

SUMMER
2024

RED TAPE

**NOWHERE TO
CALL HOME**

The crisis affecting
children in need

PUBLIC SERVICE ASSOCIATION OF NSW CPSU NSW

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SUMMER
2024

RED TAPE



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This issue of *Red Tape* contains information some readers may find confronting. If you feel you need help, organisations that can provide assistance include:

- Respect National Sexual Assault, Family & Domestic Violence Counselling 1800 737 732
- Beyond Blue 1300 22 4636
- Lifeline Australia 13 11 14
- MensLine Australia 1300 78 99 78

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.

Authorised by Stewart Little, General Secretary, Public Service Association of NSW and Community and Public Sector Union (SPSF Group) NSW Branch, 160 Clarence Street Sydney NSW 2000

The Public Service Association of New South Wales and Community and Public Sector Union (SPSF Group) NSW Branch acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and the places in which we live. We pay respect to Ancestors and Elders, past, present and future. We recognise the unique cultural and spiritual relationship and celebrate the contributions of First Nations peoples to Australia.





THE TYPE OF WORK ONLY GOVERNMENT CAN DO

Child Protection is too important to outsource.

Few would envy the work done by our members in Child Protection. They see children in severe need, parents unable to cope and living environments unsuited to harmonious family life.

They see evidence of violence, hear stories of sexual abuse and talk to children who are losing hope.

They work extraordinary hours, as children in need don't fit into a 9-5 schedule.

Like so many of the services our members offer, Child Protection must be provided by the state. There is no way a private organisation can be entrusted with the lives of children.

Out Of Home Care (OOHC) has been outsourced to non-government organisations (NGOs) by successive Labor and Coalition governments over the past 20 years without successful outcomes or budgetary savings.

NGOs have failed to take up the sheer amount of work required to adequately care for young children in need. Instead, we see children spending months in serviced apartments and motels, cared for by often-untrained staff.

No-one wins here: not the children and not the taxpayer who is now forking out astronomical sums to maintain this wholly unsatisfactory arrangement.

Your union was proud to continue its long-running campaign on members' behalf when visited in November 2023 by the Minister, Kate Washington. Your union has been lobbying both parties on this issue for many years.

Our members in Community Services experience with outsourcing is similar to other failures. From dangerous private gaols to a road system that is expected to rake in more than \$123 billion from NSW drivers in the next 40 years, it is increasingly obvious there are certain functions that must be left to the state.

Often, like in Child Protection, this work is unsettling. In the case of Corrections, it can be dangerous. But our members are there, making the state a better place to live.

In this issue, we look at TestSafe, a group of members performing work only the state can do. They provide independent testing of equipment used in industries such as mining. Without their dedicated, impartial work, people would die horrible deaths in our mining industry.

In March 2023, we saw the election of a NSW Government that promised to end the farcical outsourcing of functions of the state. And, as we saw with recent announcements about prisons, things

**OUR MEMBERS ARE THERE,
MAKING THE STATE A
BETTER PLACE TO LIVE**

are running on track. But with a likely economic downturn ahead, the Treasurer may start getting recommendations from advisers to resume sell-offs for a short-term money hit. Regardless, your union will fight to ensure the Treasurer says no to further privatisations.



PROUD TO HONOUR THOSE WHO SERVE

In November I was humbled to lay a wreath at a memorial for Prison Officers killed on duty. Along with PSA Industrial Officer David McCauley and our Prison Officers' Vocational Branch representatives Jason Charlton and Darren King, I attended Corrections Memorial Day in northwestern Sydney.

We honour all Prison Officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

PARKLEA NEXT IN LINE AS JUNEE WELCOMED TO STATE FOLD

NSW may be seeing the end of the private-prison fiasco.

One down: two to go. Junee's private prison contract expires in 2025 and the right to operate Parklea looks like it is next in line.

After years of campaigning by the PSA CPSU NSW the State Government has announced the private contract to operate Junee Correctional Centre will not be renewed and instead the gaol will be run by Corrective Services NSW.

Corrective Services Minister Anouk Chanthivong announced in November 2023 that the prison in Junee would join the overwhelming majority of correctional centres in NSW that are run by the state.

The current contract, which is held by outsourcing firm GEO, runs out in March 2025.

The Government has also announced the contract to run Parklea Correctional Centre, which is due to expire in 2026, may not be given to a private operator.

The contract to run the state's other private prison, Clarence Correctional Centre,



will be in the hands of a private operator for quite some time, as the operator Serco has years left on its contract.

"This is a fantastic victory, not just for the Officers in Junee, but the entire community" said PSA CPSU NSW President Nicole Jess. "There will be more Officers, and better-paid ones. Local businesses will benefit greatly.

"In addition, the community can better rest easy knowing a safer system is in place, rather than one that cuts quality in the pursuit of greater profits."

Junee has recently been in the news

as inmates were obtaining online information about other prisoners and their offences. Parklea's poor reputation for violence and understaffing has been news fodder for years, with the previous operator, GEO, removed from the operations after criticism about the way it managed the centre.

"We have always maintained no-one should profit from crime," said PSA CPSU NSW General Secretary Stewart Little. "The Minister's announcement about Junee and Parklea is welcome news to anyone concerned about justice in our state."



Prison Officers in Wellington show their support for public-run gaols.



TOO MANY REASONS TO JOIN

Recently there have been many reasons to join your union.

The acquittal of a Prison Officer accused of murder is good news for not only the member, but anyone charged with protecting the community.

The case confirmed that the law not only authorised the accused, known as Officer A, to discharge his firearm at an escaping inmate, but required it, placing this member in an unenviable position to balance the safety of the community against the safety of an escaping inmate.

It is also a sobering reminder of the importance of joining your union. Justice does not come cheap, particularly on a serious charge of murder, where the accused is up against the well-organised might of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP).

Few of us have the means to hire top barristers who charge four-figure sums daily to engage in the elaborate theatre that plays out every day in our court system.

However, Officer A had a trump card: he was a member of the PSA CPSU NSW. He also had the backing of the Prison Officers Vocational Branch Legal Fund. He had access to top legal minds without having to sell his home or go into crippling debt to do so.

The announcement that the State Government is walking away from the idea of prisons for profit means our members in Parklea Gaol can one day look forward to better wages, better staffing numbers and a safer working environment when their workplace comes under state control.

Likewise, the maintenance of public housing has returned to state control.

Again, these wins are the result of the PSA CPSU NSW's highly organised campaigning and high-level talks with government.

Our members in the ODPP have for years been talking to their employer about crippling levels of overwork. It took their

union, the PSA CPSU NSW, to amplify these voices as one and get concrete action to improve their working lives.

These are just some of the wins we have had in the past few weeks. Sometimes they affect just one member, other times they improve the working lives of tens of thousands of people. Sometimes our wins set precedents in workplaces across the entire country, in essence helping millions of Australian employees.

To win, we need a comprehensive army of members. The more people we have, standing together and contributing to the common good, the stronger we are and the more wins we will have.

Your union membership fees are an investment in your future and that of your colleagues. They improve the workplace for those who will follow in your footsteps.

When Officer A did what he was told to do to stop a dangerous inmate escaping into the community, his own life changed. Without his union membership, he'd have had to sell his family's home to afford the type of legal representation required

“ THE MORE MEMBERS WE HAVE, THE STRONGER WE ARE AND THE MORE WINS WE WILL HAVE ”

to fight such a case. Or he could have foregone the expert legal assistance and taken an increased risk of transforming from Prison Officer to inmate.

Union protection and benefits such as our Legal Funds may be things you never require. Or they could be the things that keep you out of prison or bankruptcy.

Talk to your colleagues. Let them know every pay increase is won by the union. Let them know they can receive an impressive array of membership benefits including shopping discounts. And let them know they never know when they will need the protection of a union.



NOT GUILTY: OFFICER A WALKS FREE

A long trial comes to an end and a PSA CPSU NSW member is spared a gaol sentence.

The Prison Officer accused of murder for shooting an escaping inmate has been found not guilty.

Known as Officer A to protect his identity, the man was initially charged by the Director of Public Prosecutions with manslaughter 18 months after the shooting incident. Then the charge was upgraded to murder another 18 months later. After the original jury was unable to reach a

verdict, there was a retrial, where he was found not guilty.

“We share with our colleague a great sense of relief,” said PSA CPSU NSW President Nicole Jess, herself a Senior Prison Officer.

“The PSA has stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the Prison Officer since day one and welcome the end to what has been a harrowing experience for him,” said PSA CPSU NSW General Secretary Stewart Little. “Like our members who work in the justice system, the PSA has the utmost respect for the rule of law.

“The PSA has nothing but sympathy for the deceased and his family.

“However, it is important that the community understand the dangers faced

by Prison Officers everyday they go to work. They are deployed with firearms for a reason, as they are tasked to protect and serve the community and safeguard them from dangerous and violent criminals.

“We need to implement legislative change to protect our members from similar charges in the future.

“We will be making representations to the Government in respect to this.”

Mr Little praised the many Officers who attended the trial to support the accused in their own free time.

The court’s decision and the PSA’s reaction received widespread media attention throughout Australia.



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SAME TIRED PLAYS, SAME TIRED OPPOSITION

Political parties have learned nothing if they still reckon maintaining an outsourcing contract trumps better-paying local jobs.

Based on ratings, like many Australians, I have an increasing fascination with the NFL.

Part of this interest is because I understand about 10 per cent of what is happening and the rest remains a mercurial mystery, including positions, scoring, tactics and how game with only 60 minutes playing time can take upwards of three hours.

But one thing I do understand is that the coach is responsible for developing an extensive array of offensive plays designed to surprise and befuddle defences.

A coach who keeps running the same predictable play again and again would not last long in their role – their team would be boring to watch, easily neutralised and ultimately failures on the field.

Which brings us to the NSW Liberal-National Coalition.

For 12 years they were in power in this state with a policy platform that included suppressing Public Sector wages, selling off anything that wasn't tied down and accepting bottles of Grange from rich mates.

Since it was elected in March the Minns Labor Government has reversed some of these policies. A recent example is the announcement that the privately operated Junee Correctional Centre would come into public sector control from March 2025.

This is a significant win for both the workers at the gaol, whose remuneration and safety will significantly improve, and our Corrective Services NSW members who have increased transfer options and one fewer centre undercutting their industrial conditions.

Now having been unceremoniously bundled out of office only eight months prior, one would expect the Coalition would

have pulled out their playbook and reviewed it before making comment on June.

But instead, like an unimaginative NFL coach, we got the same tired lines from the same tired MPs.

Enter Member for Cootamundra, Steph Cooke MP (pictured during her time as Emergency Services Minister) who in gushing terms usually reserved for the outgoing chair of the local Lions Club, described the private sector operator GEO as “an important part of the Junee community” and “a part of various fundraising including supporting our farmers during droughts”.

GEO is not a key member of the Junee community. It is a global corporation based in Florida, running gools, mental-health facilities and immigration centres around the world: often very badly.

No amount of charity donations in the local community can hide the fact that this is a global organisation actually sucking income from the Junee community, and the rest of NSW, and instead enriching shareholders abroad.

As a former NSW Florist of the Year Ms Cooke is by all accounts an accomplished small business owner who should be well aware of the positive impact several thousand dollars added to local incomes will make, particularly to those firms

reliant of discretionary spending. To speak her language, it could be the different between an Officer buying their spouse flowers on the way home or simply driving past the florist.

Then rolls out the unrecognisable Leader of the Opposition Mark Speakman who in an interview with Sydney ABC Radio claimed his party “don't have an ideological position” on prison privatisation but were “disappointed by the process” in deciding to bring Junee CC out of the cold, claiming that it should have gone to tender first.

Gotcha. That must be why the previous Government he was part of handed Serco a 20-year \$1.6 billion contract to build and operate Clarence Correctional Centre – with no public sector bid permitted.

Then he claimed that decisions regarding prison privatisation should be based on what is “best value for the taxpayers and the best health and rehabilitation outcomes for prisoners”.

Leaving aside that private prison operators fail on both these indicators, note who is missing from his considerations? The workers.

Just like a NFL coach with no new ideas, the Libs and Nats are going back to the same tired playbook in their policy. Lets keep them out of the competition until they revise their approach.





MINNS MAKES COMMITMENTS TO PRISON OFFICERS

Premier talks about the post-privatisation world of incarceration in NSW.

Premier Chris Minns visited PSA House to talk to Officers at the regular Delegates to Management meeting, which gives the union direct access to decision makers at Corrective Services NSW.

The announcement that Junee Correctional Centre was to be run by the state from 2025 still fresh in the PSA's mind, Mr Minns received a favourable reaction from attendees, who were keen to hear if the moves would also see Parklea back in state control once its contract was up for renewal.

The Premier spoke about his government's commitment to winding back the privatisation of gaols, a policy that had been introduced by his own party.

"A change of government has not only seen the end of private gaols, it has meant we have a Premier willing to come to PSA House and address the Prison Officers Vocational Branch [POVB] in person," said POVB Chair Jason Charlton. "We look forward to a positive relationship in the future with this administration."



OFFICERS REMEMBER THOSE WE'VE LOST

Prison Officers from around the state, from both public and private gaols, gathered to remember colleagues killed while on duty, as well as those who passed away in the past 12 months.

The ceremony took place at Brush Farm Academy, the training centre for NSW Prison Officers. Wreaths to those killed on duty were laid at the memorial by Prison Officers Vocational Branch representatives David McCauley and Jason Charlton (pictured), as well as General Secretary Stewart Little on behalf of the PSA CPSU NSW. Some surviving family members also participated in the ceremony.

UNION ON DECK AT KOORI CONFERENCE

The PSA takes part in a First Nations event.

The PSA was invited to attend a conference for Aboriginal Education Officers, held in Moree in November.

The event (pictured right) was organised by the Department of Education.

“When it comes to Closing the Gap, few NSW workers perform as important a role as our Aboriginal Education Officers,” said PSA CPSU NSW Industrial Manager Julie-Ann Bond. “They work to keep Aboriginal students in class, doing their best and creating the leaders of tomorrow.”



PERMANENCY PUSH IN NSW SCHOOLS NEARS 8000-STAFF MILESTONE



More staff get secure jobs.

At the time *Red Tape* was going to press, nearly 8000 school staff had successfully transferred to secure roles. This is due to years-long campaigning by the PSA CPSU NSW.

“This year, many of our members across the state, for the first time in their working lives, have job security and know they have a permanent role to return to in 2024,” said Industrial Manager Julie-Ann Bond (pictured left with the Schools Departmental Committee).

“They are finally freed from the fear of arbitrary dismissal.”

2023 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR CPSU, COMMUNITY & PUBLIC SECTOR UNION NSW BRANCH

The 2023 CPSU-SPSF NSW Branch financial statements can be accessed at:
 PSA website at: www.psa.asn.au/financial-statements
 CPSU NSW website at: www.cpsunsw.org.au/financial-statements

MEMBERS STAND TOGETHER

School members refuse to be played off against each other.

Union values were on show at a school in Southwestern Sydney when offers of permanency were made.

In September, a School Learning Support Officer (SLSO) in a primary school called the PSA CPSU NSW Member Support Centre (MSC) about their permanency offer through the Temporary Workforce Transition (TWT).

The SLSO had been offered a permanent contract with half the days of what their current temporary contract was.

The Member Support Officer (MSO) realised this issue was not just localised to the member; multiple SLSOs had been offered permanency with significantly fewer days at this primary school.

“

**THE MEMBER WAS OFFERED
A CONTRACT WITH JUST
HALF THE DAYS**

”

The MSO realised this would mean a significant loss of income for our member. However, not only was the SLSO offered less than they were entitled to, but staff were also directed to fight amongst themselves for the rest of their contracted days through an Expression of Interest.

The MSO and member agreed this was not only wrong but ethically questionable. The union contacted all SLSOs at the school, who banded together and agreed they will not let this stand and that they would not be made to fight one another for their rightfully earned working days.

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NSW PUTS THE PUBLIC BACK IN PUBLIC HOUSING UPKEEP

Minister reverses yet another outsourcing failure.

The maintenance of the state's public housing stock has been returned to Housing NSW.

Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) staff have now been briefed on the proposed reform of the Portfolio Management Branch.

The PSA will be involved in the transition.

The maintenance contract, which commences on 1 July 2024, involves

significant organisational change and the creation of several business units to accommodate a more hands-on approach to the upkeep of housing stock.

The reform itself is subject to a Change Management Plan (CMP). The CMP outlines the rationale for change, the processes for filling roles and the timelines. Consistent with the position the union has advocated for on behalf of members, all staff have been assigned to a role in the draft organisational design.

“For some members, there will be little change in the functions that they administer,” said PSA CPSU NSW General Secretary Stewart Little. “However, there

will be changes for some roles which require training and support.

“LAHC will be delivering an education program to provide the necessary upskilling and support for members to accommodate their new proposed roles.”

As part of the consultation obligations, LAHC had to take into account the feedback and views of members.

The PSA urged members to provide their feedback to LAHC.

“This is a welcome development,” said Mr Little. “It is encouraging that we have a State Government in Macquarie Street that is not only listening to our concerns, it is taking real concrete action.”

ODPP CASE A UNION WIN

Industrial Relations Commission agrees with union that staff were overworked.

Their union has long known staff at the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) are overworked. Now the Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) has agreed.

After complaints from members about their high workloads resulting in thousands of hours in lost flex time, the PSA applied to the IRC for the making of a new Award to address the issue of overwork. Previously, lawyers would accrue flex hours for their overtime. However, this was limited to 50 hours. Any additional hours would be forfeited.

The PSA provided a number of witnesses who had forfeited hundreds

of hours each. In one case, a lawyer had forfeited 1115 hours.

This situation was a major contributing factor to the high levels of discontent at ODPP revealed in the recent People Matters Employment Survey.

In evidence, PSA CPSU NSW Industrial Officer Dean Allen said, “Based on the data provided in the spread sheet, solicitors who were contracted to work 210 hours in a six-week flex period worked on average an additional 20 hours during this six-week period.”

The IRC called for a new Award with no forfeiture of flex hours. In the absence of agreement between the lawyer and their supervisor, any flex hours above 50 at the end of a settlement period will be paid as overtime.

In addition, the bandwidth will be reduced to 7:30am to 6:30pm, weekdays.

“
THE SITUATION WAS A MAJOR CONTRIBUTING FACTOR TO HIGH LEVELS OF DISCONTENT AT ODPP
 ”

Prior approval to work overtime will not be required in the case of unforeseen or exceptional circumstances.

If a lawyer routinely seeks approval to work overtime, their supervisor should meet with them to discuss their workload and why their work is unable to be performed during contract hours.

A consultative committee comprising representatives of the PSA and ODPP management will be formed.

SHERIFFS PLAN AMBITIOUS AGENDA

Champions of the State look forward to a busy 2024.

PSA members working for the Office of the Sheriff met at PSA House to start planning for a vastly improved workplace in 2024.

“We discussed the planned uplift of roles for next year and legislative changes that will affect our members,” said PSA CPSU NSW Organiser Marko Petrovic. “We also looked at workplace issues, health and safety and recruitment.”

“The disappointing People Matter Employment Survey results were also a big issue for our members.”

In addition to the PSA House meeting, Delegates Glenn Elliot-Rudder and Paul O’Shea visited NSW Parliament House to meet with Attorney General Michael Daley.





ENTERPRISE AGREEMENTS OUT TO VOTE

Two university agreements are up for approval.

At the time *Red Tape* went to press, Enterprise Agreements for the University of Wollongong and Charles Sturt University were going to members to vote on.

“The vote is the result of months of bargaining,” said CPSU NSW Senior Industrial Officer Lisa Nelson.

The Charles Sturt Agreement stipulates three salary increases:

- a 4.5 per cent rise backdated to 13 October 2023, to be paid no later than 1 February 2024;

- a 3.2 per cent increase in October 2024;
- a 3 per cent boost in July 2025.

For continuing employees and fixed-term employees, the superannuation contribution paid by the university will be at the rate of 17 per cent.

The Agreement also includes 10 days’ Special Leave for issues such as taking custody of a foster child for whom the employee has parental responsibilities, union training or an employee who is a member of a First Nations community to prepare for or attend National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week functions.

There are also provisions for Gender Affirmation Leave and leave for any future pandemics.

The Wollongong Enterprise Agreement outlines a total of 15.5 per cent pay increases up to 2026.

There is also a right to disconnect written into the Agreement.

The Agreement covering members at Southern Cross University has been rejected because the National Tertiary Education Union sought to have casual members’ votes not counted. An appeal went to the full bench regarding the validity of the making of the Agreement.

When the decision was handed down in early November the Enterprise Agreement was revoked. The university has reissued the Notice of Employment Representation Rights, so negotiations will commence again soon.

CPSU NSW MEETS MINISTER OVER TAFE FUTURE

Steve Whan meets with union officials over vocational training provider’s workplace issues.

New Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, Steve Whan, met with the CPSU NSW to discuss issues affecting members in the vocational-training provider.

The union was eager to discuss TAFE NSW’s refusal to award members backpay, claiming it only had authority to bargain until the end of October 2023. TAFE

claimed all backpay from 18 September 2023 until the date the Enterprise Agreement comes into effect upon approval by the Fair Work Commission would be void.

The CPSU NSW had to contact the Deputy Premier’s office to voice its disappointment with TAFE NSW and have the position of the Deputy Premier restated to TAFE NSW.

CPSU NSW representatives also raised issues with the current outsourced security arrangements.

“A number of incidents have been reported to the CPSU NSW by members concerned about their safety and

disciplinary action being taken against them for refusing to put themselves in harm’s way, or by refusing to do such tasks which they hold no legal qualification or training to undertake,” said Industrial Manager Julie-Ann Bond. “The CPSU NSW is concerned that TAFE NSW is issuing directions that are unreasonable and that may be unlawful to administrative staff, in an obvious and dangerous cost-cutting maneuver that places untrained staff at great risk.”

The CPSU NSW has recommended the current security contract not be renewed and the roles be returned internally to TAFE NSW.

MEET THE MEMBERS SAVING LIVES IN NSW MINES

Independently testing mining equipment is one task only the Public Sector can do.

Underground mining is a dangerous occupation. A team of dedicated Public Sector workers in Western Sydney, however, is making this industry that much safer.

Heat and high levels of toxic gases such as methane means equipment that is perfectly safe above ground can be potentially lethal when used in mining.

Therefore when new technology is introduced to the industry, it is first tested at TestSafe's facility in Londonderry, Sydney.

"The majority of our products tested are mining equipment," said PSA member Jaison Davis. "Every now and again we get something from outside the industry."

A TEAM OF DEDICATED PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS IS MAKING THE MINING INDUSTRY SAFER

Some of the equipment, such as hard hats and respirators, can be used in a variety of industries.

Another TestSafe facility in Thornleigh tests analytical equipment.

In Queensland, mining equipment can only be used if tested in Australia, so the gear used in that state is sent to TestSafe.

The impartial nature of the TestSafe regime has kept it in public hands. Companies would not have the same faith in for-profit companies that may be pressured to pass equipment from paying customers. In addition, companies are wary of getting competing firms to examine new products when they test them.

"TestSafe members are proud of their work," said Assistant General Secretary Troy Wright. "They can provide a testing regime that no private company can do with complete impartiality.

"Without our members at TestSafe, people would die at work. It is that simple."





SCORCHED EARTH: SURVEY UNCOVERS RESENTMENT IN RFS, POLICE AND ODPP

Data reveals unhappy workplaces throughout NSW.

The annual People Matter Employment Survey has revealed disquiet in Public Sector workplaces throughout NSW.

Forty-six per cent of Rural Fire Service (RFS) respondents said they felt burnt out and more than a fifth planned to leave employment.

Only 24 per cent of respondents feel that senior managers listen to employees, and 36 per cent felt senior managers model the values of their organisation.

“What truly worries the PSA and our members is the recurring themes from previous years,” said Industrial Manager Siobhan Callinan. “If we examine an eight-year average of what members report as key underlying issues, we seem to be stuck in a People Matters Groundhog Day.”

In the NSW Police Force (NSWPF), only 39 per cent of respondents would recommend the Force as a great place to work, down 7 per cent from the previous year. This is a whopping 24 per cent lower

than the wider Public Sector. Only 41 per cent of those replying believed they are paid fairly for the work they do, down 11 per cent from the previous year.

“These results undoubtedly point to issues that the NSWPF needs to address urgently,” said Industrial Manager Nathan Bradshaw. “What is worrying is the consistent decline from last year’s already poor results.

“Only 24 per cent of respondents felt confident the NSWPF will act on the results of this survey, 19 per cent lower than the wider Public Sector.

“It is up to NSWPF to prove otherwise.” Employee dissatisfaction was also high in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, which has had a long-standing problem with overwork and employees sacrificing flex hours.

PSA General Secretary Stewart Little said the real challenge for the NSW Government will be the results of next year’s survey.

“This will be the first test of an administration that should be bedded in and doing what it promised when elected: fix the NSW Public Sector,” he said. “We will be watching.”

UNIONS PUT IRC REFORM ON AGENDA

Pressure on Government wins changes.

Action by the state’s major Public Sector unions has forced the State Government to introduce a bill returning the Industrial Relations Commission’s (IRC’s) powers.

“A key reason we urged our members to vote for a change of government was the commitment from the Labor Party under Chris Minns to return the IRC to its rightful place determining wages and conditions for members,” said PSA CPSU NSW General Secretary Stewart Little.

The IRC was stripped of many of its powers and responsibilities by the previous Liberal-National Government that was determined to set wages and conditions itself. This gave the O’Farrell-Baird-Berejiklian-Perrottet Governments the power to impose a wage cap, up to 2.5 per cent, on the Public Sector. This saw real wages drop, particularly in recent years as inflation started to run out of control.

“THE IRC WAS STRIPPED OF MANY OF ITS POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES BY THE LNP GOVERNMENT”

“The Minns Government gave us a commitment it would reverse this decision,” said Mr Little. “However, we had signs his cabinet was dragging its feet.

“It took pressure from PSA and unions representing Teachers, Nurses, Police Officers and Firefighters to keep them on track.”



COMMITTEE SUPPORTS GREENWICH

Representatives vote to back independent NSW MP's equality bill.

The PSA CPSU NSW Pride Committee had its fourth meeting in November 2023.

“The Committee has voted to support a bill by independent Lower House MP Alex Greenwich to strengthen equality in the state,” said PSA Communications Officer Glenn Duncan. “The bill will give the community stronger protections in areas such as education, employment and the general community.”

“We also discussed participating in future Mardi Gras parades [pictured above].”

“In the meantime, Unions NSW has a float if anyone wants to participate in the 2024 parade.”

The Committee also discussed Gender Affirmation Leave being won by the PSA CPSU NSW in many Enterprise Agreements.

“For more information on the Committee, members can email lgbtqi@psa.asn.au or call the PSA CPSU NSW Member Support Centre on 1800 772 679” said Mr Duncan.

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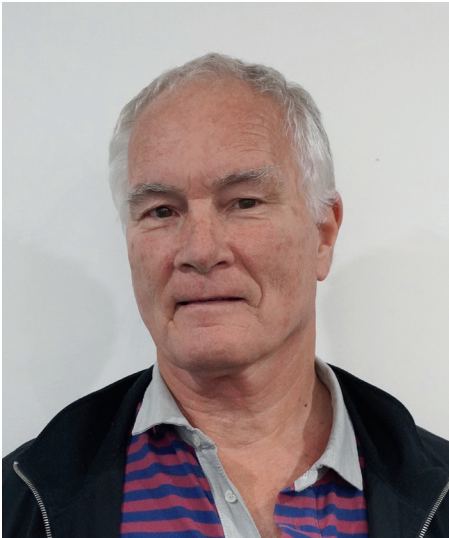
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OUR MEMBERS ARE CHAMPIONS OF THE STATE

If you need to know why we need the wages cap gone, look at the vital work done by just a few of our members. Every day our members are working hard for a better state for everyone. PSA CPSU NSW members truly are Champions of the State.



Rodger is a Services and Programs Officer at Shortland Correctional Centre, in Cessnock. He is also a Mental Health Nurse at Hunter New England Mental Health.

“I started in 1991 as an Alcohol and Other Drugs Worker at Maitland Gaol,” he said. “I have been at Shortland pretty much since it opened about eight years ago.

“I like the role, as it utilises many of my skills, with inmates and staff.”

Rodger’s typical day starts with arriving at work and seeing which staff members are available and their roles for the day.

“I like my job,” he said. “I am making a difference in small ways.”

Rodger said the qualities required in his role include being a good listener, having a knowledge of mental health issues and empathy.

He admits some of the more troubled inmates he works with require a particular “empathic style”.

Rodger’s role is vital in rehabilitating inmates in the NSW correctional system.



Vimmela works for the Building Commissioner, helping maintain building standards throughout NSW.

“I assess applications for the *Design and Builders Practitioners Act*, which was set up in July 2021 for Class 2, 3, 9a and 9c buildings,” she said.

Class 2 buildings are usually multi-storey, multi-unit apartment buildings where people live above or below each other; Class 3 are residential buildings, for long term or transient living; Class 9a buildings include hospitals; while Class 9c buildings are residential care buildings for those with various care level needs.

“This is so these type of buildings are safe for people to occupy,” said Vimmela. “I know I am making a big difference to the lives of people who live in these properties.

“We have seen some poorly built buildings closed to residents in the recent past. This resulted in the Commissioner being appointed and the *Design and Builders Practitioners Act* being created.”



Normally employed at the NSW Ombudsman’s Office, **John** is on a 12-month secondment at NSW Parliament. Only five weeks into the new role, John will be working not only with politicians, but with the Department of Parliamentary Services, community and committees.

“It’s a massive role, but enjoyable, as the NSW Parliament is going through change management, developing up-to-date processes,” he said. “It is an exciting time to be there. I have noticed a great response from staff to have more of a First Nations perspective on things and incorporating culture within the Parliamentary precinct.”

John hopes to bring to the role “critical thinking, my cultural knowledge and personality”.

John has worked in the Public Sector since 2012, starting at St Vincent’s Hospital, where he was the facility’s first ever Aboriginal drug and alcohol counsellor before moving into Child Protection.



and ‘Work to live not live to work’. My gratitude for him is far beyond words. His generosity taught me to be a better person and motivated me to inspire others as he did.”

As a working holidaymaker, Ms Chen held down a variety of casual jobs, deciding “the hospitality and friendliness of Australian people” were reasons for her to stay here permanently.

Today, in her role with the NSW Government, she oversees strategic program evaluation, develops project planning, coordinates resources, and delivers reports meeting stakeholder and investor requirements for the Department of Planning and Environment.

“The Register captures various approaches to evaluating government programs through ‘knowing’, ‘being’, and ‘doing’ evaluation across different departmental clusters, offering a unique lens,” she said. “It acknowledges the diverse experiences and perspectives of evaluators, leading to a better understanding of the programs managed.”

Ms Chen said she enjoys her role.

“I am an educator and data analyst by nature,” she said. “Evaluation resonates with me well when it comes to monitoring, evaluation, and reporting.

“We can visualise the progress of continuous improvement and outcome alignment. It gives me a great sense of achievement when I can help people

THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME

Annabelle Chen found her calling in a new country.

When she arrived as a backpacker to experience life in Australia, Annabelle Chen had no idea she’d be one day giving

a presentation at a major international conference.

A Senior Analyst at the Program Evaluation Unit in Corporate Services at the NSW Department of Planning and Environment, Ms Chen was a speaker at AES23, an international event held in Brisbane by the Australian Evaluation Society.

Yet her life in Australia began on a farm picking mushrooms.

“I met my very first Australian friend in London when I was an exchange

student on a scholarship at the University of London,” said Ms Chen, who is originally from Taiwan. “That friend was on a working holiday in the UK. The encounter planted the seed in me to do a working holiday in another country.

“I started as a mushroom picker and packer in an old train tunnel between Mittagong and Bowral. I was looking for jobs in Brisbane and promised the farm owner to go there in the evening, as I thought Bowral was somewhere near Brisbane, only to find out after hanging up the phone that the destination was 1000km away.”

Travelling the distance was worth it, though. It was at that farm that she met someone who motivated her to succeed at whatever career she chose.

“The farmer there taught me three life mottoes: ‘Forgive but don’t forget’; ‘You scratch my back and I’ll scratch yours’;

“WORKING IN THE GOVERNMENT, I TRULY BELIEVE THE WORK I DO HELPS MANY PEOPLE”

see their advancement in what they do. Especially, working in the government, I truly believe the work that I do helps many people at a large scale.

“Just thinking about it makes me thrilled to wake up to work every day.”

In addition to taking pride in her work, Ms Chen is also a proud union member.

“I unfortunately experienced bullying in my previous department,” she said. “It means a lot to me when the union has the legal support and can lend an ear to me when I need it.”

A PROUD MEMBER REMEMBERED

Paul Egan enjoyed the camaraderie of the workplace.

Long-time PSA CPSU NSW member Paul Egan passed away in September 2023.

Coming from a blue-collar working family, Paul's father had a strong view that he did not want his children to struggle. Paul was therefore encouraged to start in the Public Sector, obtaining a traineeship in Survey Drafting at the Register General's Department in the 1970s. In the 1980s he moved to the Department of Lands to undertake special projects.

Paul received several promotions and remained there until the late 1990s when he took voluntary redundancy.

He went to work as a contract manager in the NSW Police Integrity Commission.

"He made many lifelong mates during his time working in the Public Sector, and enjoyed the friendships he gained from working there," said Paul's daughter, Christie Holt.

As a child Paul enjoyed school



and weekend sports and played for Wentworthville Rugby League Club.

He was a coach, assistant secretary, and secretary of Engadine Dragons Rugby League Club and was a loyal Cronulla Sharks supporter.

He also pursued an interest in kayaking and was president of the Sutherland Kayak Club in the mid 2000s.

Paul is survived by partner Sue; daughters Renee, Carly and Christie; sons in-law Simon and Richard; grandchildren Jayden, Akala, Caitlyn, Jasmine, Brianna, Courtney, Rhianna, Shae and Taylor; brothers Greg and Brian; and sisters Marilyn, Lesley, Gail and partners.

He was predeceased by a daughter, Annette.



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SUPPORTING PSA MEMBERS



FAREWELL TO THE FACE OF THE UNION

The PSA CPSU NSW farewells Patrick Norton.

For many visitors to PSA House, Patrick Norton was the first face of the union they came across.

If not maintaining the union's fleet of cars, Patrick was at the front desk, telling members when and where their meetings or training sessions were and helping conference attendees with luggage.

Patrick Norton began at the PSA CPSU NSW in 1998. He worked in administrative roles throughout the union, including industrial teams, membership and communications. It was in the Building Management team, however, that he became best known to anyone walking into the front lobby of PSA House.

“Patrick provided a friendly, warm welcome to those who came into our building,” said PSA CPSU NSW General Secretary Stewart Little. “Away from the front desk, he helped look after the upkeep of cars to ensure Organisers could easily get to sites throughout NSW.

“He was always on hand during events such as Conferences.

“Most of all, he will be missed by everyone here and the countless visitors he made feel welcome.”



DO WE HAVE YOUR DETAILS?

The PSA CPSU NSW Aboriginal Council wants you.

If you are an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander member and you are not sure the union has these details, contact **membership@psa.asn.au** to update your information with us. You can also update your address and workplace if required at the same time.

WOMEN'S DAY COMMITTEE STARTS TO PLAN

PSA CPSU NSW members are encouraged to join the march in March.

The Unions NSW International Women's Day Committee held its first meeting for the 2024 celebrations. The theme will be *Count Her In: Accelerating Gender Equality Through Economic Empowerment*.

"We urge as many members as possible to get involved in International Women's Day on Saturday 9 March 2024," said PSA CPSU NSW Women's Industrial Officer Simone Scalmer. "Unions have also been encouraged to include regional members."

Unions NSW is also discussing what other organisations can be brought into the Committee and how to better engage younger women.

International Women's Day dates back to 1909, and is a global celebration of women's rights in the workplace and in wider society. There are annual marches throughout NSW.



WOMEN'S LABOUR STUDY WINS NOBEL PRIZE

Study into female labour trends secures famous award.

The winner of the 2023 Nobel Prize for Economics, Claudia Goldin (illustrated right), provided the first comprehensive account of women's earnings and labour market participation throughout recent centuries.

Ms Goldin examined more than 200 years of data from the United States, learning how and why gender differences in earnings and employment rates have changed over time.

She found female participation in the labour market did not have an upward trend over this entire period, but instead formed a U-shaped curve.

The participation of married women decreased with the transition from an agrarian to an industrial society in the early 19th century, but then started to

increase with the growth of the service sector in the subsequent century.

Ms Goldin explained this pattern as the result of structural change and evolving social norms regarding women's responsibilities for home and family.

During the 20th century, women's education levels continuously increased, and in most high-income countries they are now substantially higher than men's. Goldin demonstrated that access to the contraceptive pill played an important role in accelerating this revolutionary change by offering new opportunities for career planning.

Despite modernisation, economic growth and rising proportions of employed women in the 20th century, for a long period of time the earnings gap between women and men hardly closed.

According to Goldin, part of the explanation is that educational decisions, which impact a lifetime of career opportunities, are made at a relatively



young age. If the expectations of young women are formed by the experiences of previous generations – for instance, their mothers, who did not go back to work until the children had grown up – then development will be slow.

UNION FEES FROZEN FOR ANOTHER YEAR

PSA CPSU NSW helps fight rising living costs for its members.

The PSA CPSU NSW Executive and Central Council have frozen membership fees for the fourth year running. General Secretary Stewart Little said the freeze will help members cope with rising living costs.

“Interest rates are up and many of our members have partners in the private sector who have not received pay increases for some time, or have struggling businesses,” said Mr Little. “Fee relief is just one way to address this.

“Your membership fees are an investment. They are an investment in your career, your family and your future.

“YOUR MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE AN INVESTMENT IN YOUR CAREER, YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR FUTURE”

Union membership is like an insurance policy against unforeseen events that can dramatically affect your job and your standard of living.

“It is proven that people in highly unionised industries are better paid than those elsewhere. Your union fees are an investment in a better-paying career.

“In addition, your membership fees can cut your cost of living. PSA CPSU NSW members are eligible for a multitude of discounts for products and services.

“Savings are possible through the Union Shopper program, as well as partnerships negotiated directly with companies by your union.”

The PSA CPSU NSW has compiled a chart (see right) outlining discounts available to members, demonstrating that union membership can pay for itself.



Product/Service	Not a union member	Union member	Minimum weekly saving	Minimum yearly saving
Food/Groceries	\$250	\$240	\$10	\$520
Fuel	\$80	\$76	\$4	\$208
Alcohol	\$50	\$48	\$2	\$104
Power Bills	\$50	\$47	\$3	\$156
Clothing/Footwear	\$70	\$67	\$3	\$156
Misc goods	\$190	\$182	\$8	\$416
Health/Medical	\$90	\$86	\$4	\$208
Total spend & savings	\$780	\$746	\$34	\$1,768

The figures used here are based on information about Australian household weekly spend as at 2023 from www.finder.com.au/australian-household-spending-statistics. The savings are an example of what a member could save if they use Member Benefits discounts to reduce their weekly spend.

MSC CONTACT RESULTS IN BACKPAID ALLOWANCE

A phone call is all it takes.

A retired General Assistant (GA) has received an unpaid uniform allowance after contacting the PSA CPSU NSW Member Support Centre (MSC).

The former member contacted MSC Officer Michael George, who supplied the necessary information to take to the Department when claiming the unpaid allowance. The former member had received incorrect information from the Department's EDConnect service.

"I am so thankful for the PSA," said the former GA. "I would not have known about this backpay and would have missed out. For the PSA to notify me, even though I'm no longer a member is exceptional.

"The extra Mr George and the team have done for me is truly appreciated."

"On the old GA email network, I always encouraged non-members to join."

"Former employees should contact EDConnect on 1300 323 232 to make any request for backpay," said Mr George.



TIME TO APPLY FOR THE PSA CPSU NSW SCHOLARSHIP

A member benefit is now available for next year.

Applications are open for the 2024 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.

The scholarship will have a value of \$2000 per annum and will 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 their progress and conduct.

The Scholarship will be awarded on results obtained in the 2023 Higher School Certificate Examination and Assessment or equivalent and will take into account whether or not the applicant is the holder of a 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 close at 5:00pm on Thursday, 29 February 2024. You can download an application form at the PSA and CPSU NSW websites.

If you have any queries, please contact Viji Varghese, Executive Support Officer, at the PSA CPSU NSW on (02) 9220 0982.

COVID MEMBER RECEIVES SPECIAL LEAVE

Getting COVID-19 is bad enough without being denied leave. A PSA member in the Hunter caught the virus, but was told by her Team Leader that Special Leave introduced for the pandemic was no longer available.

However, when she phoned the PSA Member Support Centre (MSC) she was

advised the Premier's Circular was still active and she thus raised the issue with her Manager.

She was granted Special Leave after contacting management.

"This case proves how important it is to contact the MSC," said Member Services Manager Kym Ward. "Your union is on your side."



DEALS FOR HEELS

Discounts available on a famous Australian brand.

PSA CPSU NSW members can get cheaper Blundstones, as well as other footwear brands.

Members going to the Shoes2u website at www.shoes2u.com.au can enter PSA into the voucher box on the check-out page for a 15 per cent discount.

"Blundstones are among our most popular brands," said business owner Shona Fisher. "Ideal for the office or outside and they are an excellent school shoe that will last."

Shoes2u is just one of the discount providers available for members. See the PSA and CPSU NSW websites for a full list of available deals.

Introducing a new member benefit program



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Brian's Story
Cancer Caregivers
by OSARA HEAL+H



**NOWHERE TO
CALL HOME**



Outsourcing has failed the NSW Child Protection system.

The NSW Community Services system is in crisis. There are simply too many children in need and not enough staff to care for them. Add in a failed attempt to offload on non-government organisations (NGOs) and you have a disaster.

Out Of Home Care (OOHC) has been outsourced to NGOs by successive Labor and Coalition governments over the past 20 years, resulting in the quality of services plummeting and the costs to run them spiraling out of control. There are no winners: children are in crisis and the taxpayer is paying a premium for a substandard service.

**THERE ARE NO WINNERS:
CHILDREN ARE IN CRISIS
AND THE TAXPAYER IS
PAYING A PREMIUM FOR A
SUBSTANDARD SERVICE**

Whereas once the Department of Community Services was responsible for caring for children in need, this service now places some cases into the care of a variety of NGOs throughout the state.

In NSW, about 500 children are cared for under “Alternative Care Arrangements” in facilities such as serviced apartments at enormous cost. In the past, children were housed in motel rooms and caravans. Children are supervised round the clock by labour hire workers, who are sometimes inexperienced.

These children make up about 2 to 3 per cent of kids in care, yet the Government paid private providers a billion dollars over the past two years to care for them.

PSA General Secretary Stewart Little said it is vital the OOHC system is returned to Government control, as the



“providers are just not up to the job”.
“This should be a key part of the government’s role,” he said.
“Governments need to protect their most vulnerable citizens.

**“
GOVERNMENTS NEED TO
PROTECT THEIR MOST
VULNERABLE CITIZENS
”**

“A lot of these large NGOs are using a subcontract model. You end up with a situation where babies are looked after by labour-hire staff often lacking appropriate experience.

“Some Alternative Care Arrangements cost up to \$3 million for one child in need.”

Private providers are able to pick and choose cases, often refusing to accept responsibility for the most troubled children. There is also, thanks to the way the system is set up, little financial incentive for the private providers to find foster homes for children. The NGO gets paid, no matter what the result.

“Under the outsourcing arrangements, there is no contractual compulsion to take the most troubled cases,” said Mr Little. “Yet some of these providers which are refusing to take on high-needs children have vacancies. They don’t want to spend resources on these kids. It is up to the new government to unpick these arrangements and end this situation.”

The Department’s Caseworkers say they are being pressured by management to put pressure on extended family members to take on children in need, particularly high-needs cases, regardless of whether this is a suitable match.

“One of our concerns is kids in

high-needs placements with no-one in their extended family who can care for them,” said one member. “What instead happens is this puts pressure back on Caseworkers to find the placement to cut costs.

“You are required to contact the family to take on the children. I’m happy to talk to the family members, of course, but management is telling me to use phrases such as ‘they are your family’ to force them into taking on kids. Pressuring family members who have expressed a reluctance to take on this role is not how you get quality care for children.

“Getting family involved is obviously a good idea. Forcing family to get involved is not.

“This also increases our massive workload. It doesn’t make sense.

“Newer workers find talking to people about family members in need can be a really distressing task.

“In some cases, the children are

BETTER PAY AND MORE STAFF REQUIRED IN A DEPARTMENT IN CRISIS

The OOHC outsourcing fiasco is occurring during an underfunded crisis leaving Caseworkers and other Child Protection staff burnt out.

In the past year, the vacancy rate for Caseworkers has increased by 250 per cent, with 166 vacancies reported in June 2023. The Department of Communities and Justice is losing more Caseworkers than it is employing, with a net loss in 2022-23 of 22 staff. Aboriginal staff are leaving at a higher rate, a crisis when their cultural knowledge is so vital to a community so heavily involved in the Child Protection system.

The result is a workforce of relatively inexperienced Caseworkers, with more than a quarter still in their first two years of employment with the Department.

A report found low staffing numbers are believed to be among of the reasons for some of the deaths of children known to Child Protection 2022.

“Our grading is woefully outdated. We need to be paid commensurate with the work we do,” said Allison Corrigan, Secretary of the Community Services Departmental Committee.

“The starting wage of a Caseworker is \$75,992. In comparison, the starting wage of staff doing similar work in Youth Justice is \$100,011. This is despite the fact we need tertiary qualifications, and Caseworkers in Youth Justice do not.”

The PSA CPSU NSW has written to the Government demanding higher band levels for workers starting careers in the Child Protection system.

“We need higher wages to attract and retain staff,” said PSA CPSU NSW General Secretary Stewart Little. “A PSA evaluation found these staff are underpaid.”

The Child Protection system has seen an increase in Level One cases, which require investigation within 24 hours. For example, this could be a response to sexual assault allegations. However, the system simply does not have the staff to deal with this explosion in numbers.

“We have never seen it taking so long

to respond to Levels One, Two and Three,” said one member. “For example, a Level One could take more than a week; a Level Two, which should be investigated within 72 hours, could take three weeks; and a Level Three can take months instead of the required 10 days.

“Now we have no Caseworkers, I recently went out to a case with non-government worker who was not trained as a Caseworker. She was supposed to be my secondary worker, but did not work for the Government and her notes won’t hold up in court if it gets there.”

PSA CPSU NSW Assistant General Secretary Troy Wright said the Minister needs to put more money into the right parts of the system, therefore cutting this huge outsourcing bill.

“The problems are well documented,” he said. “We have to snap this loss of staff.”

He said hiring more staff will free Caseworkers to do their jobs. However, with the average Caseworker quitting after 18 months on the job, Mr Wright said the Minister needs to look at making the job more attractive by raising salary levels.

“There is a risk otherwise that Community Services becomes something akin to the fifth year of a Social Work degree,” he said. “Then people just leave for a better-paid job elsewhere and the Department has to retrain yet another employee at yet more expense.

“This is not a section of the Public Sector the Government can afford to ignore. Even the most ardent free market zealot would agree that caring for

vulnerable kids is a key responsibility of the state. We need to do better.”

Due to a shortage of support staff, Caseworkers are struggling as administrative work keeps them from working with children.

“I’m holding a complex Aboriginal family, with secured records, making my job harder as I can’t get support from other staff to assist with administrative tasks, keeping me from my actual role,” said one member. “My to-do list is exploding, and I can’t get the help required.

“This family requires weekly visits, but the location of the placement means I have a three- to four-hour turnaround just to visit them: that does not even include the time required to write up what is going on.

“This is keeping me from seeing other siblings in the same family.

“Of six children, four are in placement. Some of the carers are neglectful simply because the pool of people the children can go to is so shallow.

“We need to attend to the children, yet still have to read reports from parents. I’m up working until 1:30am some mornings. Then I am offered a late start the following day, but with so much on my plate, there is no way I can take that up.

“The reality is that our hours are exploding daily, yet we have to fight for overtime. It is nothing short of wage theft.

“The community needs to know that Child Protection is run in a way that staff are just too scared to raise issues for fear of being labelled a troublemaker.”



FEATURE

reluctant to leave the residential situation they are in and the friends they have made in school to move in with a relative they have possibly never met in a town they know nothing about.

“Better planning would help address this. It needs to be less of a knee-jerk reaction to a dire situation.”

High-needs children have extremely complex requirements, and simply handing them over to the nearest available relative may make things worse.

“A lot of families can’t be found,” said one member. “In other cases, with high-needs children, they are simply unsuited or incapable of taking them in.”

“A lot of Caseworkers are talking about the few placement options for kids with medium-level and high-level needs,” said another member.

“They end up in residential services cobbled together with no notice. Better preparation is required. They know there will be a certain number of children coming up with these needs every year.

“We need, in place now, appropriate services such as intensive foster care and residential care ready to accept these cases. The Department needs to be proactive, not reactive.

“These cases have challenging behaviour issues that mainstream foster carers struggle to cope with.

“The Department has known about these issues a long time. We are hearing about uplift teams looking into the cases: they should just ask us, the frontline

Caseworkers. We don’t need another six-month review to delay everything. We need placement for these medium- and high-needs kids.

“When in doubt, bureaucrats review. We believe in taking action.”

Recently the PSA’s Community Services Departmental Committee continued its long campaign on this issue, demanding more be done when meeting with the Minister for Community Services, Kate Washington.

Speaking to the Committee in PSA House, Ms Washington said the system was showing signs of 10 years of neglect under the Liberal-National Coalition and was “a ship that takes a long time to turn around”.

“Words are nice, actions are better: we are determined to get things changed,” she said.

She agreed the 2 to 3 per cent of children requiring special accommodation in facilities such as serviced apartments have cost the state half a billion dollars over the past two years.

Ms Washington has since made statements to the media stating her government has listened to the PSA CPSU NSW’s concerns and is considering taking Out of Home Care back into total state control. This came after the union gained significant media interest about its members’ plight soon after the Minister’s meeting in PSA House.

“We are glad the Minister is listening to us,” said Mr Little. “The current system

is the result of a catastrophic failure of government over a number of years.

“About 15,000 kids are in foster care throughout the state. These are children, they are not responsible for their predicament. It is up to the new government to pick up the pieces of a

WORDS ARE NICE, ACTIONS ARE BETTER: WE ARE DETERMINED TO GET THINGS CHANGED



broken system and take responsibility for these children.

“By bringing OOHC back to government, the Department will be able to provide foster carers with better support.

“Child Protection is just one of these areas where the Government has walked away from its responsibilities to the most vulnerable people in NSW. They have also walked away from aged care and we live in the only state in Australia where there is no government-run safety net for people with disability.

“We are the wealthiest state in one of the world’s wealthiest nations. The current situation cannot stand.”

AT RISK: WORKERS PLACE THEMSELVES IN DANGER

The sheer lack of staff numbers for the ballooning number of cases is causing Caseworkers to bend the rules that are in place to protect them.

“We are going out to cases alone, without a colleague,” said one member. “This is not just a security issue. What it means is if we go to court, it is just your word against the alleged perpetrator’s in front of a judge.

“It is against policies that are there for a reason and should not be ignored.”
PSA CPSU NSW Industrial Officer

Graydon Welsh said understaffing meant Caseworkers were too often taking risks.

“We have people going to deal with the children of well-known crime families where there is a reasonable expectation that there will be firearms in the house,” he said. “We have members out west going to isolated farms, where there may be guns.

“We implore members not to visit places alone, but they are so determined to help children in need that they put their concerns about themselves aside and do it anyway.”



WE ALL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY

The 2023 PSA CPSU NSW Mental Health Conference examined strategies to deal with a workplace scourge.

Opening the PSA CPSU NSW Mental Health Conference, General Secretary Stewart Little talked about the union's goal of "a comprehensive mental health strategy right across the public sector".

Mr Little said decent workplace health and safety (WHS) policies were needed to accommodate workers' mental health in areas such as schools, where staff faced violence "sometimes daily".

The Mental Health Conference was the first held at PSA House since 2018. It attracted more than 100 members from the union's diverse membership. Entitled *We All Have a Role to Play*, the conference featured a mix of speakers and presenters looking at how union members can support each other at work.

The first speaker was the Federal Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, Emma McBride. Ms McBride, the MP for the Central Coast seat of Dobell, praised the union movement for working with government to "remove the stigma on talking about mental health", particularly in male-dominated industries such as construction and mining.

While proud of the Albanese Government's achievements in the mental-health sphere, Ms McBride admitted there was still some work to be done. She acknowledged there is still a shortage of psychologists throughout the country. This was particularly prevalent in regional areas and was

an issue the Federal Government was addressing.

She said there was still work to be done on toxic behaviour towards women in Australian workplaces, including her own parliamentary chamber in Canberra. Referring to the State Parliament and MPs' electoral offices that are covered by the PSA, Mr Little brought up the "power imbalance" that can adversely affect staffers.

Emma Boucher is a Mental Health and Wellbeing Facilitator and Senior Psychologist with the Mental Fitness

“WHILE PROUD OF THE ALBANESE GOVERNMENT'S ACHIEVEMENTS, MS MCBRIDE ADMITTED THERE WAS STILL SOME WORK TO BE DONE”

@ Work program at HSE Global risk management consultancy and the speaker after Ms McBride. Her presentation touched on intervening with potential suicide in the workplace.

She discussed stress, which she pointed out is a normal response to enable us to cope with situations around us. However, she pointed out an excessive, overwhelming level of stress is not normal and can actually result in burnout.

"Burnout is a syndrome and is quite specific to workplace stress," she said.

She said too much stress can result in you "running on empty" affecting productivity, a decline in performance, apathy and, ultimately, mental illness. For





many, she said excessive drinking is a way to cope with stress.

One solution Ms Boucher discussed is using a Mental Fitness Framework to help manage stress and burnout. She said changing workplace culture can be a slow process; but encouraged attendees to talk about mental health when back in the office or onsite.

The next presentation on the agenda was delivered by Lachlan O'Neill, Principal Inspector with SafeWork NSW Psychological Health.

Mr O'Neill discussed the specific hazards Public Sector workers face, citing a 65 per cent increase over five years for psychological injuries among government workers.

In addition to the suffering faced by those with these industries, he said the typical mental health-related workers' compensation claim costs taxpayers \$100,000, which is more than the typical claim for a physical workplace injury. He said this figure may be high, but it still does not take into account lost productivity and the additional cost of recruitment that results when a worker leaves a role.

He said a key way to lower the risk in your workplace is to "learn about risk factors, especially if you or a colleague face these issues". By looking out for

MOST OF THE TIME BULLYING IS BECAUSE OF A POWER IMBALANCE, THE PRESSURE WORKERS ARE UNDER OR SYSTEMATIC FAILURES

risks, a resolution is more likely.

Moving onto workplace bullying, Mr O'Neill acknowledged that "everyone will have received training on what it is" and that systems are in place to prevent bullying in public sector workplaces. He said contrary to the stereotype, bullying in places of work is not due to "workplace psychopaths".

"Most of the time it is because of a power imbalance, the pressure they are under or systemic factors in place,"

he said. "Often it can be addressed by putting measures in place rather than the dismissal of parties."

However, regardless of the strategy, he said workplace bullying "needs to be dealt with quickly and efficiently".

Mr O'Neill said with WHS regulations having recently been expanded to include psychosocial risks in the workplace, early intervention using these rules is important.

"People often come to us when everything has already exploded," he said.

He urged those in attendance to develop relationships with managers, who, while they may not be able to deal with psychosocial hazards, will know the difficulties these issues create.

Mr O'Neill praised the role of Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) and their legislated right to prevent workers being placed in hazardous situations.

"Putting a worker at risk of injury is unreasonable," he said.

HSR training is available through the PSA CPSU NSW.

Jane Hogan from Aware Superannuation followed Mr O'Neill, discussing her employer's Mental Health Assist program for members. The telephone service offers assistance on mental health matters to Aware Super members, and they are not required to get a medical referral to take advantage of it.

Next at the conference podium was Ali Walker from The Change Room, an organisation that encourages people to improve their physical and mental health by exploring better practices used in high-performance sports environments.

In a light-hearted, engaging presentation, Dr Walker discussed how to "increase your wellbeing and life expectancy", pointing out that despite being an invisible condition, the effects of social isolation can be devastating.

"Loneliness is worse for us than smoking, obesity and substance abuse," she said. "We need to know how to diagnose loneliness in people."

Dr Walker said strong ties to colleagues and friends is better for longevity than an improved diet and exercise. She discussed with the audience methods on how to read others' signs of social engagement to improve their social skills.

Dr Walker talked about the evolution of mental health treatment in recent years, something that had had a positive effect on workplaces.

She said today's work culture has evolved with people treating colleagues with increased concern thanks to "an explosion of research into the culture of belonging".

The conference may have touched on quite serious subjects, but it ended on a high note with former reality TV star Magic Mike, who was at pains to tell attendees he was not the stripper of the same name, but rather an entertainer who performed magic tricks with his clothes on.

A survivor of severe depression, Mike made his name on *Australia's Got Talent*. His show used magic tricks such as switching cards to tell his story of overcoming suicidal thoughts to travel the world and entertain people.

People were brought up from the audience to participate in his tricks as he discussed his recovery and the strategies he uses to address depression and anxiety.

"Mental health is a huge issue in all our workplaces," said PSA CPSU NSW President Nicole Jess after the event. "As a union, we are proud to be at the forefront of the fight to ensure any mental-health issues that affect our members are addressed properly."

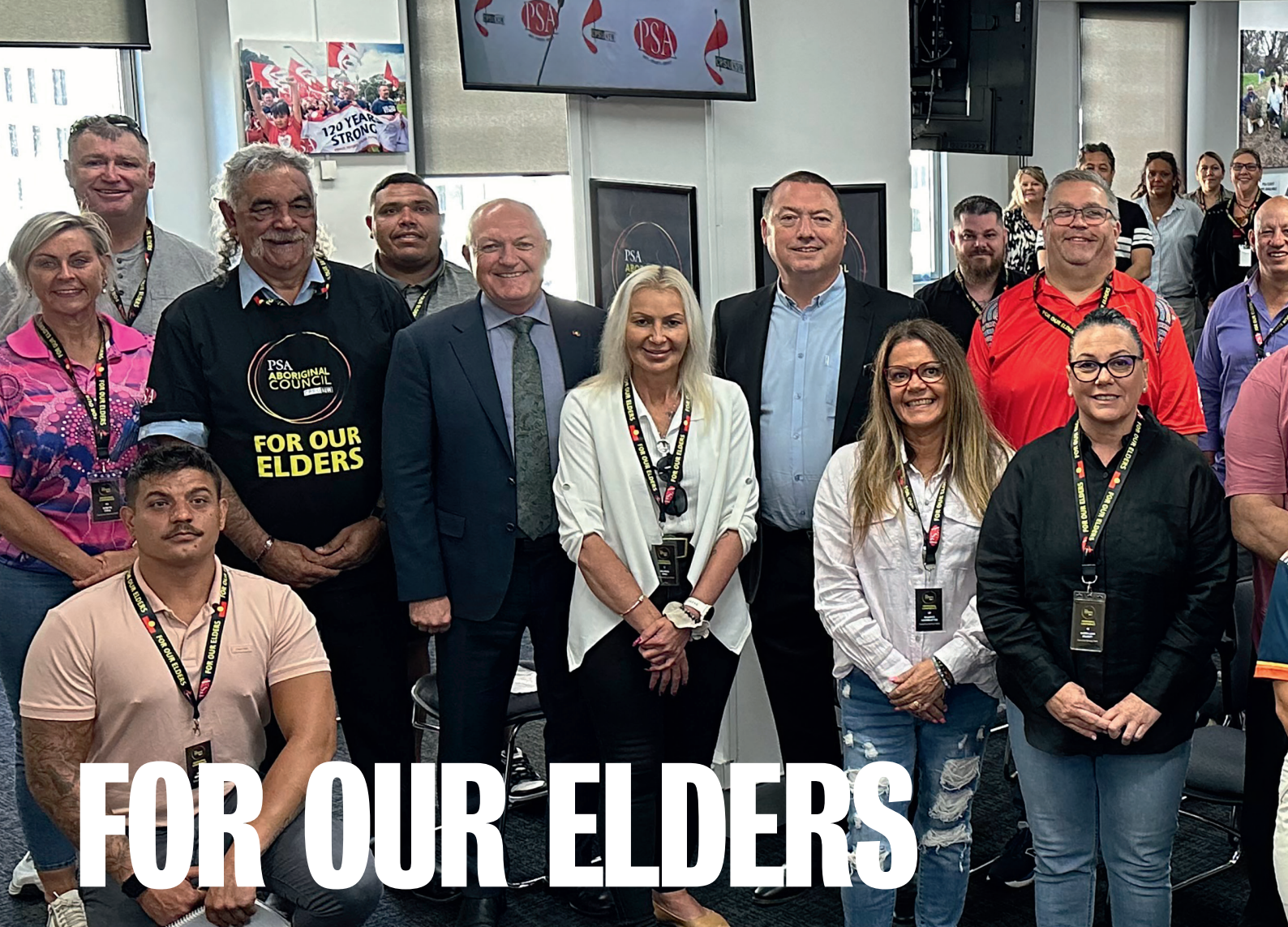
"*We All Have a Role to Play* is more than a catchy conference theme. It goes to the very fundamentals of what it is to be a union member. We look out for each other, we support each other and we listen to each other."

"Just as we work together for better wages and conditions, we work together to create workplaces where we look after each other's mental health, and in turn that of our family and friends."

"It was wonderful to see a room full of members at conference listening to an excellent array of speakers and taking back this knowledge to help them, their colleagues and even their families better navigate any mental health issues confronting them."

"We look forward to similar events in the future."





FOR OUR ELDERS

The PSA CPSU NSW Aboriginal Council looks to a brighter future.

It was an Elder's words that helped uplift the room.

Des Rumble, a long-time member working in TAFE, took to the microphone as the 2023 PSA CPSU NSW Aboriginal Conference talked about the disappointment of the recent loss of the federal referendum into a Voice to Parliament, the latest in a long list of injustices doled out to a 65,000-year-old culture.

"Australia had a chance to do something very positive, and sadly that did not happen," said Mr Rumble. "That is not a total loss. I said to friends, 'Don't look at this as a defeat. We as people and the non-indigenous people who helped us may be in a minority. But we will one day be the majority. Maybe not in our lifetime but it will happen."

"Don't spend your time too much worrying about this loss: think to the future, that is where we are at.

"Black, white, or brindle; be proud of who you are."

Conference had begun earlier that day when Aboriginal Council Chair Darrell Brown told attendees they were "all representing our ancestors". Despite the gloom of the recent referendum result, Mr Brown's opening addresses took an optimistic tone.

"It's going to be a great day today," he said.

PSA CPSU NSW General Secretary Stewart Little echoed Mr Brown's positive introduction, pointing out it was "fantastic to be able to have another conference".

"The trade union movement has long been intertwined with the Aboriginal movement: both movements of struggle," said Mr Little. "Often Aboriginal struggle has been part of the trade union movement."

Mr Little and the trade union

movement's longest strike was the walk-off in the Pilbara in response to workers not being paid in wages. At Wave Hill station, "it was Aboriginal workers walking off and striking over injustice".

Mr Little said he hoped there would be a more positive relationship with "senior levels of government" on Aboriginal affairs since the election of the Labor Party under Chris Minns.

It was Premier Minns's Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, David Harris, who was next to the podium, confirming that the "PSA can always knock on his door".

"Good progressive government is about doing things with people, not to them," he said. "I am sure these principles will guide me."

The Minister said debates such as the Voice bring out the best and worst in people.

"You probably saw some pretty base racism," he said. "It is something that disappoints me. I thought, as a country, it was something we were putting behind us."



Mr Harris said he had to turn off comments on a social media post about a kids' Aboriginal dance troupe as "the racism in the comments section absolutely astounded me. This was aimed at young kids.

"I had to mute the post so these young kids could not see what was being written about them," he said.

Importantly, Mr Harris said he would not let the NO vote and subsequent drop in public support for reconciliation deter him from continuing to negotiate for a treaty between Aboriginal people and the state of NSW.

"We will start a discussion around treaty," he said, pointing out three commissioners will travel the state to talk about "prior and informed consent".

"They will be asking, 'Do you want a treaty process and if you do, what will it look like?'"

The Minister said a treaty is required "because governments break promises: a treaty is about locking in the rules of the game.

"Governments are happy to stick with promises with toll companies and the companies that run the ports, but will happily break promises to Aboriginal people," he said.

AUSTRALIA CAN NEVER BE WHOLE UNTIL SUCH TIME WE ARE RECONCILED IN WITH EVERYBODY ELSE

Mr Harris said people may express concerns about treaty, but similar moves have provoked unfounded fears.

"We've had the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act* for 40 years, and the world hasn't ended."

He said the process will coincide with truth-telling in schools.

"There were massacres," he said.

"People were poisoned. Soldiers were sent out to shoot people. There is no nice way of putting it."

William 'Smiley' Johnston was next. He opened his presentation talking about his varied career path, including a tough gig as chair of an Aboriginal Land Council.

A part of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), he said the body, which was dissolved by John Howard, had successes in areas such as housing, economic activity and education. He said it proved it was important to consult people rather than impose rules.

He said ATSIC brought in regional and community plans for Aboriginal people, but the body was doomed the moment Mr Howard was elected, as the Liberal Party Prime Minister always had it in his sights.

"Australia can never be whole until such time we are reconciled in this country with everybody else," he said, saying the DNA of bureaucracy was



still in a colonial mindset, where white experts are better to be consulted with rather than Aboriginal people.

He urged Aboriginal people to take charge, improving school attendance and building more housing on their own land.

“Government comes up with these great ideas: but they don’t know what they are doing,” he said. “We have to change the system: we are going to have blues with our own mob.

“I want our people to train up then build their own houses, and maintain local facilities, keeping money in our communities.”

Mr Johnstone was disappointed Prime Minister Anthony Albanese failed in his campaign for the YES vote, giving its opponents “a six-month free kick” while the YES campaign sat back.

“What role can the PSA play going forward?” he said. “We need to be holding Minister Harris and company to account. Can we move past Reconciliation Action Plans and art on the wall?”

Originally from Dharumbal Country

in Central Queensland, Murri-South Sea Islander woman Kristy Masella was next on stage. The Managing Director of Redfern-based Aboriginal Employment Strategy, Ms Masella gave an upbeat presentation brimming with good news about the job market.

“RACISM HAS ALWAYS BEEN HERE IN THIS COUNTRY. THE CAMPAIGN JUST GAVE IT LICENCE TO BE OUT IN THE OPEN. THE POSITIVE IS OUR ALLIES SEE IT NOW”

“At the moment we can’t fill all the jobs we’re offered for Aboriginal people,” she said. “This is good. We don’t have enough

Mob for the vacancies. There are higher-than-market wage on offer for skilled Koori workers.

“Black Fellas are resourceful, creative and innovative. We’re deadly, we have good skills and capabilities and we should be paid well for the work we do.”

She said local, state and federal governments are among the largest employers of Aboriginal people, particularly in regional NSW. However, despite the plethora of vacancies, Ms Masella said there were still some people in the community who required assistance skilling up for the jobs market.

“The bulk of the work we do is supporting people with barriers to employment,” she said. This includes trauma, substance abuse and psychosocial disorders. Many people need help to get into the workforce.”

Other positive trends in the jobs market included more Aboriginal women seeking leadership and management roles and more Koori graduates.

“It is exciting to see our young ones



lead the way, but also good to see older people go back to earn degrees,” she said.

Rachel Bos from the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) was next with the “bruising” task of talking about the referendum publicly for the first time since the vote.

“The racism has always been here in this country,” she said. “This campaign just gave it licence to be out in the open. The positive is our allies see it now.

“I really wish I was here today with a different story to tell you: even if just one state voted YES.”

However, Ms Bos praised the union movement for its role in the campaign, adding she had figures showing that 67 per cent of union members voted YES.

“Over the next 12 months we are going to take a deep breath and wait for the rest of the union movement and affiliates and consider what to do next,” she said. “We need to make sure the ACTU First Nations Committee is full to the brim.”

Darryl Wright from Southwestern Sydney’s Tharawal facility gave a

presentation on the organisation’s work, that included a prerecorded message on community empowerment from British public health expert Sir Michael Marmot of the World Health Organization. Sir Michael said engaging the community in projects like Tharawal is fundamental.

Last guest was Executive Director Aboriginal Strategy and Outcomes with the Department of Planning and Environment, Mark DeWeere.

He said his role involves ensuring sure programs work towards self-determination and talked about closing the gap and areas such as policy reform, employment targets and maintenance of culture.

Mr DeWeere said there had been success in areas such as cultural burns to improve country, as well as the Aboriginal Ranger strategy.

He said the Roads to Home Strategy was beginning to improve infrastructure in Aboriginal communities throughout NSW, keeping them up to standards

maintained by other parts of the state.

Thanking attendees as the event drew to a close, Assistant General Secretary Troy Wright revisited the disappointment of the referendum result, but committed the union to continue its support for Aboriginal members.

Mr Wright signed off saying the community must take responsibility for itself “because no-one else will”.

He said the union’s executive “will still rely heavily on Aboriginal Council for advice”.

“We are proud to host our Aboriginal Council and the annual conference” said Mr Wright after the event. “The referendum result and the accompanying outpouring of racism will not stop your union from campaigning for better rights for First Nations people, not just in the Public Sector but in wider NSW society.”

In closing the event, Mr Brown praised the attendees and speakers, saying they put on “the best conference we have had yet”.



STAY ON TRACK FOR A SECURE FUTURE

An online tool makes it easier to keep on top of your super.

A new personalised digital advice tool is helping tens of thousands of Public Sector workers keep track of their superannuation savings. Younger and middle-aged workers are far more likely than their older counterparts to expect a better standard of living in retirement than they have today.

Australians with more than 20 years left in the workforce are twice as likely to expect better living standards after they finish working, the research by Aware Super has found.

The finding is based on usage of the new digital advice tool that is used by the fund's members in recent months.

Aware Super also found only 27 per cent of those one year out from retirement had a clear picture of the lifestyle they wanted, and therefore a specific amount in mind for their income needs.

Jacki Ellis, Head of Retirement at Aware Super, said it was important workers – “whether they're two or 20 years out from retirement” – understood their circumstances so they could plan for the future more realistically.

“Having a keen understanding of your financial circumstances and those specific goals makes it easier to feel confident about achieving them,” Ms Ellis said.

This was particularly important in the

prevailing economic climate, she said. With high inflation putting sustained pressure on living costs, lifestyle goals may be at risk without careful planning.

“Planning for the future in times like these isn't just for those nearing or in retirement,” Ms Ellis said. “It's hard to have a detailed view of life in retirement, especially if it's in the distant future.”

Separate research commissioned by Aware Super in recent months found more than 90 per cent of Australians were concerned or strongly concerned about the cost of living.

The fund is urging Australians not to be complacent with their super while focussing on shorter-term financial issues, weathering higher mortgage rates and living costs. While super is a long-term

investment, it's crucial members don't neglect their retirement savings at a cost to their quality of life when they reach retirement, the fund says.

Ms Ellis said the digital advice tool was aimed at helping members plan. Almost 30,000 Aware Super members have used the tool, called My Retirement Planner, since it was launched midway through 2023.

It provides users with a 'retirement confidence score' – measuring how likely it is that, when they're in retirement, they'll have the income they need for the lifestyle they'd like.

The tool allows users to change variables such as their expected retirement age and voluntary contributions to understand how they can influence that outcome.

Almost one third of users said they would make voluntary contributions to improve their confidence score rather than delaying retirement.

"This reinforces the importance of understating your retirement lifestyle goals and the actions needed to achieve them," Ms Ellis said.

The research also found more than two in five Australians were not on track to meet their retirement goals. One in five expected to retire with additional assets outside of the family home and superannuation.

TWO IN FIVE AUSTRALIANS WERE NOT ON TRACK TO MEET RETIREMENT GOALS

The median confidence score for those who have used the tool so far is 77 per cent.

Aware Super says that score is relatively strong – despite the fact many Australians aren't confident about their financial outlook – because of the capacity for users to experiment with variable factors.

"As a result, our members come out feeling more confident because they

have clear actions they can take to make genuine improvements over time," Ms Ellis said.

The tool connects directly to individual members' accounts to provide them with high-quality insights and projections. While it uses data such as the member's current income and super balance to provide those insights, new members with as little as \$1 in their account can also manually update these inputs to receive their retirement confidence score.

A public-access version of My Retirement Planner is in development with Aware Super anticipating launch in 2024.

Supplied by Aware Super Pty Ltd, Trustee of Aware Super. This is general information only. Before taking any action, please consider your own circumstances and consider getting advice to make sure it is appropriate for you. Please also look at the relevant Product Disclosure Statement.



Gidget Foundation Australia
– here to help expectant
and new parents
How can we help you?

Start Talking – Telehealth

The **Start Talking** program provides individual psychological counselling services for parents delivered via a video call service, similar to Zoom.

Gidget House – Face to Face

Gidget Houses are located in NSW, QLD and VIC, are easily accessible and offer a safe haven for parents to access individual psychological counselling services in person. Partners are able to access our specialised services as well.

Gidget Virtual Village – Online

Gidget Foundation Australia coordinates and moderates three private, **Facebook peer support groups**, connecting expectant and new parents with the Foundation and each other, in a safe, judgement free space. **Gidget Virtual Village** for new parents, **Gidget Virtual Village Dads** and **Gidget Virtual Village for Expectant Mums**.

Gidget Foundation Australia is proud to offer FREE individual psychological counselling services for expectant and new parents nationwide.

We are honoured to partner with PSA to offer support to members and their families.





Radiolab

RADIOLAB

A podcast answers questions you didn't even think to ask.

What has scientific discussions, progressive political commentary and a curious exploration of the human condition?

Answer: *Radiolab* podcast.

The Peabody award-winning podcast has been running since 2002. A blend of probing journalism and a scientific lens, this American podcast is produced by WNYC Studios.

Hosts Lulu Miller and Latif Nasser explore topics beyond your everyday thinking. From the show's description: "*Radiolab* is a curiosity bender. We ask deep questions and use investigative journalism to get the answers."

Each episode is an hour long, with the February 2023 edition, *Golden Goose*, well worth seeking out. The episode tells the story of scientists reaffirming the importance of studying even the smallest of notions or unanswered questions, such as snails, and their ability to change the world.

The podcast can be lighthearted and humorous, with fascinating true stories such as *Man Against Horse*, exploring the hilarious question, could a human being out-run a horse?

If PSA CPSU NSW members are in search of a deep, philosophical exploration of humanity and the extraordinary nature of this world, this podcast is worth a listen.

THE REST IS POLITICS

Australian politics can look a little ho hum when compared to what goes on in the British halls of power. Sure Scott Morrison was possibly our strangest Prime Minister, but compared to Boris Johnson, he was relatively sane, while former British Home Secretary's Suella Braverman's outright cruelty to asylum seekers makes Petter Dutton look like a slightly awkward Wiggle.

The Rest is Politics is

presented by two insiders, former Labour spin doctor Alastair Campbell and Conservative renegade Rory Stewart to "lift the lid on the secrets of Westminster, offering an insider's view on politics at home and abroad, while bringing back the lost art of disagreeing agreeably".

Updated sometimes daily, this is a rivetting listen, even if you have never set foot in Britain. This is all thanks to the larger-than-life characters in British politics trying desperately to captain a ship on a disastrous course thanks to the lunacy that is Brexit.

The two talk about subjects as diverse as the Conservative Party's hard right wing, how Britain will deal with the war in Gaza, and what will happen to Mr Sunak once he fires his Home Secretary.

The two may have left politics, but they still have plenty of contacts and an excellent insight into one of the world's oldest democratic systems: albeit one that is buckling under enormous pressure as inflation bites and an immigration crisis takes place.

There is also an ad-free subscription model.

DEMOCRACY SAUSAGE

Produced, by the Australian National University (ANU), *Democracy Sausage* gives a deep insight into our political system.

The podcast is presented by academics Marija Taflaga, the Director of the ANU Centre for the Study of Australian Politics and a Lecturer at the ANU School of Politics and International Relations, and Journalist Mark Kenny, Professor at the ANU Australian Studies Institute.

The podcasts feature guests from politics, academia and the media, covering Australian and international events.

Recent episodes look back at the career of Labor Prime Minister Bob Hawke and a withering criticism of the media's performance during the referendum on the Voice to Parliament.

The conversational tone makes for easy listening and the guests offer genuine insight into the issues covered. Each episode lasts about an hour each, but thanks to the presenters' casual manner, they seem a lot shorter.



PODCAST

LISTEN UP!

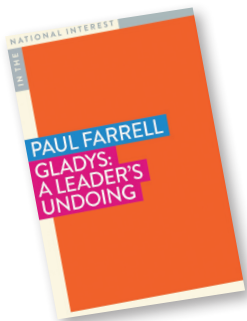
Did you know the PSA CPSU NSW releases regular podcasts?

Tune in to hear the latest about your union, your workplace conditions and the events that affect you.

You can listen to the PSA CPSU NSW podcast wherever you download your podcasts.



GLADYS: A LEADER'S UNDOING



Paul Farrell
\$19.95
 Monash University Publishing

All but the most biased readers of this small, 90-page book will come away admiring the professionalism demonstrated by staff at the NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC).

A Leader's Undoing recounts the demise of former Premier Gladys Berejiklian, who was found to "engage in serious corrupt conduct" by ICAC.

Ms Berejiklian's case was

held against the backdrop of demands for a Federal version of ICAC, a body fiercely resisted by then Prime Minister Scott Morrison.

Using ICAC's case against the popular NSW Premier, Mr Morrison and his supporters publicly vilified the corruption-fighting body, with many in the Murdoch press supporting his campaign.

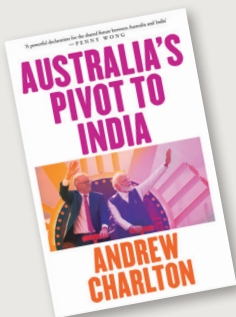
Paul Farrell, an ABC 7:30 journalist, examines the way ICAC investigated

Ms Berejiklian's conduct after phone taps revealed she and Wagga Wagga MP Daryl Maguire were in an undisclosed relationship.

In the ensuing case, it emerged that projects in Mr Maguire's electorate received attention not afforded to most other seats.

A short read, Mr Farrell's book is an entertaining look at how a well-run government agency, in this case ICAC, can make the state a better place.

AUSTRALIA'S PIVOT TO INDIA

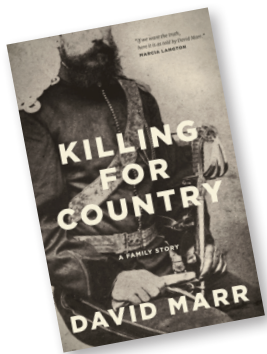


Andrew Charlton
\$32.99
 Black Inc

Labor MP Andrew Charlton (pictured right with Prime Minister Anthony Albanese in Harris Park in his electorate) examines Australia's relationship with the rising superpower India.

Mr Charlton writes the relationship between the two nations has not adapted to changing times and urges governments to do more to strengthen economic and security ties between Australia and India.





A family story

David Marr
\$39.99
Black Inc

KILLING FOR COUNTRY

Tracing his family tree, author David Marr discovered his great grandfather, Reginald Uhr, was part of the Native Police in colonial Queensland. Reginald's brother D'arcy was also a member.

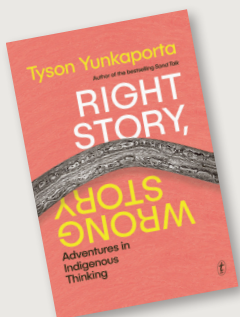
The Native Police served at the frontline of the Frontier Wars at the time Aboriginal people were cleared from the land they had inhabited for thousands of years to allow pastoralists to transform the

bush into farmland. And if this quest involved killing the original inhabitants, then the Native Police were the people to do the dirty work.

Despite instructions from British authorities to protect the original inhabitants, Colonial authorities in Australia instead went on a murderous rampage. As Mr Marr finds, British authorities were quite lax in enforcing these ideals, instead turning a blind eye to the ruthless activities of Colonial forces.

Mr Marr uncovers stories of settler violence that would be in hundreds of family trees throughout Australia.

The high number of voters refusing to back the Voice referendum in October 2023 suggests that many Australians have not come to terms with the violent manner in which the nation was settled since 1788. Mr Marr's efforts at uncovering his family's past and its role in these atrocities makes for a sobering and informative read.



Adventures in Indigenous thinking

Tyson Yunkaporta
\$35.00
Text Publishing

RIGHT STORY, WRONG STORY

Tyson Yunkaporta's (pictured right) previous book *Sand Talk* discussed how indigenous thinking and approaches to things such as nature, education and the economy can help arrest social and environmental destruction.

Mr Yunkaporta's latest work, *Right Story, Wrong Story* savagely refutes the way the western world has created a system where "every day more of us become collateral damage in the scorched-



earth policies of an economic experiment scaled to the planetary level".

In a slightly manic writing style, he talks instead to

indigenous people around the world, getting their perspectives on everything from gendered violence to the creation of energy.



APHEDA SUPPORTING PASIFIKA WORKERS

Like many South Pacific seasonal workers, Samoan agricultural employees are easy pickings for dodgy employers.

The Samoan economy, with its heavy reliance on tourism, took a big hit from COVID-19. Many workers have instead come to Australia temporarily to work in understaffed sectors such as fruit picking and meat processing. For the workers, this means hard currency that can help family back in the Pacific. For unscrupulous labour-hire companies, it is a ready pool of people to exploit.

APHEDA-Union Aid Abroad has a long association with Samoa First Union (SFU). Founded in 2015, SFU is the first and only private sector union in Samoa and has become well-known nationally for its advocacy for workers' rights across a broad spectrum of industries and issues.

More than 3000 workers, primarily those in the tourism and hospitality

sectors represented by SFU were laid off during COVID-19. Therefore, many Samoans participated instead in seasonal worker programs in Australia and New Zealand.

With many workers in remote towns, and not familiar with local industrial relations and rental laws, some agencies have ripped off guest workers with poor wages and high accommodation costs.

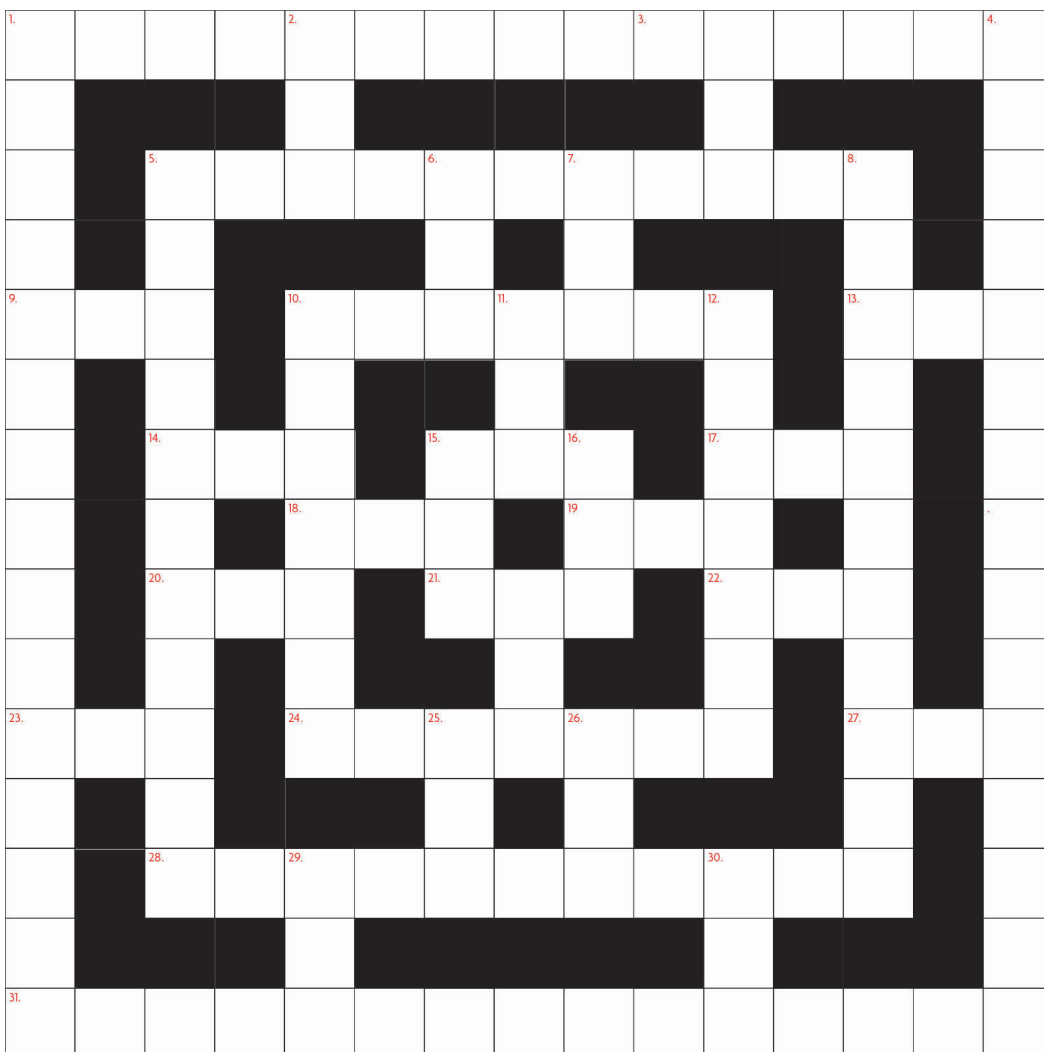
With the vast majority of members now undertaking seasonal work, SFU had to shift its focus. Most weekday mornings, a long queue of prospective

and returned seasonal workers wait outside SFU's office in Samoa's capital, Apia (pictured above), seeking their assistance and support through the labour migration process – from helping with their applications, contracts and police checks, to assisting them to claim their entitlements while overseas, and outstanding superannuation on their return home.

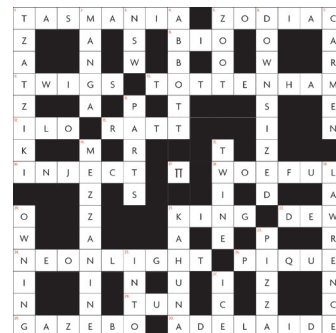
Working in concert with Australian and New Zealand unions, SFU has been able to document and speak out about poor employment practices.



CROSSWORD



Last issue's solution



ACROSS

1. Matilda between the posts (9,6)
5. Famous Soviet machine gun (11)
9. Short medical practitioner (3)
10. Band: Black _____ (7)
13. The end of most URLs (3)
14. Surname of boxer from Kentucky (3)
15. Eighties band behind *The Lexicon of Love* (1,1,1)
17. Can be from Brazil or Queensland (3)
18. Internet-speak expression of mirth (1,1,1)
19. Not young (3)
20. Brand of washing powder (3)
21. The small version of this has been wiped out, but the chicken version is prevalent (3)
22. To and ____ (3)
23. Desire for this shade of light brown can lead to a melanoma (3)
24. Site of Dakar (7)
27. International trade union body (1,1,1)
28. Decks around a building site (11)
31. Making an act no longer an offence (15)

DOWN

1. Badly run (15)
2. Long slimy fish (3)
3. Airport code for Rockhampton (3)
4. Closing a nuclear power plant (15)
5. Informal football games (4,7)
6. Cry uncontrollably (3)
7. Agreement signed to seal lips (1,1,1)
8. Holidaying (11)
10. Naval staff (7)
11. Shortened Robert (3)
12. Small enough to fit in your palm (7)
15. Single Swiss peak (3)
16. Non-rowing boat team member (3)
25. National Liberation Front (1,1,1)
26. Colloquial young woman (3)
29. French friend (3)
30. Maori social unit (3)

TEA BREAK



MEMBERS WORK ON MENTAL HEALTH

A day away from the office helps Community Corrections staff feel better at work.

The PSA helped its members in Wollongong Community Corrections have an active day to help deal with the mental stress of working with offenders.

“Attendees participated in activities such as barefoot bowls and surfing lessons, and relaxed with a barbeque lunch,” said

PSA CPSU NSW Organiser Chris Auld.

“Thanks to Chris and the PSA for funding the surf lesson and lunch and most importantly, thanks to everyone who made an effort to show up for the day,” said PSA member Chad Haynes who is a Senior Community Corrections Officer in Wollongong.

“I know it was out of the way for a lot of people, but from the feedback I got on the day everyone had a great time. Also congratulations to everyone who got in

the water, I am pretty sure we all stood up which is awesome given most of us were first timers.

Attendees also heard from Rusty Moran, a surf instructor who gave people insights into dealing with stress at work.

“I think it was a great day listening to him talk about the importance of burn out and mental health for front line staff and the impact of breathing and getting in the ocean can have on our body and mind,” said Mr Haynes.

FAIR WORK: SHAY ON THE CASE FEDERALLY



Meet our National Industrial and Research Officer.

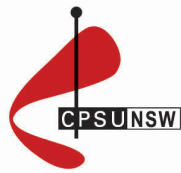
Shay Deguara first started at the PSA as an Organising Works Trainee in 1999 after being a Delegate in the finance sector. After several years as an Organiser he became an Industrial Officer, then an Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Officer for the union leading some significant prosecutions to support our members having safer workplaces.

He was Manager of the PSA CPSU

NSW Industrial Support unit from 2017 until 2022.

Mr Deguara currently works for the national union, the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU) as the National Research and Industrial Officer, working with different state branches such as the PSA CPSU NSW.

The role helps branches of the CPSU in issues such as maintaining governance requirements, adhering to health and safety policies, coordinating training, co-ordinating national vocational groups and working on submissions.



JOINING FORM

Public Service Association of NSW
Community and Public Sector Union
ABN 83 717 214 309

JOINED BY:

ABOUT ME:

Title: M F X

First name:

Surname:

Preferred name:

D.O.B:

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander: Yes No

Address (home):

STREET STATE

SUBURB POSTCODE

Address (postal):

POSTCODE

Phone:

MOBILE

HOME WORK

Email:

PERSONAL

WORK

Receive quarterly union magazine (Red Tape) 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/
ONGOING 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:

- Gross annual salary Weekly fees from 1 July 2023
- Less than \$11,697 \$3.75
- \$11,697 - \$46,785 \$7.28
- \$46,786 - \$66,458 \$11.73
- More than \$66,458 \$15.25



Fees can also be paid quarterly or yearly by cheque/credit card/cash. Payment must accompany this form. An invoice will be sent when your next payment is due.

I would like more information about:

Training Becoming a delegate/workplace contact

Membership fees subject to change.

ABOUT MY PAYMENT: (SELECT ONE)

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 040172). 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: (T&C)

SIGNATURE

DATE

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

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 SPSP 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.

Revised 10/2023

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 its magazine, *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/CPSU NSW 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.

Any information collected is handled and used in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles, the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).

When we use third parties to carry out union functions (e.g. 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



160 Clarence Street Sydney NSW 2000 GPO Box 3365 Sydney NSW 2001

☎ 1800 772 679

✉ psa@psa.asn.au

🌐 www.psa.asn.au

✉ cpsu.nsw@psa.asn.au

🌐 www.cpsunsw.org.au

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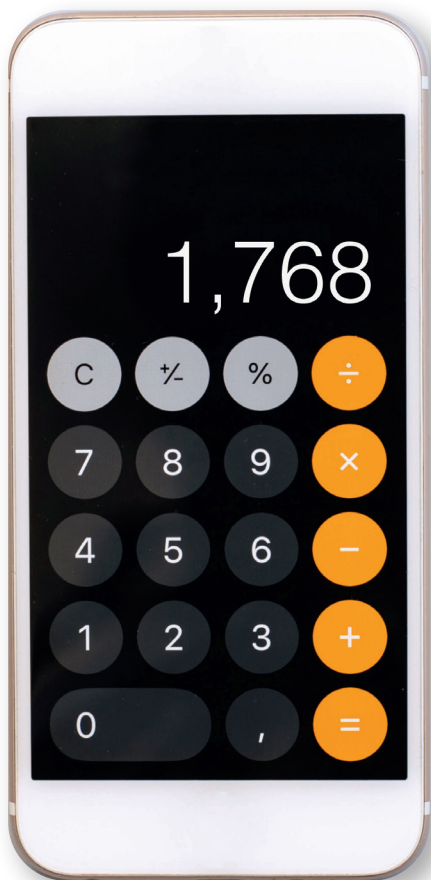
1300 368 117

Visit our website at



unionshopper.com.au

YOU CAN'T AFFORD NOT TO BE A UNION MEMBER

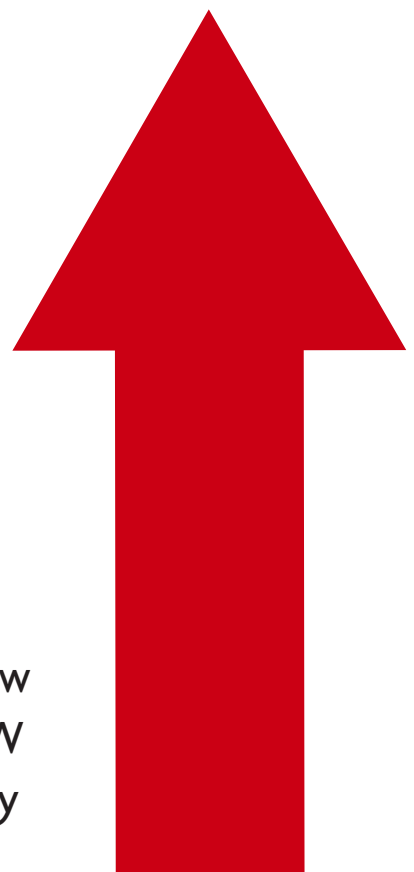


COST OF LIVING

- \$ Groceries
- \$ Housing costs
- \$ Energy costs
- \$ Insurance



Scan here to see how your PSA CPSU NSW membership can pay for itself!



☎ 1800 772 679

🌐 www.psa.asn.au 🌐 www.cpsunsw.org.au

