthur Streeton’s most famous work, painted in 1891. The oil on canvas painting depicts the death of a railway worker in an explosion during the construction of a railway line across the Blue Mountains.



DOWNPOURS WASH AWAY RELOCATION CASE

The PSA believes recent heavy rainfalls in Parramatta exposed the folly of moving the Powerhouse Museum to a new spot that is at risk of flooding.

“The move puts at risk some of our most valuable heritage items,” said PSA Industrial Manager Nathan Bradshaw. Among the exhibits at risk is the famous Locomotive No. 1. The PSA submitted questions on the exhibit’s fate to Shadow Minister for the Arts Walt Secord, who in turn put them to Minister Don Harwin in a Legislative Council Estimates Committee meeting.

The Minister and Lisa Havilah, the new Chief Executive of the Powerhouse, maintained the locomotive will be situated 7.5 metres above the Parramatta River’s normal level, which is beyond a once-in-100-year flood level. However, Mr Secord produced submissions from the public that flooding reaches this level with a greater frequency than once a century.

Mr Harwin and Ms Havilah had difficulty answering questions from Shooters Party MLC Robert Borsak on how the public will even get inside a building 7.5 metres from the ground.

Legislative Councillor David Shoebridge pushed the Minister to justify closing the Powerhouse



on July 1 this year, even though he could give no definite date of when the replacement facility would be opened.

“In times of financial uncertainty, spending billions to move the Powerhouse west is spending money better used in reconstructing the burnt-out communities hit by fire or sectors of the state struggling through Coronavirus,” said Mr Bradshaw. “By all means give Parramatta a new cultural institution. But it should not come at the expense of the existing Ultimo site.

“Ms Berejiklian went to the polls saying voters could ‘have it all’. Here is a situation where the people of NSW could have two museums for less than the cost of relocating one.”

Like all cultural institutions in NSW, the Powerhouse Museum is closed due to COVID-19. ■



“

“THE PEOPLE OF NSW COULD HAVE TWO MUSEUMS FOR LESS THAN THE COST OF MOVING ONE”

”



Staff at Emerton Public School in western Sydney celebrate their 19 per cent salary increases after the Pay Equity win. They encourage all SASS and other non-teaching staff to join their union and be a part of the change.



**MS CRUDEN
USED THE
PRESENTATION
TO DEMONSTRATE
WHAT CAN
HAPPEN WHEN
UNIONS MAKE A
COMMITMENT TO
EQUAL PAY FOR
THEIR MEMBERS**



Spread the word: Kris talks about Pay Equity

PSA Industrial Manager Kris Cruden spoke about the PSA's Pay Equity win to a conference of lawyers and industrial staff.

Ms Cruden used the presentation to demonstrate what can happen when unions make a commitment to equal pay for their members. The case, which was taken to the Industrial Relations Commission, resulted in a 19 per cent pay rise for most members, with some others receiving even more.

Mr Cruden and Independent Education Union of Australia (IEU) Industrial Officer Michael Wright joined Lucy Saunders, who was one of the PSA's Barristers, on a panel to discuss equal pay cases. The panel spoke on the examination of different approaches to achieving industrial outcomes across jurisdictions, through the lens of equal pay.

The IEU is running a case for early childhood teachers. This case has been running for a number of years and is yet to reach fruition.

Ms Cruden's presentation touched on issues such as the advantages of conciliation and the challenges posed the costs and logistics of launching a large legal case. ■

PSYCHOLOGISTS HAVE THEIR SAY

After a number of School Psychologists contacted the PSA with concerns about their working conditions, the union set up a meeting. This gave the members a chance to flesh out their concerns and to provide further detail on what issues they would like to progress.

Following that teleconference a survey was developed and sent to all School Psychologist members with a request that they share the survey with their colleagues. The survey included information about joining the union and encouraged non-members to do so.

The survey received a good response with 25 per cent of the total School Psychologist workforce providing feedback on their working conditions and access to entitlements. The results confirm that the concerns raised by members are widely felt amongst the workforce and will inform how the PSA proceeds.

The PSA encourages all School Psychologists to join the PSA to work together with their colleagues to resolve emerging issues in their workplaces. ■



Your Delegates at work

Sandra Burgin, School Administration Manager and PSA Schools Departmental Committee Vice Chair with her admin team at Baulkham Hills North Public School.



BIG ISSUES IN SMALL SCHOOLS

Middle Dural Public School Administrative Manager Lyndon is very popular with the school's 39 students and their families. Her infectious smile and bubbly personality not only welcome all who visit the school, she is the only administrative person on staff.

Small schools such as Middle Dural have administrative managers thanks to the PSA, which has lobbied state governments to ensure that small schools have administrative tasks undertaken by a permanent administration manager.

Out of the lab: science staff networking

In March the PSA was invited to present at the Western Sydney Science Administration Network Group held at Evans High School.

The group is made up of SAO Science Staff from schools in the western Sydney area.

The PSA recently set up a vocational advisory group to protect the interests of SAOs working in science.

“These SAO members have unique workplace issues to deal with,” said PSA Industrial Manager Kris Cruden. “They are usually the only SAO Science member on staff, and so work quite separately from other PSA members.”

SAO Science staff members are responsible for maintaining high schools’ science facilities. They are responsible for maintaining laboratories, storing and disposing of chemicals and setting up for science experiments in classes.

“These roles bring their own Workplace Health and Safety issues,” said Ms Cruden. “Storing and disposing of chemicals the wrong way can create unexpected reactions – even explosions.

“However, the state is lucky to have such hard-working and knowledgeable staff in its labs.

“The PSA is determined to ensure not only are SAO Science staff well paid, something we achieved with the Pay Equity case, but that they also work in a safe environment.

“We are also pushing for more training.”

The PSA also recently visited a conference on behalf of SAO staff in libraries. ■



“THE STATE IS LUCKY TO HAVE SUCH WELL-TRAINED, KNOWLEDGEABLE STAFF IN ITS LABS”



Forestry Corp sell-off gets the chop

After a five-month scoping study costing more than \$1 million, the partial sale of Forestry Corporation has been scrapped.

The sale was called off after widespread bushfires reduced much of the softwood plantations to ashes. Under the aborted plan, the hardwood arm of Forestry Corp was to remain a State-Owned Corporation.

CPSU NSW State Branch Secretary Stewart Little had warned Treasurer Perrottet hundreds of regional jobs would have been on the chopping block if the Berejiklian Government sold off Forestry Corp.

“The Government’s announcement that it will abandon the sale will bring a sigh of relief across regional NSW, where their economies rely on forestry jobs,” said Mr Little.

The CPSU NSW is pressing the government to guarantee it will never sell off Forestry Corp of NSW.

“It’s not just the jobs and regional communities that are hurt by any privatisation,” said Mr Little. “Forestry Corp takes a responsible and sustainable approach that protects our native flora and fauna. After this horror fire season, how can we know that a private operator will invest in fire prevention and sustainability?”

“A privately-run Forestry Corp won’t have the same commitment to sustainability and safety. If proper bushfire management has too great an impact on the bottom line, then what corners will a private company cut to squeeze the most out of the plantations?”

“The CPSU NSW would like to thank all of the Forestry Corp members for all of their tireless work and especially over this unprecedented fire season.” ■



Hunter workers say no to proposed EBA

Combined union members at AGL Macquarie have said no; voting to reject a proposed Enterprise Bargaining Agreement.

“It looks like a no vote campaign could be on the cards if management are not prepared to move on outstanding issues,” said CPSU NSW Organiser Ian Braithwaite.

Issues at stake include lost annual and public holiday leave since workers moved from 35 to 39 hours a week, a skills mix not approved by unions and a lack of agreement over workplace safety.

Unions failed to agree with the Liddell Transition Clause, which was designed to accommodate employees affected by the closure of the out-of-date power station.

AGL Macquarie is a major employer in the Hunter region. ■

DPI CHANGES HIT AN INDUSTRY EMERGING FROM DROUGHT AND FIRE

The Berejiklian Government has announced a planned retreat from its funding responsibilities, putting more pressure on the state’s recovering rural sector. The Department of Primary Industries (DPI) has traditionally shared research and development costs with the private sector. This relationship has produced one of the world’s most effective primary industries sectors, with a continued growth in yields from the state’s farms.

However, recently the Government has warned about what it believes to be the risk of “overcommitting” to research projects, instead issuing a call for “standardising” the way projects are funded. This is putting more onus on the private sector to pay the costs of government staff at a time when industries are most exposed and financially strained.

“I believe that this will be the thin edge of the wedge not only for us but the wider

public service. One hundred per cent of our wages should be supported by the Government – we are public servants doing public good for regional communities,” said one PSA member in the DPI. “We should not be funded by external funds. Imagine public teachers being asked to get some of their wage from the students.”

“The changes come at a time when the rural sector is embattled,” said PSA General Secretary Stewart Little. “Our farmers and rural communities have suffered through droughts, fires and, recently, floods in some spaces. Add in the COVID-19 pandemic and you would be hard pressed to find a worse time for the Government to put the onus of research of costs onto primary producers.

“This is a Government that is abandoning its responsibilities to rural industries at the worst possible time. With all this talk of grant money to the bush, this is the demonstration of a Government that gives with one hand and takes with the other.” ■

Help on the line: PSA calls in help for radio staff

After a number of PSA members working in Police Radio and Policelink were left traumatised after the bushfire season, their union stepped into action.

Working in Police Radio and Policelink during events such as the bushfires that ravaged the Australian east coast is tough work. The hours are long, the calls numerous and some of the work is mentally traumatic.

“Since January, several of our members have taken leave to deal with post-traumatic stress disorder [PTSD],” said Industrial Officer Roland Harris. “We set up a meeting with Assistant Commissioner Kyle Stewart to see what can be done.

“The Assistant Commissioner met with our General Secretary and agreed to look into better solutions for workers in Police Radio dealing with stressful situations such as people under threat from bushfires.”

“Mental health at work is an important issue,” said PSA General Secretary Stewart Little. “I am glad to see the Assistant Commissioner is in agreement with us.” ■



PURR-FECT ROLE FOR A FELINE UNION SUPPORTER

Jo Keep poses with Ed, an honorary PSA member who resides at the Mounted Police Stables in Redfern, Sydney.

Ms Keep, who is a human member of the union, is a Groom at the stables, caring for horses used by mounted police in crowd situations.

The PSA is currently working on the role description for Grooms and their salaries.

PSA ON ALERT OVER RFS CHEMICAL EXPOSURE

As evidence mounts up on the health risks associated with firefighting agent polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), the PSA is supporting changes to workers' compensation legislation.

The NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) has in the past used firefighting foam containing PFAS. There are also numerous PFAS-contaminated sites across NSW, including bulk storage facilities, NSW RFS Stations and Fire Control Centres. To date there are no monitoring systems in place for RFS staff and volunteers who may have been exposed to PFAS.

Evidence recently put before the Federal Court associates PFAS with health effects currently not listed in the Firefighters Presumptive Legislation.

Recent scientific research has provided fairly consistent findings of an association with several other health effects including reduced kidney function, and altered levels of thyroid hormones and sex hormones.

PFAS contamination has left many properties near defence bases worthless. ■

PSA PUSHES TO SAVE KIDS

The PSA has kept up its campaign to keep the KIDS computer system operating.

There will still be very limited access to the system for specific roles, but those in frontline child protection will have had none from April. “The PSA has advocated tirelessly at every level of the department and government for child protection workers to have the tools to do your work effectively, including maintaining KIDS in read-only version,” said PSA Industrial Manager Kris Cruden. “Despite this, Minister Ward does not believe your continued access to KIDS is necessary. Minister Ward and the Department of Communities and Justice Executive have chosen to ignore child protection practitioners’ wishes and have made a decision that will make it more difficult for you to do your work. A decision that will inevitably place children at risk.”

PSA Delegates have demonstrated to the department that not all records migrated from KIDS are visible in ChildStory and that without access to KIDS, the time taken to do certain child protection work will take significantly longer. However, the Minister, Gareth Ward, has continued with plans to phase it out.

“In letters to the Minister, we clearly highlighted the risks and consequences of turning off KIDS,” said Ms Cruden. “KIDS allows easy and ready access to some 30 years of electronic records relating to around one million children and adults.” ■



THAT'S A NOTICEBOARD

PSA members in the Gosford office of Housing have no problems finding the latest news on their union, thanks to what Organiser Sharon Richards described as “the biggest PSA noticeboard I have ever seen”.

Housing has been a hotbed of activity this year, with staff helping out in the wake of the bushfires (see page 38) and the PSA ensuring members are safe during a count of homeless people (see page 40).

PSA members in Housing recently completed a survey on their workplace conditions.

More than 40 per cent of members replied, highlighting concerns about violence in the workplace from clients, access to flex and a variety of health and safety issues. ■



Mount Druitt gets new Delegates on side

Linda Stinton and Jackie Newton are among the new Delegates at the Mount Druitt office of Housing.

BREAKING UP HARD TO DO FOR CARER CAREERS

The dissolution of Hunter Valley Disability Services (HVDS) has not left members any worse off with wages and conditions but it may affect their career advancement.

The HVDS consortium has split into three components – Ability Options, ConnectAbility Australia and Finding Yellow.

One of these, Finding Yellow, operates only two group homes.

“Our members will stay on their Copied State Awards but with fewer sites to work in, there is a lesser chance of picking up new skills in different work settings,” says CPSU NSW Industrial Officer Jessica Moore. “When the disability sector had a publicly run disability arm, it was easier for members to acquire a variety of skills as there was a greater number of sites.” ■

CPSU NSW gets casuals back to where they always belonged

After nearly a year of pressure from the CPSU NSW, Northcott has finally started correcting an error and paying casual and temporary staff the correct amount.

The CPSU NSW informed Northcott on 19 March 2019 of the union’s position that transferred staff were to remain on Copied State Instruments as outlined in the *Fair Work Act*. The union believes the movement of casual and temporary staff to the *Northcott Enterprise Agreement* was a potential breach of the Act.

After discussions with Northcott, the CPSU NSW in December agreed in principle to Northcott’s proposal to progress the matter.

However, due to a lack of progress from Northcott, in late January the CPSU NSW provided Northcott with 14 days to restore transferred staff to their correct employment conditions and any

outstanding pay owed or we would initiate legal action. Northcott has since started the process of correcting the error.

Transferred casuals and temporary staff will be returned to the *Community Living Award* and other relevant Copied State Instruments and receive any retrospective payments due. This will take place over the coming weeks.

“If you are an affected member, any outstanding back pay must include the differences with shift penalties, overtime, split shifts, weekend penalties, public holidays and any other entitlement you should have received had you remained on the CLA and other Copied State Instruments,” said CPSU NSW Industrial Officer Graydon Welsh.

“If you believe there has been a miscalculation, contact Northcott to request a review. If there is still doubt, contact the CPSU NSW on 1300 772 679.

“Northcott has also chosen to withdraw the option of salary packaging from transferred staff. If you are impacted by this, speak with Northcott to find the best way forward. We will continue to contest this matter.” ■

JUNE-
AUGUST
2019

RED TAPE

IN YOUR INBOX

Did you know you can receive *Red Tape* digitally?

You can read the latest edition as a PDF sent directly to your inbox!

To receive *Red Tape* in this format, email membership@psa.asn.au





BUSHFIRE RELIEF FUND ESTABLISHED FOR MEMBERS

The PSA/CPSU NSW has established a \$100,000 relief fund for members affected by the 2019-20 bushfires.

Operating until December 2020, the fund will give up to \$1000 to eligible members whose primary residence has been totally or partially destroyed by fire. Applications will also be considered for other reimbursements for those affected by the disaster.

Applications for funds will be reviewed by a committee consisting of representatives of the union, the Rural Fire Service, the State Emergency Service and National Parks and Wildlife Service.

GET INFORMED FIRST

A CPSU NSW member facing an ominous meeting with their manager did the right thing and contacted their union first.

The member, who works in Disability Services, was issued with information on avoiding being “ambushed” by their boss, as well as information on the role a support person can play in meetings with managers.

“Forewarned is forearmed,” said Member Services Manager Kym Ward. Call the union’s Member Support Centre if you think management is targeting you. “We are always here to help.”



A PHONE CALL AWAY

Below is just one note of many the PSA/CPSU NSW has received from grateful members. If you have any issues at work, please call you union on 1300 772 679.

I just wanted to let you know that FACS leave was approved today after my father paid a visit to his doctor yesterday.

Thank you so much for your assistance in this matter. And please pass on my thanks to Jessica as well.

Having somewhere to turn in situations like this is one of the main reasons I have been a member of the PSA for all of my working life in the public service.

*Thanks again
Linda*



Since leaving his workplace, Mr Ratto has found bushwalking has "helped me improve my work related mental health issues".

UNION SUPPORT THERE WHEN YOU NEED IT

A PSA member who left "my toxic office environment" has thanked the PSA for standing by his side during a difficult time.

Hernan Ratto said he was so unhappy at work he "ended up walking out of my toxic office environment one day and put in a worker's compensation claim". The claim was upheld by the Workers Compensation Commission.

He added "some eight colleagues ended up leaving our toxic office" from a staff of 35.

"The PSA also supported me by having McNally Jones Staff lawyer Richard Brennan represent me in appealing my worker's compensation decision by my employer's insurer," he said. "The PSA's support was excellent. Richard Brennan was awesome

and a complete delight to deal with considering he had to put up with me and my stress during a time of work stress and mental health problems.

"I would like to thank the PSA and its staff, in particular Ruben [Tabuteau], Luba [Cakovski], Tania [Woods] and Shane [Howes], for their support during a most difficult time I experienced at my workplace."

Mr Ratto was disappointed the dispute went this far and "my employer spent more energy protecting my manager".

"I believe it is more important to discuss problems when we have to work in a toxic work environment and not sweep them under the carpet like my employer's policy document tells us," he said. ■

OVERPAYMENT DRAMAS SORTED

A member accidentally overpaid due to a paperwork error has praised the PSA for its role getting his issue resolved.

The member called the union's Member Support Centre (MSC) after he was verbally advised that he would not be paid any wages for a payment period to correct the overpayment. The union informed his employer, the Department of Communities and Justice, that it was obliged to renegotiate a repayment plan that considered his financial

circumstances, the circumstances of the overpayment and the amount owing.

The member thanked the union and the MSC, saying "without your responsive assistance I feel that the outcome would have been dire".

Outbreak sees MSC open on weekends

The PSA/CPSU NSW is often the first port of call when members are confused, worried or angry at work.

The COVID-19 outbreak has brought with it a maelstrom of misinformation, confusion and worry. Members are unsure about their rights at work.

In response, for the first time in its history the PSA/CPSU NSW Member Support Centre (MSC) will operate on weekends. In addition,

it will open an hour earlier and close half an hour later.

"A big thank you to our MSC staff who are fielding an enormous amount of calls," said General Secretary Stewart Little, who helped out on the first Saturday. "Many Organisers are also helping to staff the MSC."

If members have work issues and need to turn to their union, the MSC can be reached on 1300 772 679 or at membersupport@psa.asn.au.



**A REAL PUBLIC ASSET:
CLAUDIA'S FIGHT FOR ANIMALS**



Claudia Bianchi works among colleagues who don't indulge in office gossip around the photocopier, steal your lunch from the fridge or talk too loudly on the phone. The 56-year-old Keeper works in the Australian Fauna section of Mosman's Taronga Zoo, dealing mainly with nocturnal animals such as echidnas.

While NSW is lucky enough to have a plethora of facilities to view animals, it is the government-run facilities in Mosman and Dubbo that are among the world leaders in conservation and breeding projects.

In the light of recent fires, as well as climate change, these breeding programs are vital. "All Australian fauna is threatened," said Ms Bianchi.

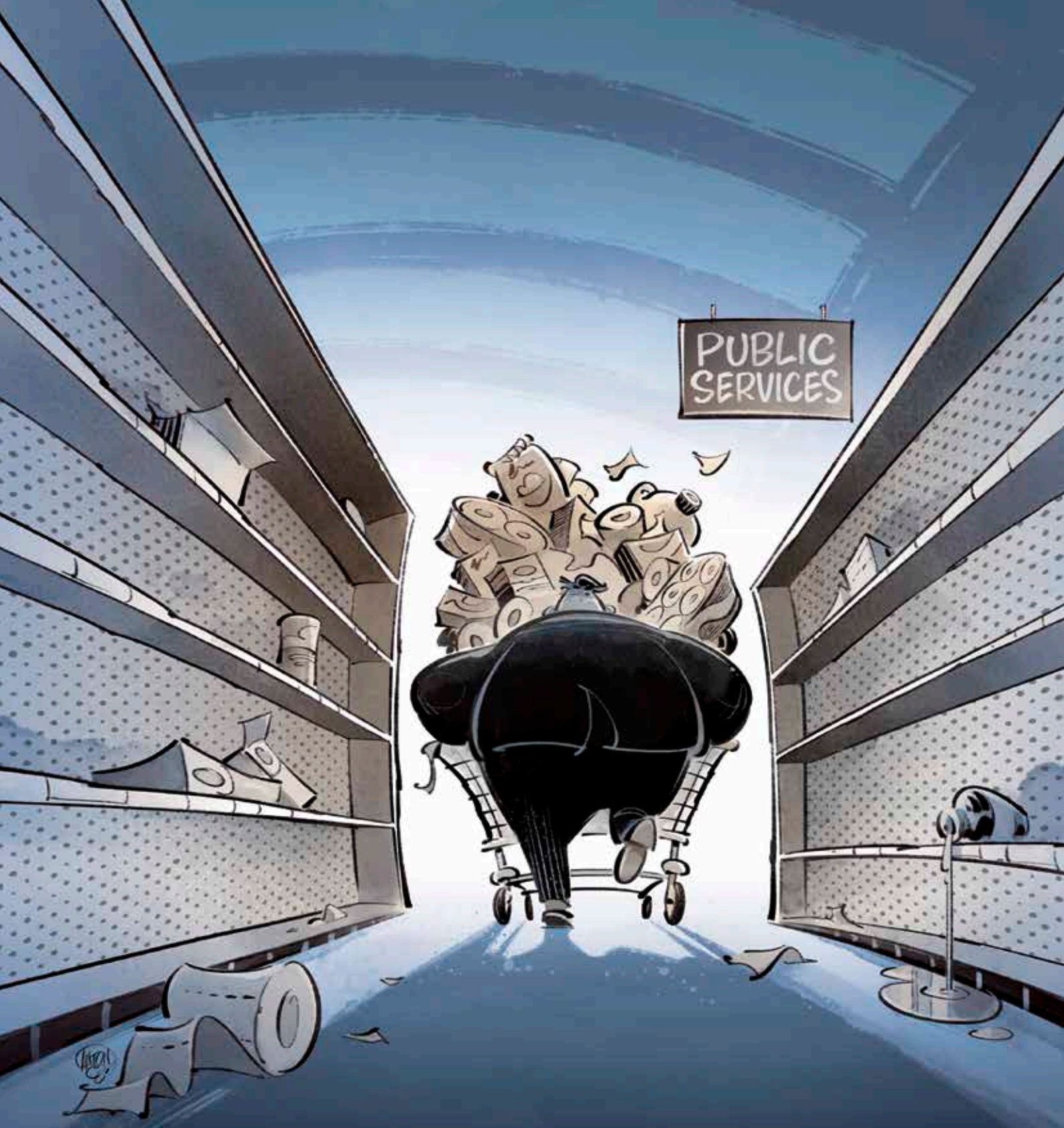
"I get to work with incredible animals that we find in our own back yards. What

I find really amazing is that so many people don't even know they exist." The zoo has a higher purpose, educating people about the environment and providing breeding opportunities for animals threatened by extinction. "Breeding programs can maintain diversity in animals that may not otherwise have an opportunity to do so," said Ms Bianchi, who was employed at the zoo 20 years ago after a three-and-a-half-year term as a volunteer. She is a qualified zookeeper and vet nurse qualified in animal behaviour and training. The PSA has nearly 150 members employed by the Taronga Conservation Society, which runs both the zoos. Taronga Zoo dates back to 1844, when it was set up in Moore Park, moving to its present Mosman site in 1916. Dubbo Western Plains Zoo opened in 1977. "The zoo is a great place for a day out, but behind the scenes people like Claudia are working to nullify extinction rates both in Australia and abroad," said PSA Industrial Officer Michael Sinclair. "Government-run places like Taronga will always be doing more for conservation than the privately run alternatives throughout the state."

The zoo is currently closed to the public due to COVID-19. ■



"WHAT I LOVE ABOUT MY JOB IS THAT I GET TO WORK WITH INCREDIBLE ANIMALS THAT WE FIND IN OUR OWN BACK YARDS"



**The end of
privatisation?**

For years, the private sector has stripped away public assets. Could fire and disease turn the tide?

It took a devastating bushfire to finally put a brake on the State Government's privatisation obsession. The ferocious fires that tore through Australia didn't spare the state's pine plantations. Like hectares of National Parks, farmland and housing throughout the state, many plantations have been devastated by fire.

Once the embers stopped smoking, a new disaster reared its head. Stories about a new viral disease outbreak in a regional Chinese city suddenly morphed into a global pandemic that didn't spare NSW from its wrath. Talks about the efficiency of the private sector over the public evaporated as the state's Health Department employees took on the roles of heroes, which only months earlier had been held by firefighters.

Saving Forestry Corp

The timber housing frames of tomorrow, Forestry Corp's softwood plantations dot the state, earning NSW income and doubling up as recreation reserves for people eager to explore the bush without the National Park restrictions on pets, camping or trail bikes.

However, last year the State Government looked to offload yet another state asset. It wasn't until fires tore through the forests that Macquarie Street gave up on its plan. And even then, a government more obsessed with ideology than stark reality threw thousands of dollars at the issue to try and salvage the sale.

Right up until the deal was kiboshed, PSA/CPSU NSW Assistant General Secretary Troy Wright said the Government was "paying consultants \$10,000 a day to tell it what it wanted to hear", namely that there had to be another way to sell a public asset. Even if that asset was a smouldering ruin.

"It is bizarre," he said. "It is as if one of us was selling our house and paying hundreds of dollars to the real estate agent just to say that they are going to sell it."

Of course, once the public has spent millions on replanting and improving the asset, chances are it will once again be put up for sale. Socialise the costs, privatise the profits.

In fine health

As outlined in our feature on page 32, NSW Health's 'Bunker' in Homebush became the epicentre of the state's response to COVID-19, learning from countries where the pandemic had taken root earlier and giving advice to the Government and residents.

Across the harbour, the Henry Deane building housed a similar war room, with Corrective Services NSW and the PSA outlining how to deal with the state's prisoners, staff and visitors.

Meanwhile, as the private sector struggled, staff in public schools went to work each day, NSW Police patrolled out-of-control supermarkets and train and bus drivers kept the city moving.

The public sector never seemed so vital.

The problem with privatisation

Professor John Quiggan of the University of Queensland has long been a critic of the retreat from state ownership that has blighted government policy in the past 40 years.

He says an earlier NSW deal, the sale of the Land Titles Service at Land and Property Information "would have to be up on the list of the world's most absurd sell-offs".

Here was an asset that earned the state of NSW \$190 million a year, according to leaked Treasury documents. Yet the right to run the service for 35 years was outsourced for \$2 billion, ensuring its eventual buyer was all but guaranteed to make a killing. Money that would have gone on essential

“

WE SEE GOVERNMENTS EITHER REWARDING MATES IN BUSINESS WITH OUR PUBLIC ASSETS OR ELSE STICKING THE PROVISION OF VITAL SERVICES IN THE 'TOO HARD' BASKET

”

Police line-up: when things got out of hand in private enterprise, it was the public sector that stepped in.



“
**PRIVATELY RUN
 LIGHT RAIL SERVICES
 AND DRIVERLESS
 METRO TRAINS MEAN
 GOVERNMENTS CAN
 AVOID PAYING FOR
 SERVICES OR DEALING
 WITH PUBLIC SECTOR
 UNIONS**
 ”

Up and running: thanks to a government aversion to sell-offs, Singapore's taxpayers are under less pressure.

public services now needs to be sourced from elsewhere.

Of course, the Land Titles sale brought with it the usual accompaniments to sell-offs; an increase in the cost of title searches for consumers and an ongoing risk that land owners' details are not as securely held.

Professor Quiggan says this is not unusual, as privatisations offer few advantages.

“There is no evidence that the shift away from a publicly owned structure has been beneficial here or anywhere else in the world,” he said. “It is a vehicle for bringing in price increases of various kinds that governments haven't been willing to do.”

He says we are “charged more typically in ways that exploit monopoly power”, with the proceeds of the sell-offs misused “because they have been treated as a ‘free’ source of money”.

“Things like asset recycling are essentially selling off income-generating assets and using the proceeds to fund luxury projects, which would not have passed the test if they'd had to be financed in the ordinary run of things.”

Tax returns

When income-generating assets are sold off, the Treasury becomes more dependent on the taxpayer for revenue. Singapore, for example, depends on taxpayers for less than 15 per cent of total revenue, as it has held onto its government-owned enterprises – including communications company Optus. After decades of unloading

assets, Australia is about twice as dependent on taxpayers to run its government.

Professor Quiggan believes selling assets is too often done at the expense of real value. “The amount received for privatised assets is less than the public would have received if they had held onto the asset,” he said. “There is really a net loss to society.”

Even in a case where he believes government retreat from services was justified – namely airlines – Professor Quiggan maintains “the Government didn't get a particularly good price for Qantas when they sold it”.

When it goes wrong

The PSA/CPSU NSW's Troy Wright says there are two types of privatisations: “asset sales and relegation of duty”.

“We see governments either rewarding mates in business with our public assets or else sticking the provision of vital services in the ‘too hard’ basket,” said Mr Wright.

Privatisation not only hurts the public sector and the people depending on its services, it can also be a disaster for companies hoodwinked into taking on state responsibilities.

“The buyers of the assets have sometimes gotten good deals but sometimes been overly optimistic,” said Professor Quiggan.

NSW is littered with failed retreats from its duties. The Port Macquarie Base Hospital opened in 1994 to great fanfare from pro-privatisation zealots. Here was an institution that was to provide a public service utilising the supposedly more dynamic private-sector model. Run by an imaginatively titled consortium called Health Care of Australia, the place was a disaster from the outset, busting the myth that private does things better.

According to the Nurses and Midwives Association, “from the outset it was clear that profit was the driving force behind the privatised model. Staff members were indoctrinated into the structure of the parent company, Mayne Nickless, and advised how important it was to keep the shareholders happy.” Not patients, shareholders.

One social worker was expected to cover a 160-bed facility; rooms were smaller than Australian hospital standards; six CEOs took the helm in the space of seven years; specialists were scarce; and elective waiting lists were the worst in the state.

In 2005, the State Labor Government ended the fiasco and brought the beleaguered hospital back into public hands.





Poll driven: privatisation has never been popular with voters.

Could disability services follow the hospital's example? The retreat from disability services by organisations such as Australian Unity, which is reducing operations in regional NSW, shows that some players misjudged the financial opportunities posed by the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The result: unhappy companies, unhappy staff, unhappy clients and unhappy families.

"With Northcott, the operating costs were either higher than they thought or they wanted to make more profit," said CPSU NSW Industrial Officer Graydon Welsh. "They have cut support hours, moved transport costs to Day Programs and are constantly looking for ways to reduce overheads. There was talk of removing vehicles from each group home and having a pool available in areas. This was to reduce the overheads of maintenance and upkeep."

To address this, many disability service providers are now trying to cut wages and conditions.

"Many professional and clinical staff have been given inferior national minimum standard

redundancies the day after the so-called two-year guarantee, making a lie of the need for NGOs to increase staff," said CPSU NSW Regional Organiser Shane Elliott, who has worked in the field. "They are often inviting them back to do the exact same job for \$30,000 less by simply calling the position a different title."

Other retreats from essential services include public transport. Privately run light rail services and driverless metro trains mean governments can avoid paying for services or dealing with public sector unions. Thus we have a light rail providing a service in a manner so sluggish it has been described on the ABC as "the red snail", or privately run bus services cutting off unprofitable non-peak hour services, leaving elderly passengers increasingly isolated. A slide in the quality of services destroys the myth that the free market does it better.

Of course, when companies take over state-owned assets, they know the essential nature of the services means the Government will step in

“
THE CONSISTENT GAINERS ARE THE FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS WHO MANAGE THESE SALES AND COLLECT SUBSTANTIAL PAYOFFS
”

Degree factories: our universities' dependence on overseas students has been exposed by COVID-19.



PRIVATISATION NOT ONLY HURTS THE PUBLIC SECTOR AND THE PEOPLE DEPENDING ON ITS SERVICES, IT CAN ALSO BE A DISASTER FOR COMPANIES HOODWINKED INTO TAKING ON STATE RESPONSIBILITIES



if anything goes wrong. We have recently seen privatised power companies call on taxpayer-funded military help to repair the infrastructure they own.

As PSA members who worked with the disastrous GovConnect – the outsourced provision of services from Infosys/Unisys roll-out – would know, the promises made by private providers often far exceed reality.

PSA members suffered continuing issues involving GovConnect, including over- and underpayments and their recoupment, inaccurate leave records, information on P-Files being compromised and incorrect, and an overall severely diminished HR service. At the time the NSW Auditor-General called out “significant breakdowns” in the migration of back-office delivery from ServiceFirst to Unisys and Infosys, warning it showed risks in the privatisation process.

With all IT and payroll outsourcing there are security risks, particularly when the companies involved succumb to the temptation offered by low-cost overseas providers.

The decimation of education

While the Premier has claimed the privatisation of TAFE is not on her radar, the policies of the past few years have seen a massive departure from the Government’s role in providing vocational education. Cuts to TAFE, teamed with funding that can be used with private providers, has seen the public system wither, to the advantage of usually inferior cut-price private colleges.

“We have also seen attempts to outsource functions such as security,” said CPSU NSW Organiser Shane Jobberns. “In some cases the security contractors have been given roles they are not trained for, including working with dangerous tools. This makes it easier for TAFE managers not to fill vacant roles.”

More recently, Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education Geoff Lee has floated the idea of allowing TAFE college facilities to be opened to private competitors.

Universities may be in public hands but poor funding has them reliant on fee-paying foreign students, many of whom apply for permanent residency after graduation. This could be seen as not only a departure from a government’s responsibility for education, but from immigration as well.

The state: back in vogue

But public ownership is coming back.

“We have already seen significant reversals, such as the NBN, which renationalised a large part of the telecommunications system,” said Professor Quiggan. “Because it had been privatised, Telstra refused to build the National Broadband Network and we had to come back and do it ourselves in a publicly owned set-up.

“There have been numerous failures, where the response has been by the Government to either take the assets back into public ownership or create new enterprises which replicate the function that has been sold off.”

In Europe, the economic downturn has led to governments renationalising railways and airlines.

Here in NSW, a bid by the government’s

Corrective Services NSW beat off private operators to run the John Morony Correctional Complex.

Who wins?

Privatisation seems to leave a swathe of destruction in its path. So who wins when state-owned assets are auctioned off?

“The consistent gainers are the financial institutions who manage these sales and collect substantial payoffs, and of course the politicians who put the sales through and then go on to work for those same financial institutions after politics,” said Professor Quiggan. Previous premiers Bob Carr and Mike Baird, having sold off state assets, later served in positions with banks.

Companies that outsource are also quite adept at donating to political parties. A look at the political donors’ register reveals plenty of private health care providers, privatised energy firms and “government service consultants”.

In 2018-19 the Big Four consulting firms, Deloitte, EY, KPMG and PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC), which all earn handsomely as consultants in privatisations, together reached a new record in donations to the major parties.

Selling off services also eliminates another problem for governments; accountability. As National Party Senator Bridget McKenzie found out in February, spending government money is bound by rules on accountability. Sticking a private operator between the taxpayer and where money is spent, however, can take away the spotlight.

“Privatisation is used by governments to avoid accountability through notions like ‘commercial in confidence,’” said Professor Quiggan.

In NSW, the Government has hidden behind commercial contracts to disguise cost overruns on transport projects that have run into billions. This lack of transparency is particularly galling when funding for the projects is obtained by public sell-offs as part of the ‘asset-recycling’ agenda of the Coalition.

PSA Industrial Manager Julie-Ann Bond says privatised prisons are less accountable to the taxpayers who fund them, hiding behind commercial-in-confidence provisions to avoid reporting information such as assaults and staff ratios.

“We will never know fully what goes on inside,” she said.

Wasn't this once ours?

The recent moves to contract out access to Cockatoo Island National Park also highlights another insidious side to the sell-off debate; restricting access to state assets to those who can pay top dollar.

“We have seen it with Lane Cove National Park, where camping facilities were privatised,” said PSA Organiser Kim de Govrik. “It’s the thin edge of the wedge: the Government wants to privatise as much of the National Parks system as it can.”

Turn back time

In their responses to the twin crises of bushfire and COVID-19, the State and Federal Governments have the power to reverse the decades-old privatisation trend. The public sector has proven its worth in times of disaster: it should keep that role in times of plenty, too. ■

“

**SELLING OFF SERVICES
ALSO ELIMINATES
ANOTHER PROBLEM
FOR GOVERNMENTS;
ACCOUNTABILITY**

”



Passing issues: Sydney's ferries have already been privatised, is access to Cockatoo Island next?



STATE OF FEAR

PSA/CPSU NSW members are on the frontline against the terrifying COVID-19 pandemic.

A room is measuring the pulse of a sick state: NSW Health's "bunker", situated in Homebush, Sydney, is a crisis headquarters measuring the spread of COVID-19 throughout NSW. It is staffed by a dedicated group of workers, including PSA members, keeping the Government up to date with a potentially fatal virus that has brought the state to its knees.

Working in shifts, staff are looking at the number of people affected, where they were likely to have been infected and where they have since been. It is looking at how other countries already affected by COVID-19 have succeeded in slowing the virus's progress, and where they have failed.

Further east, near Sydney's Central Station, Corrective Services NSW has established a temporary command centre on the COVID-19 pandemic at the Henry Deane Building. The centre was set up after a meeting between the PSA General Secretary Stewart Little, PSA Corrective Services Branch Executives and Commissioner Peter Severin.

The centre is looking at strategies to minimise infection rates inside the state's gaols, protecting inmates and staff, as well as visitors, who have been largely banned. The centre is determined to avoid the fate of some gaols in Italy, where riots resulted in dead inmates. It is also looking at how centres are managing to deal with excessive staff illness.

Throughout the state, members in the Aboriginal Health Unit are keeping indigenous communities already blighted with health issues safe from the virus, which could have fatal results if it arrives.

A state at war

As we saw when the Rural Fire Service, National Parks and Wildlife, the State Emergency Service, Police and Forestry came together to fight bushfires, the state's public servants are on the frontline for the people of NSW.

The pandemic is not just affecting those members in the crisis centres. Offices are closing and people are being asked to self-isolate or care for others who are ill.

The PSA/CPSU NSW negotiated with the

Premier's Department, which spelled out a range of provisions in a circular for those affected by COVID-19 working for the public sector, TAFE and state-owned corporations. These include:

- paid special leave of up to 20 days for people who need to be excluded from the workplace/ placed in quarantine
- paid special leave of up to 20 days for people with caring responsibilities or who have transport disruptions (without needing to exhaust other forms of leave first)
- paid special leave if the workplace is closed
- special leave for people who exhaust sick leave
- provision to work flexibly/remotely/at other locations where at all possible.

At the time of printing, the State and Federal Governments were determined to keep schools open, despite the difficulties staff would have in enforcing social distancing.

PSA Industrial Manager Kris Cruden said she met with the Department of Education and "reminded them that our members deal with students who may be sick at school".

"The Government wants to keep schools open as long as possible," said Ms Cruden. "If they want to do this they must protect their staff."

Service NSW is another area where working from home is not an option for many PSA members. The Department of Customer Service

The World Health Organisation has published advice on how to get your workplace ready for COVID-19. It includes tips such as:

- Keep workplaces **CLEAN AND HYGIENIC**
- Promoting regular, thorough **HAND-WASHING** by employees, contractors and customers
- Promoting **GOOD RESPIRATORY HYGIENE** in the workplace
- Advising people to **CONSULT TRAVEL ADVISORIES** before business trips
- For places where **COVID-19** is spreading in the community, asking people to **STAY HOME FROM WORK** if they have symptoms, even if they're just a **MILD COUGH, LOW-GRADE FEVER** (37.3 degrees Celsius or more) or if they have taken medicines such as paracetamol, ibuprofen or aspirin, because these can mask symptoms.

This issue is evolving and changing every day. The information here was up to date at the time of press. Please keep posted on new COVID-19 developments at the sites below:

- health.nsw.gov.au
- [facebook.com/psansw](https://www.facebook.com/psansw)
- [facebook.com/cpsunsw](https://www.facebook.com/cpsunsw)
- twitter.com/psansw

has stated that if Driver Testers, for example, feel unable to continue testing, they should “have a conversation with their manager”.

“The PSA had real concerns about Driver Testing and why it was continuing,” said Industrial Manager Nathan Bradshaw. He added the PSA has approached the Department to find out about the availability of safety materials such as masks and sanitisers for those Service NSW staff continuing to work in client-facing roles.

“We are concerned that if COVID-19 gets into a group home or residential facilities for people with disability,” said Industrial Manager Anne Kennelly. “It will have even more disastrous impact than in aged-care facilities where people have died. We wrote to NSW Health seeking guidelines. We have also been successful in obtaining some COVID-19 paid leave with some disability providers.”

Campus closed

CPSU NSW members in the state’s universities were among the first affected by the outbreak.

The Lismore and Gold Coast campuses of Southern Cross University were closed when a visiting staff member tested positive to COVID-19. However, according to Ms Kennelly, “when staff returned to work the following day they found a forensic clean had not been performed”.

There were more comprehensive clean-ups at the University of NSW, where, at the time of press, three cases tested positive.

Shutdowns or moves to online learning are now happening in universities all over the state.

The union has negotiated a suite of benefits for staff affected by closures, illness or enforced isolation. In Sydney University, and UNSW this included 10 days’ special leave.

The CPSU NSW recommends members go to the NSW Health website (see page 33) and find a factsheet dedicated to people working in the state’s universities.

Power in a union

“It is times like these that your union comes to the fore, protecting the workers who are protecting us,” said PSA General Secretary Stewart Little. “We need to stand together and bring normality back to our state.” ■

ALL HANDS ON DECK: PUBLIC MONEY NEEDED TO FIGHT THE CRISIS

Public Services International has used the spread of COVID-19 to highlight the importance of using public funds in the fight against infectious diseases.

“The main bastion for crisis preparedness is a strong public health system,” said the organisation in a public statement. “Government after government have been drastically cutting the funding of public health, including for disease control and prevention. Throwing money into public health emergencies when they happen, such as this outbreak is not enough. What is required is sustained funding of the public health system towards ensuring universal public health care.”

Based in France, Public Services International is a global lobby group set up to fight the retreat of government from public services and to oppose the rise of mass privatisations.

MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO GET FLU SHOTS





SICK? TAKE THE DAY OFF

Your sick leave entitlements not only save you the need to come to work when you are feeling ill, they also protect your workmates.

“Coming to work with a severe cough or sneezing can spread your flu virus to colleagues,” says PSA/CPSU NSW WHS Industrial Officer Ian Tuit. “It can even be spread via hands touching surfaces at work.

“The labour movement has fought long and hard to obtain sick leave for workers in Australia. If you think you have the flu or a cold, use your days off.”

Members are also encouraged to get flu shots, particularly if they are pregnant, over 65 or part of an at-risk group, which includes Aboriginal Australians.



How to ride out the impact of *coronavirus*

The recent increase in market volatility has created a challenging environment for investors and the wider superannuation industry.

We take a look at some of the important things to consider about your super during times when investment markets are affected by events such as the coronavirus.

What is happening?

China first reported the outbreak of coronavirus in late December and most cases and deaths have been in the Hubei province. Chinese authorities responded with travel restrictions and many countries banned travellers entering from China.

The virus was assumed to be relatively contained. However, coronavirus has now spread to 48 countries and the US Centre for Disease Control states that "current global circumstances suggest it is likely that this virus will cause a pandemic."¹ Locally, the Australian Government has enacted its pandemic plan to ensure a proactive response.²

How have markets reacted?

There was an optimistic tone in the markets at the beginning of 2020, and prior to the rapid spread of the virus outside of China, markets were pricing a relatively confident outlook. It was assumed that there would be a temporary impact to Chinese growth, but that Chinese authorities could deliver stimulus to counter this.

With a backdrop of ongoing central bank support via low interest rates, it was viewed that markets would undergo a "V-shaped" recovery. That is, a sharp decline followed quickly by a sharp rise back to its previous levels.

When the virus spread outside of China these assumptions changed, and it's now looking like the impact to global growth

will be more severe, with recovery taking longer than originally expected. Additionally, the crucial role that China plays in global supply chains has become clearer and many global companies are now reporting delays in sourcing input materials and products.

At First State Super, we manage our investments to take account of short-term risks. We are guided by a longer-term strategy that aims to maximise your long-term savings.



What does this mean for my super going forward?

Market volatility is expected to remain a prominent feature of the next few weeks and months due to the coronavirus, its potential impact on economies and related shifts in investor sentiment.

While headlines can be distracting, and at times unsettling, it's important to remember that super is a long-term investment.

At First State Super we manage our investment portfolios with longer-term objectives in mind. This means we look beyond the daily news and focus on investing in a mix of good quality assets that can grow your savings over time.

So rather than reacting to short-term events, we prepare for them by including strategies to diversify market risk and deliver positive long-term outcomes for members.

We also diversify our pre-mixed options across many asset classes including property, infrastructure and bonds and shares, as well as alternative investments that aim to outperform during periods of market volatility. Spreading your money across a range of investments can reduce the impact of a poor performance in any one asset class.

I'm concerned, what should I do?

Most of our members choose to ride out the ups and downs, but those who choose to switch investment options to cash tell us that negative returns are the main trigger.

When you see others reacting to a falling share market, it can be hard to accept that doing nothing is often the most sensible response. But during times of

heightened volatility, it's even more important to focus on your long-term strategy and think carefully before making any significant changes.

Switching to a more conservative option, such as cash, after a market fall can lock in losses. This may mean you miss out on any rebound that occurs. For example, the market falls that resulted from the October 1987 crash, the tech bubble burst in 2001, the September 11 terrorist attacks and 2008 global financial crisis, were all followed by a strong bounce back within a relatively short timeframe.

Put another way, a loss on your statement remains a paper loss if you remain invested because it is possible you will recover any losses as markets rebound. However, switching to a more defensive investment option removes this potential and locks in that loss.

Short term market volatility typically has little overall impact on long term returns. Markets are also inherently unpredictable and trying to time them means you must get two important decisions right: when to get out and when to get back in. There is a risk of having to pay a higher price to get back into the market, as well as missing out on the growth from any market recovery.

The important thing is to choose an option that is appropriate for your age, investment timeframe, risk tolerance and any investments you have outside of super. History has shown that **having a long-term plan and sticking to it gives you the greatest chance of reaching your retirement goals** and that those who do this ultimately end up better off than those who change investment options.

Should I Invest in cash?

In volatile times, you may be tempted to switch your investments to cash options. Cash has the lowest market risk and potential for loss. While cash can protect

against negative returns, its value does not usually increase over time and with today's very low interest rate environment, the level of income is also low.

This leaves the investment susceptible to inflation risk. That is, the return on your investment may be lower than the rate of inflation, meaning the purchasing power of your money would not actually be growing, which is an important consideration for your retirement savings.

This highlights the long-term risk associated with investing in cash, which is the relevant horizon for your superannuation – even in retirement. Investing over longer periods (10 years or more) means that your investments will probably have time to ride out short-term ups and downs and keeping up with inflation is your main risk.

What if I'm retired or close to retirement?

Even if you are close to, or in, retirement you probably still have a reasonably long investment horizon for your retirement savings. Sticking with your longer-term strategy and focusing on your longer-term goals can make it easier to deal with periods of market volatility.

History has shown that having a long-term plan and sticking to it gives you the greatest chance of reaching your retirement goals and that those who do this ultimately end up better off than those who change investment options.



Further questions?

We appreciate the impact of events like these can be unsettling, and that everyone's situation is different. If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at enquiries@firststatesuper.com.au.



WORKING IN THE EMBERS

Long after the high-vis jackets have been put away and the fire hoses rolled up, an army of PSA and CPSU NSW members will be working to repair the state from the effects of the summer's ferocious bushfires. The fires have scarred the landscape and local animal populations, razed communities and put a huge strain on services.

Chief botanist at the Botanic Gardens and Centennial Parklands, Brett Summerell, is part of a project to collect seeds of threatened species to ensure they can be reintroduced to the environment after events such as the fires.

"The scale [of the fires] is so enormous that we are just trying to prioritise the areas we focus on," he said. "It'll take a while for vegetation to recover."

"We are trying to get out there and monitor what's happened to vegetation and plant species."

His team will look at the wildly varying aftermath of the fires and work to regenerate according to local conditions.

He says the fires were so ferocious that "some vegetation types have burnt that really shouldn't burn, like rainforest, swamps and some of the alpine country, and there will be a much slower process for that to recover".

"There will be some areas where the fires were so intense, that it is almost like a sterilisation effect," he said. "You may not see much recovery at all."

The fires even entered the Royal Botanic Gardens facilities in the Blue Mountains, burning a quarter of the site.

Dr Summerell's team will work with

National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) staff to ensure safe access to the parks requiring attention, just part of the herculean list of tasks they face in the fires' wake.

"Many of the fire trails will have had some maintenance undertaken during the fires so most of them should be in reasonable condition," said PSA Organiser Kim de Govrik, who spent much of the Christmas break fighting fires alongside NPWS staff himself. "In the Blue Mountains, there are 300km of walking trails, which will need to be checked for fallen trees and repaired, as well as other visitor infrastructure that has been impacted by fire.

"In addition, much has to be done to ensure the viability of our endangered species such as our Brush Tailed Rock Wallaby colonies and other threatened and vulnerable species including the Wollemi Pines in Wollemi National Park and the Blue Gum Forest in the Grose Valley, Blue Mountains National Park.

“I really don’t know how staff will cope with the additional and significant increase in workload; it will be overwhelming.

“The PSA is pushing for more resources to redress not only the damage done with over 2 million hectares of National Parks burnt in NSW, but to redress years of staff and funding cutbacks by the NSW State Government.”

Ben Plummer, State Mitigation Crew Leader with the Rural Fire Service (RFS), said his teams were “on the go” thanks to a relentless fire season that ran from August to February.

“THERE IS NO REAL INCENTIVE TO RETAIN STAFF IN CRITICAL ROLES”

“In my time in the service, I have never seen fires of this scale,” he said. “The scale has blown everything else out of the water.”

Mr Plummer said the RFS’s work continues after the fires go out.

“We’re looking at essentially strengthening containment lines throughout the state, lending a hand to mop up and making sure we have any control lines that need to be locked in are locked in, and knock down any hot spots we are tasked to deal with,” he said. “We’ll be back into our regular duties of strengthening fire trails and preparing containment lines through the state.

“There is still plenty of bush out there that is ready to burn.”

Mr Plummer said the RFS has suffered from “a brain drain” as staff leave the service thanks to the short-term, insecure contracts many of them are hired under.

“There is no real incentive to retain staff in critical roles,” he said.

PSA members working in Housing are also on the ground, with the Disaster Call Centre running out of the Housing Call Centre. Housing staff have also been sent to the South Coast to deal with people requiring emergency accommodation.

As part of the whole-of-government response to the fires, Service NSW became the “front door” for all access NSW government services.



Troy Wright in burnt-out Morton National Park.

Staff are there to take over and resolve clients’ housing needs, including emergency and temporary accommodation, as well as assisting with bond loans and rent applications.

“The work our members are doing in

fire-ravaged regions shows how important a well-funded, well-supported public sector is to the people of NSW,” said Assistant General Secretary Troy Wright, who has visited a number of recovering communities since the fires. ■

PREMIER’S BUSHFIRE INQUIRY MUST CONSIDER IMPACT OF BUDGET CUTS

The PSA is demanding that any independent bushfire inquiry looks into the impact of relentless staff cuts on disaster readiness.

“There are many unanswered questions about how underfunding of key agencies has left our state unprepared,” said Stewart Little, General Secretary of the Public Service Association.

“Did the government ever factor in bushfire preparation and management when it slashed the budgets to National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), State Forests and other environmental agencies? PSA members

have been warning that these cuts have crippled the state’s ability to prepare and respond to the horror of the fire season. Why were they ignored?

“Following massive restructures, how many redundant staff from both the Rural Fire Service and National Parks have been called back in to fight fires?”

Mr Little said cuts to funding meant the NPWS had not “been able to reach its annual hazard reduction target since 2016”.

Mr Little called for a “mandatory funding mechanism to avoid the crippling of vital environmental services”, so “ideological fights over climate change wouldn’t be able to impact the state’s ability to fund its bushfire preparedness”. ■



PRISON OFFICERS GET ACCESS TO BETTER MENTAL HEALTH CARE

A long campaign for better mental health care by the PSA and the Prison Officers Vocational Branch (POVB) has paid off.

Earlier this year Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW), with the support of the PSA, launched Stand TALR, a mental health awareness program developed by the Western Australian Prison Officers Union. TALR stands for Talk, Ask, Listen, Refer.

The program focuses on the unique challenges and risks correctional staff face keeping the community safe in what can be a highly stressful workplace.

At the launch at Long Bay Correctional Complex, CSNSW Commissioner Peter Severin and PSA General Secretary Stewart Little addressed staff and acknowledged the importance of seeking support and building a positive culture around mental health in our workplaces.

The program commenced at Long Bay, Silverwater and John Morony complexes, with a regional roll-out to follow.

The program is part of a range of initiatives aimed at improving the wellbeing, resilience and mental health of staff working in NSW prisons.

"As Australia's largest employer, the NSW Government needs to be at the forefront of protecting the mental health of its workers," said Mr Little. "Stand TALR is a great first step in this."

"We've been pushing for some sort of mental health program, because we believe [post-traumatic stress disorder] is going to be our biggest factor for workers' compensation claims," said POVB Chairperson, Nicole Jess.

Ms Jess said the program is "designed by Prison Officers for Prison Officers", and can be adjusted for other professions in the custodial system.

Vice-Chairperson of the POVB, Jason Charlton, said Stand TALR sends a message to Officers that it is OK to ask for help if they are adversely affected by their highly stressful, and often dangerous, work environment. ■

PSA overturns rough deal for street count

Pressure from the PSA has forced management at Housing to design a risk tool for staff approaching street sleepers.

The PSA was alarmed to discover the department had decided, without consulting the union, to ask for "volunteers" to conduct a survey of people sleeping on the streets. The surveys involved approaching people sleeping on the streets before dawn, waking them and asking 45 questions, including one on sexual orientation. Staff would receive time in lieu for involvement.

Late last year PSA members and delegates raised serious safety concerns about the process. The union was alarmed to discover the department had undertaken programs without consultation with the union and with insufficient consultation with workers to address their safety concerns.

At the PSA's consultative meeting with the Deputy Secretary in December last year, the PSA asserted that the safety concerns

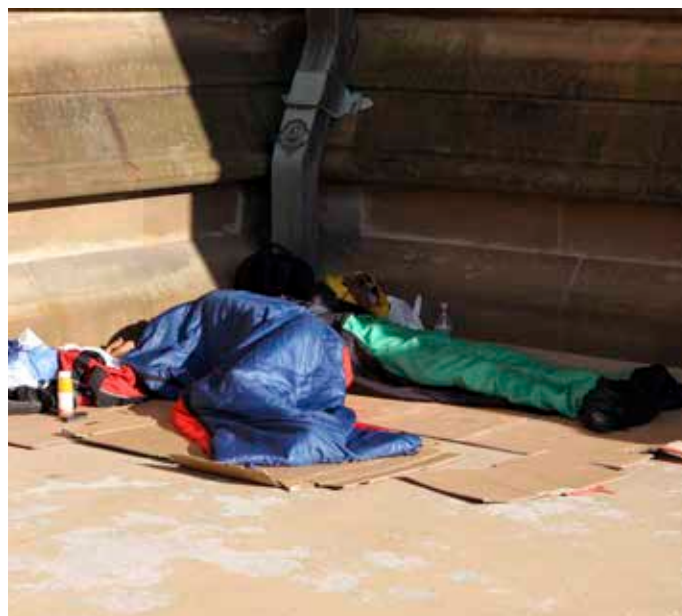
and industrial issues be addressed through consultation with the PSA.

As a result of the hard work of our Delegates and Health and Safety Representatives bringing this matter to our attention, the PSA has been successful in winning significant improvements for members.

Department of Communities and Justice – Housing has now designed a comprehensive risk assessment tool that is to be used consistently across the state. This tool will record who has been consulted in addressing safety concerns-including the District Health and Safety Reps (HSRS). The Department has also prepared a specific Street Count Safe Work Procedure document.

This is a significant improvement for members and shows what you can achieve with strong Delegates, Health and Safety Representatives and the union behind you.

The PSA has also been successful in reinforcing with Housing that staff are not "volunteers" and as such all award entitlements must be applied. ■



STEP-DOWNS FAIL TO GET WORKERS BACK ON THEIR FEET

A study has found 'step-downs' are not an effective way to get injured employees back into the workforce.

Step-downs reduce the rate of income replacement paid to injured workers after they have been on benefits for a period of several months. They are found in a number of workers' compensation systems around the world, including each of Australia's major workers' compensation systems.

The study, by the Insurance Work and Health Group of the School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine at Melbourne's Monash University, found that step-downs had "an anticipatory effect, leading some workers' compensation recipients to leave the system early in anticipation of a reduction in income".

But the rate of success, the study found, was not particularly high.

"However, the effects are small and probably short-lived," it read. "Step-downs may still reduce costs to workers' compensation systems, which is a legitimate policy goal. However, our findings suggest step-downs have marginal practical significance and are generally ineffective as a return to work policy initiative."

"Many of the workers' compensation schemes begin substantial step-downs from Week 13," said PSA/CPSU NSW WHS Officer Ian Tuit.

"The Productivity Commission report notes 'the median time off work for mental health related workers' compensation claims is 16 weeks'.

"These income cuts are a significant additional stress for workers with a mental health injury." ■



CALL FOR NOMINATIONS 2020 TAFE DELEGATES COUNCIL

Nominations are called for positions of delegate on the TAFE Delegates Council.

Each nomination must be seconded by two other members in the same electorate as the nominee. Nominees, nominators and seconders must be financial members of the Association as at 27 March 2020.

The call for nominations is as follows:

25 delegates required:

Electorate 1 - South Region (comprising Riverina Institute and Illawarra Institute)

6 delegates – 2 from Riverina and 4 from Illawarra

Electorate 2 - West Region (comprising Western Institute and New England Institute)

3 delegates – 2 from Western and 1 from New England

Electorate 3 - North Region (comprising Hunter Institute and North Coast Institute)

6 delegates – 3 from Hunter and 3 from North Coast

Electorate 4 - Sydney Region (comprising Sydney Institute and Northern Sydney Institute)

6 delegates – 4 from Sydney and 2 from Northern Sydney

Electorate 5 - Western Sydney Region (comprising Western Sydney Institute and South Western Sydney Institute)

4 delegates – 2 delegates from Western Sydney and 2 from South Western Sydney

NOMINATIONS AND CLOSING DATE

Nominations must be submitted via Survey Monkey

www.surveymonkey.com/r/TAFE_Delegates_Council_2020

This link will be emailed to all TAFE members on 30 March 2020.

Nominations close 17 April 2020. Forms must be completed via Survey Monkey by **4pm on 17 April 2020.**

If there is a ballot, candidates who wish to have a profile available for voters to read should provide a brief statement of 300 words or less stating how they will best represent members' interests.

Space is provided for this purpose on the form available through Survey Monkey. ■



UNION CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

A long-standing supporter of better working conditions for women, the PSA/CPSU NSW celebrated International Women's Day across the state.

A number of worksites held morning teas to highlight ongoing issues, such as the pay gap and sexual harassment in the workplace. It was also a chance for Organisers to talk to non-members about the benefits of being part of their union. There was also a morning tea at PSA House.

On Saturday 7 March, women and supporters from the union took to the streets, marching through the Sydney CBD to celebrate the day.

The union movement has long been associated with International Women's Day, which was first floated at the

1910 International Socialist Women's Conference.

Now 8 March is an official public holiday in 27 countries. Two of those, China and Madagascar, grant the public holiday for women only. ■

WOMEN AND SUPPORTERS FROM THE UNION TOOK TO THE STREETS

Membership Campaign
Appointment of Lady Organiser—Miss Marjorie Plunkett.

In pursuance of its objective of increasing the membership of the Association, the Committee, which comprises the President and the Vice-Presidents, recommended to Council the appointment of a lady organiser to contact the women and girls in the Service who are not yet members of the Association, with a view to enrolling them as members. Council endorsed the recommendation.



Miss Plunkett.

The position was advertised, the Committee reviewed the qualifications of a number of applicants and decided upon the appointment of Miss Marjorie Plunkett, who commenced her duties on 18th November. Friends and representatives of the Association in the various Departments are invited to co-operate with her to the fullest extent in the matter of enrolling the ladies of the Service under the banner of the Association.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

In 1940, the PSA announced Marjorie Plunkett was its new 'Lady Organiser', as more women moved into the public service to accommodate labour shortages brought on by the Second World War. Above is how the announcement was made in the issue of *Red Tape* in that era.

WOMEN'S VOICES HEARD

PSA/CPSU NSW women members have the opportunity to have their say by filling out the What Women Want survey.

At the PSA Women's Conference in 2019 CPSU (PSU Group) National Secretary Melissa Donnelly gave a presentation about the CPSU's What Women Want Survey, which has been run since 1999. The CPSU surveys all women in the Federal Public Service and produces the What Women Want report biennially.

PSA/CPSU NSW women members will have received a link by email for the survey. If they have not and would like to participate in the survey, they should contact the Member Support Centre on 1300 772 679.

The NSW Government is the largest employer in the country and the PSA's survey has the potential to be the largest of its type measuring the concerns of working women in Australia. It is certainly the largest in NSW. More than 60 per cent of the PSA/CPSU NSW membership is female.

"What Women Want will mean that women working in the public sector can tell us what matters to them and what their priorities are," said Project Officer Claire Pullen. "It will give us a snapshot of the issues that matter most to working women.

"We want to understand the issues members face so we can find solutions to them together. We know the gender pay gap is widening in the NSW public service, that the superannuation gap persists, and that bullying and sexual harassment are problems. We want to know exactly how these and other issues affect our workplaces."

The survey opened in March and will close on 1 May. The PSA/CPSU NSW hopes members will share the link with colleagues via word of mouth, email or social media to get a greater snapshot of women's needs in the workplace. ■

Meet the new Women's Council

The new PSA/CPSU NSW Women's Council began its term in December 2019, holding its first meeting on 11 February.

"I look forward to working with the new team," said Women's Industrial Officer Rachel O'Shea. "We thank the outgoing Women's Council and executive members for all their work and dedication during the last term of the Committee and look forward to the challenges ahead as we celebrate 90 Years of the PSA/CPSU NSW Women's Council in 2020."

The Executive is as follows:

Chairwoman: Trish O'Brien (Justice)

Vice Chairwoman: Carol Erskine (Department of Education)

Honorary Secretary: Janice Hartmann (Service NSW)

Assistant Secretary: Faith Dent (Disability Services)



NATIONAL INQUIRY INTO SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN AUSTRALIAN WORKPLACES

In 2018 the PSA/CPSU NSW sent out a survey to our members regarding sexual harassment in the workplace.

More than 60 per cent of PSA/CPSU NSW members are women and the union now knows many of them have experienced sexual harassment in their workplaces. While some men have reported experiencing this also, the survey and the inquiry revealed it is overwhelmingly experienced by women employees, driven by gender inequities and sexism more broadly.

This survey and its findings contributed to Unions NSW's submission and through the PSA/CPSU NSW SPSF office, contributed also to the ACTU submission.

The PSA/CPSU NSW also attended the "round table" discussions held with Kate Jenkins, the Sex Discrimination Commissioner at the Australian Human Rights Commission.

In NSW, government employees don't have coverage in the *Sex Discrimination Act* (by section 13 of that Act) and there are no provisions in the *Industrial Relations Act* that cover Sexual Harassment. Staff need better protections, such as giving enhanced powers to the Anti-Discrimination Board and removing the six-month reporting limit and changing it to six years, as with other breaches of employment law.

On 5 March 2020, the Australian Human Rights Commission released *Respect@Work: Sexual Harassment National Inquiry Report*.

This report has 55 recommendations including:

- The *Sex Discrimination Act* needs to be amended with enforcement powers.
- Explicitly include Sexual Harassment in the *Fair Work Act* and Fair Work Regulations.
- Make clear provisions in the *Industrial Relations Act*.
- Work Health and Safety Regulations, Code of Practice and guidelines need to identify Sexual Harassment as a work health and safety issue.

To view the full Report, go to: humanrights.gov.au. ■



TEAM PLAYERS

The PSA/CPSU NSW Member Services team is just a phone call or the click of a send button away.

Whether you have a billing query, need to change your details or have moved to a new department, the nine-member team has you covered.

The team can also update banking details, answer queries about logging into the PSA and

CPSU NSW websites and talk to you about travel insurance and other member benefits. Many of these functions can also be done directly via the website.

Members encountering financial hardship in the current downturn should contact Member Services to talk about their union fees.

“One of our important roles is ensuring members who are in difficulty are given assistance to resolve issues,” says Member Services Manager Kym Ward.

MEMBER'S VERSE

At the Batemans Bay meeting of Central Council, Schools member Victoria Parker presented her union with the poem below.

Thank you!
 The first men and women we should bless
 Are all the brave people in RFS
 For this season they have been to war
 Saving us from the monster that came to our door
 Flames and heat that reached unbelievable heights
 Confronted by terrifying noises and sights
 They battered and fought to save each life
 Reached out to help all those in strife
 Exhausted volunteers who patrolled the line
 Those of courage so sublime
 Pilots too, planes 10 feet above the bridge
 Scooping up water to defend the ridge
 Circling round and round they flew
 To save the lives of me and you
 Helicopters with buckets swinging low
 Quickly filling then into the smoke they'd go
 All these risks repeated all day
 To protect lives and infrastructure caught in the fire's way
 The diesel and fuel to keep everything going
 The logistics handled by the inventive and knowing
 Police escorting the essential loads
 Through the blockades and little back roads.
 Power poles by the hundreds down, substations in doubt
 Towns by the dozen where the power is out
 Electricians thinking and working ideas into traction
 Hooking up generators so towns could see action

Power to the banks so money could flow
 Power to the fuel pumps so the tourists could go
 Power to the grocers so people could eat
 Power to the chemists with scripts to complete
 Power to hospitals to keep us well
 Lights to the evacuation centre where thousands did dwell
 Temporary toilets on the scene
 And the blokes in the trucks did their best to keep them clean
 Many people were fed by those on the line
 Red Cross kept the names including mine
 There were fallen trees and buildings in the aftermath
 Closing streets and blocking our path
 So Council worked hard on the roads
 Removing the debris in heavy loads
 Men climbed damaged and dangerous towers looking for the clues
 On how to repair them and give us phone connection and radio news
 Yes, it's time to thank all those who cared
 Time to thank all those who shared
 To thank all the volunteers who answered the call
 To thank all heroes one and all
 They didn't do these things to earn your praise
 But don't forget your glass to raise
 They went, full tilt, the extra mile
 They have earned a handshake or a smile
 Offer your thanks and hear their story
 For they have covered themselves in glory.



YOUNGER VOICES HEARD AT PSA HOUSE

Looking to the future, The PSA/CPSU NSW recently hosted three interns from the Unions NSW Summer Internship program.

The three interns, Alex North, Elise Chidiac and Amira Thomson recently worked at the union under the program to nurture the movement's future leaders.

Mr North, originally from South Australia, has been a passionate union member since he was 15 and working in retail. Even when not working, he was a member of the Unemployed Workers Union.

He admits many people his age have a limited understanding of what unions do. "It is a huge issue; unless they are involved in vaguely left politics, they have no idea of what a union does," he said.

"Individual workers are powerless. Despite our differences, we have to work together."

Ms Chidiac, currently studying international and global studies at Sydney University agrees many of her peers have "very little" understanding of unions.

"I think it comes down to education: we are not taught about it in schools and the media rarely cover unions in a positive way," she said. However, she believes "workers' rights join everyone together" and unions may be able to appeal to young people by associating themselves with popular causes such as the environment.

Ms Thomson, who is studying a Bachelor of Communications at UTS, agrees nothing is taught about unions in high school.

"I grew up going to rallies with the PSA," she said. "Trying to reach students going out into the workforce would be a good idea."

"Unions getting out onto social media is also important."



UNION STAFF GO BUSH TO HELP OUT

PSA/CPSU NSW staff hit the country to help repair damage from the bushfires.

Eleven staff, friends and family travelled to Braidwood to repair fences as part of Blaze Aid, a movement to improve rural infrastructure damaged by fire.

"Unions are about helping people," said Assistant General Secretary Troy Wright. "Sadly our efforts were hampered by the rain but I am proud that we volunteered to lend a hand and helped the local economy." ■

PSA/CPSU NSW SCHOLARSHIP

Members are invited to apply for the PSA/CPSU NSW scholarship.

The scholarship is available at any Australian university in any course and is restricted to students entering the first year of a full-time course.

It is restricted to children of members of the PSA or CPSU NSW at the time of application, who have been continuous financial members for the previous five years. Eligible applicants must have sat their Higher School Certificate the previous year.

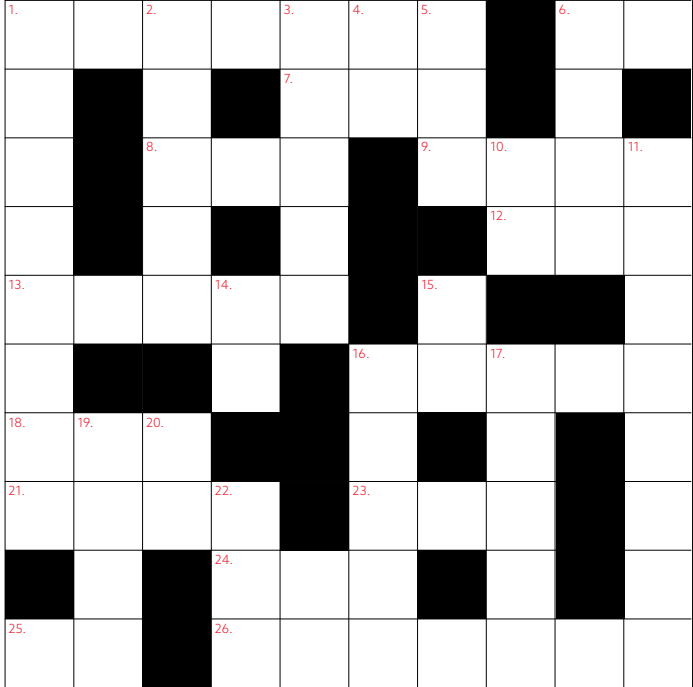
The scholarship will have a value of \$850 per annum and be awarded in the first instance for one year and re-awarded annually for a maximum period of three

years. A scholar's tenure shall be subject to a satisfactory report as to his/her progress and conduct.

The Scholarship will be awarded on results obtained in their HSC Examination and Assessment or equivalent and will take into account whether or not the applicant is the holder of any other scholarship, traineeship, etc. Subject to the provisions above, the highest marks and assessment and/or aggregate will be the deciding factor in the award.

Applications normally close in February each year. Due to technical difficulties, this year applications will close on 30 April.

CROSSWORD



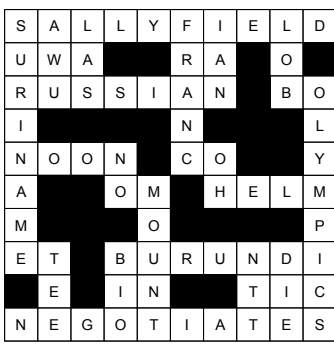
ACROSS

1. Surname of Australia's first female PM. (7)
6. Perform. (2)
7. Swiss-based organisation of world trade unions. (1,1,1)
8. Move head to say yes. (3)
9. Bath tubs with jets. (4)
12. Japanese airline. (1,1,1)
13. Too close to the fire and you'll get these. (5)
16. Shifted. (5)
18. The heroes of the bushfires. (1,1,1)
21. Unclothed. (4)
23. Glenrowan's Mr Kelly. (3)
24. Industrial city in PNG. (3)
25. Required to get youths into the pub. (1,1)
26. Climate change-denialist media mogul. (7)

DOWN

1. City hosting the Supermax facility. (8)
2. One who shuns acquaintances. (5)
3. Assistants. (5)
4. Initials of 13-player football code. (1,1)
5. Dated computer operating system. (1,1,1)
6. Head of university school. (4)
10. Grandfatherly nickname. (2)
11. Kent town that gave its name to a lunchtime staple. (8)
14. Initials of Fargo's state. (1,1)
15. Proceed. (2)
16. This digger sounds young. (5)
17. Type of shop killed by Netflix. (5)
19. Finance. (4)
20. Just below 14 down (initials). (1,1)
22. Type of deciduous tree. (3)

Last issue's solution



UNION HITS THE FLOATS

PSA/CPSU NSW members were out in force at the annual Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras.

Members joined the Union Pride float, making up about 80 per cent of participants on the night.

"It is important for us to be at events such as these because a high percentage of our members identify with the LGBTIQ+ community," said PSA/CPSU Education Officer Mary Jo Costache, who coordinated the Unions NSW float and a stall at Fair Day at the start of the festival.

"It is important for members to know we look after them at work and in other parts of their lives. Unions have done much for the community, including the Builders' Labourers' Federation's pink bans, when a student was kicked out of accommodation at Macquarie University, provoking a ban on work until the decision was overturned."

Ms Costache said two of the original protesters who launched the Mardi Gras parade in 1978, which began as a protest, were PSA employees. ■



GULF STATE DITCHES 'MODERN SLAVERY' EMPLOYMENT MODEL

Qatar has ended the controversial kafala system that underpinned projects such as the stadiums for the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

The International Trade Union Confederation has announced the Gulf state has enacted minimum wages and ended the system where workers on visas are tied to the one employer. Previously overseas guest workers were required to seek an employer's permission before moving to a better-paying or safer job. The employer would usually keep a worker's passport as a bond.

Qatar, which has the highest

per capita income in the world, depends on a large pool of foreign labour; usually from poorer Asian countries. There are more Indian, Nepalese and Bangladeshi residents in Qatar than there are Qataris. There are also large communities of workers from poorer Arab states, as well as a large number of professionals from wealthier countries.

FIFA, which awarded the 2022 World Cup to Qatar under controversial circumstances, has been criticised for the high number of fatalities of foreign workers building the stadiums for the tournament.



SOLVED!

Andrew Wear

\$29.99

Black Inc Books

With the right political will behind them, PSA/CPSU NSW members would be at the forefront of solving the myriad problems confronting the 21st century. Members are at the front line: combatting COVID-9, climate change, educating children, working in the health system, confronting inequality and fighting crime.

However, a reactionary political environment, fuelled by an often venomous press, is holding Australia back from being a world leader in renewable energy, education and social progress.

Solved! takes the reader around the world, looking at why Denmark's energy is cleaner, why Singapore's kids excel at school, why Norwegians have higher standards of living and lower inequality, why Koreans live so long, and so on.

Even Australia gets a thumbs up for its successful multicultural society forged so soon after the elimination of the White Australia Policy.

The book also examines the strengths and weaknesses of the groups of countries that generally lead the world in these criteria: namely east Asia, northern Europe and the Anglosphere.

Each chapter finishes with "five things we can do now" to achieve these goals. Sadly, most suggestions would be opposed by the Coalition and reactionary parts of the media.

Taking you on a rollercoaster of optimism, then pessimism when Australia's lack of political will dawns on you, *Solved!* will at least provide you with back-up facts when confronted by fervent supporters of Australia's timid current political landscape. ■



Training schedule: Sydney

All held at PSA House, 160 Clarence Street, Sydney
Please check beforehand if training sessions have been cancelled or moved to online delivery.

- Meeting and Negotiation Skills** Tue 21 Apr
- Young Workers Training** Thu 23 Apr
- WHS 2 day** Tue 5 and Wed 6 May
- Intro to the PSA/CPSU NSW** Thu 7 May
- Role of the Delegate** Fri 8 May
- Dealing with Workplace Bullying** Tue 16 June
- Mental Health, Care and Resilience** Thu 25 June

Training schedule: Regions

- Dealing with Workplace Bullying, Wollongong** Thu 30 April
- Intro to the PSA/CPSU NSW, Wollongong** Wed 13 May
- Role of the Delegate, Wollongong** Thu 14 May
- WHS 2 day, Grafton** Thurs 14 and Fri 15 May
- WHS 2 day, Wagga Wagga** Thurs 28 and Fri 29 May
- Dealing with Workplace Bullying, Newcastle** Tue 9 June
- Dealing with Member Issues, Tamworth** Tue 9 June
- Dealing with Member Issues, Newcastle** Thu 25 June



Information

These courses are available at no charge to PSA/CPSU NSW members. Most state public sector members are entitled to paid Trade Union Training Leave. Your delegate or organiser will be able to provide the details. Non-members wishing to attend our training will need to submit a membership application first.

Special needs

If you have a disability and/or special needs, please contact training staff at the time of your enrolment.

Course outlines

Introduction to the union

Discover what role unions play in your workplace.

Role of the Delegate

This course discusses the role of the delegate and active members: what delegates do, delegate protections, organising skills, recruitment, working with issues, union values and involvement. Any member is welcome to apply.

Dealing with Member Issues

This course is for delegates who want to develop their ability to assist members with individual workplace issues.

Dealing with Bullying in the Workplace

Designed to assist members and delegates in dealing with bullying and harassment at work.

Dealing with Restructures

Government guidelines that inform the restructure process, how the PSA responds to restructures at the consultation and implementation stages, the role members and delegates can play, discussion around specific restructures and case studies.

Achieving Workplace Flexibility

This course looks at the benefits of workplace flexibility and which flexible work practices exist in the NSW public sector. It examines what you can do to access and

implement these flexible work practices, by providing negotiation and organising strategies.

Women in the Union

Topics include history of women's participation in the workforce, your rights and entitlements, union structures, assertiveness, EEO and anti-discrimination.

Care and Resilience

This course aims to enhance mental health awareness. It also provides participants with information, strategies and resources to assist in identifying and supporting a colleague/s with mental health issues and encouraging them to seek professional help. We also look at some useful strategies to manage stress and build personal resilience.

Work Health and Safety

This two-day course covers the various rights, entitlements and obligations under the WHS Act 2011 that underpin a safe and healthy workplace, paying special attention to union perspectives.

See 'Training You' at the PSA or CPSU NSW website on how to register.

HEALTH & SAFETY REP TRAINING AVAILABLE

Courses will be held at PSA House and are available to elected Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs). The cost of the five-day course for your agency is \$800, and the one-day Refresher is \$200. To register for either course you must fill out a registration form from our website and have it approved by your Manager. Please return completed form either by email to training@psa.asn.au or by fax to 9262 1623.



JOINING FORM

Public Service Association of NSW
Community and Public Sector Union

JOINED BY:

Membership fees subject to change.

ABOUT ME:

Title: M F Other

First name:

Surname:

Preferred name:

D.O.B:

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage? Yes No

Address (home):

STREET STATE
SUBURB POSTCODE

Address (postal):

POSTCODE

Phone:

MOBILE
HOME WORK

Email:

PERSONAL PLEASE NOMINATE YOUR PREFERRED EMAIL
PREFERRED
WORK PREFERRED

Red Tape magazine via: Post Email

ABOUT MY WORK:

Employer name:

Job title:

Pay ID serial no:

Commencement date: Agency/Work Unit:

Worksite address: STREET STATE
SUBURB POSTCODE

Employment status: FULL-TIME PART-TIME

Employment type: PERMANENT / ONGING TEMP/ CONTRACT CASUAL LABOUR HIRE

Are you a current Health & Safety Rep (HSR)? YES NO

ABOUT MY MEMBERSHIP:

Weekly membership fees are based on your gross annual income. Please tick which applies to you:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gross annual salary	Weekly fees from July 2019
<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$10,718	\$3.75
<input type="checkbox"/> \$10,718 – \$42,870	\$7.30
<input type="checkbox"/> \$42,871 – \$60,896	\$11.70
<input type="checkbox"/> More than \$60,896	\$15.25



Fees can also be paid quarterly or yearly by cheque/credit card/cash. Payment must accompany form and then an invoice will be sent when account is due.

I would like more information about:

Training Becoming a delegate/contact

ABOUT MY PAYMENT:

OPTION 1: Direct Debit Fortnightly 4 weekly

NAME ON ACCOUNT
FINANCIAL INSTITUTION
BSB ACCOUNT NUMBER
SIGNATURE

I hereby request the deduction from my account of my subscription to the PSA (User ID 040 172). I authorise the following:
1. The PSA may verify the details of the above mentioned account with my financial institution if required. 2. My financial institution may release information allowing the PSA to verify the above mentioned account details. 3. My employer may release my bank account details to the PSA for the purpose of enabling me to establish a direct debit facility for the payment of my subscription. 4. I have read the Automatic Payment Service Agreement overleaf and agree with its terms and conditions.

OPTION 2: Credit Card (monthly only) Visa Mastercard

CARD NUMBER
NAME ON CARD
SIGNATURE EXPIRY DATE

I hereby authorise the PSA to debit my card account with the amount and at the intervals specified in the Salary and Fees Table detailed on this form, and in the event of any change in the charges for these subscriptions, to alter the amount from the appropriate date in accordance with such change. This authority will stand, in respect of the above specified card and in respect of any card issued to me in renewal or replacement thereof, until I notify the PSA in writing of its cancellation. Union dues processed on 7th of each month.

DECLARATION:

SIGNATURE

DATE

RETURN YOUR FORM
AFTER COMPLETING YOUR FORM, YOU CAN:
Hand it to your organiser
SCAN AND EMAIL TO:
membership@psa.asn.au or fax to 02 9262 1623

YOU CAN POST IT TO:
Membership Section, PSA of NSW
GPO Box 3365, SYDNEY NSW 2001

I, the undersigned, hereby apply to be enrolled as a member of the Public Service Association and Professional Officers' Association Amalgamated Union of New South Wales (PSA) and the Community & Public Sector Union SPSU Group NSW Branch (CPSU NSW) in accordance with the Rules of both bodies, by which I agree to be bound, and I appoint the PSA and CPSU NSW as my bargaining agent. I agree that a copy of this form (whether as a scanned image, photocopy, facsimile or otherwise) may be used or dealt with as if it were the original. I have read and understood the information detailed overleaf relating to financial obligations and the circumstances and manner in which I may resign my membership.



JOINING FORM

Public Service Association of NSW
Community and Public Sector Union

JOINED BY:

JOIN YOUR UNION

#JoinYourUnion

psa.asn.au/join  [psansw](https://www.facebook.com/psansw)

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

Automatic Payment Service Agreement

We, the PSA, make the following commitment to you:

- »The PSA will debit/charge your membership fees as they fall due. However, if this day falls on a non-business day, they will be debited/ charged on the next business day.
- »The PSA will only use this authority to debit/charge regular fees. If you miss a payment, it will be picked up in the following period i.e. two instalments will be taken out.
- »Resignation from the PSA must be notified according to the section "How to resign from the PSA and CPSU NSW". Should you resign your membership, the PSA undertakes to cease debiting your account upon the termination of the written notice period.
- »The PSA will notify any changes to your union fees in "Red Tape".
- »The PSA will act in accordance with our Privacy Statement, while noting that your financial institution may require such information to be provided in connection with a claim made on it relating to an alleged incorrect or wrongful debit.
- »The PSA will investigate and deal promptly with any queries, claims or complaints regarding debits/charges and provide a response within 21 days of receipt.

Your commitment to the PSA:

- »You will ensure that the account details provided to the PSA are identical to the account details held by your bank or financial institution.
- »You will ensure that you have sufficient funds or credit available in the nominated account on the due date for payment of your fees. You will let us know in writing within 14 days if the nominated account is altered, transferred or closed.
- »You will be responsible to ensure that the amounts debited/charged to your nominated account for your PSA fees are correct.

»If the charging arrangements are stopped by you or your nominated bank or financial institution, you will arrange a suitable alternative payment method with the PSA.

»Resignation from the PSA/CPSU NSW will be notified by you as per the conditions in the section "How to resign from the PSA and CPSU NSW". Repayments will not be made for late notifications.

How to resign from the PSA and CPSU NSW

You may resign from membership when either you cease to work in an area covered by the Association or by giving 14 days notice in writing of your intention to resign to the PSA General Secretary.

Resignation from the PSA will also be taken as resignation from the CPSU NSW, subject to confirmation.

Resignation from the CPSU NSW can be by notice in writing of two weeks or more, such notice being delivered to the Secretary of the CPSU SPSF Group NSW Branch.

Please note that you are obliged to pay any dues owing to the PSA up to the date of effect of the resignation and that fees are not refundable on resignation from the PSA/CPSU NSW.

Privacy Statement

Information collected in these applications is used for the purposes of the PSA and the CPSU NSW only.

When we use third parties to carry out union functions (eg mail-houses, electoral offices, candidates to union office, union delegates, etc.) only necessary information is released, and subject to the condition that it not be used for any other purpose.

Information requested for payment of membership fees is provided only to the relevant financial institution or employer.

Any member may at any time arrange to see and correct their membership record by contacting membership@psa.asn.au

A NEW HEALTH FUND THAT'S BACKED BY ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S MOST TRUSTED FUNDS.

WE'RE ALL FOR IT.

If you're a union member, you deserve a health fund that strives for fair. One that looks after its members. One you can trust to protect your health long into the future.

One like Union Health.

Union Health is here to serve all union members. And it's brought to you by TUH Health Fund, which was ranked first by members for trustworthiness, satisfaction, loyalty and likelihood to recommend in the latest nationwide Ipsos survey of health funds.

ARE YOU FOR A FAIRER HEALTH FUND?

Join today and get your second month free!*

Visit unionhealth.com.au to find out more.

FAIRER TOGETHER

union health

Brought to you by TUH, the health fund members trust.



TRUSTWORTHINESS,
SATISFACTION, LOYALTY AND
LIKELIHOOD TO RECOMMEND

*Terms and conditions apply



**THANK
YOU**

The PSA/CPSU NSW would like to thank every one of our members who worked or volunteered their time to fight the bushfires that ravaged our state last summer, and who are working to rebuild communities.



1300 772 679

 @psansw

www.psa.asn.au

 @psansw

www.cpsunsw.org.au

 @cpsunsw

Authorised by Stewart Little, General Secretary, Public Service Association of NSW
and State Branch Secretary, Community and Public Sector Union (SPSF Group) NSW Branch, 160 Clarence Street, Sydney