



COMMUNITY & PUBLIC SECTOR UNION ♦ SPSF GROUP NSW BRANCH

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IN REPLY
PLEASE QUOTE
FILE NUMBER:

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3 May 2013

Professor Peter Lee
Vice Chancellor
Southern Cross University
Military Road
East Lismore NSW 2480

Dear Prof. Lee

Re: University Budget Situation – CPSU Members' Feedback

The CPSU members at Southern Cross University met this week to discuss your "All Staff" announcement regarding the dire financial circumstances in which the University finds itself in.

Our members have raised a number of concerns, and some suggestions on how to progress, but foremost our members wanted to express their commitment to ensuring that the University survives and prospers through these difficult times. CPSU members expect that the University will manage these difficult times with good faith, honesty and integrity and CPSU members are committed to respond in kind.

While members have raised some issues that are personal in nature, the vast majority of concerns raised were about the possible impact on the University and its membership. This shows a level of dedication that should be valued and supported.

Concerns Raised

Members have raised the following concerns which they would like you address:

Staff Morale - As should be expected, many staff have reported to CPSU members (and including CPSU members) that they are feeling very negative about the future, and that regardless of what happens, many are feeling that the future is only going to be difficult, messy, painful, stressful and disheartening. This further negatively impacts on their work, their productivity, and the services they provide, which then exacerbates the stress and workloads even further.

Unexpected negative impacts of the Job Freeze - members are worried about how this job freeze is going to impact on services and the University's operations. Already, some vacancies are being advertised with others now being told they cannot be advertised. The rationale for these decisions is unclear. Over the coming months, the impact of not replacing staff is likely to negatively affect services, and the decision about which of these services will be let go (even temporarily) and which services would have a much greater, negative flow on effect, needs to be considered and planned for.

Timetable of expected call for Voluntary Redundancies - and other future changes. Some members are concerned about how to plan their future work, whether they (or anyone) will be doing that

work in the next 3 months, in the next 6 months, in the next 12 months. Staff do not know how long should they be planning for, and if they do not plan there could likely be longer term, negative consequences. Unintended consequences could also further negatively impact on the University's finances.

Staff want a clearer understanding of what areas of the University are expected to be affected, which areas are likely to have the same, or increased, investment, and what opportunities there are for job swaps. This is where a general staff member who wants a VR (but the University does not want that job to go), swaps jobs with a general staff member who doesn't want a VR (but whose job may or may not be available for redundancy).

The status of current reviews, such as the Crooke Review, is unclear. A lot of time and money were put into those reviews, and it is unclear if they are now completely off the table, if they will still be implemented, and if so, will there now be further changes?

Finances are still not being appropriately managed, and inappropriate waste may still be occurring. There are a number different examples, which are best not raised in this forum. Our members would like to see a commitment by you that all financial wastage is curtailed before job losses are implemented. One area of concern that can be raised, is that over recent years, the number of senior managers working for the University has grown consistently and considerably, (nearly doubling) while the number of general staff they are meant to 'manage' has been steadily declining. This has an obvious, clear and immediate negative impact on productivity.

Requests

CPSU members request the following:

- that during the current recruitment freeze, all current and new vacant positions be reported to the JCF to ensure workloads and services are not too adversely impacted. This reporting should include:
 - relevant position descriptions, where the duties are going or being removed
 - ensuring workloads of remaining staff are considered, along with other affected stakeholders
 - and other relevant information as agreed to plan effectively
- that the University management agree to meet with the CPSU representatives to go through in further detail, the financial circumstances so that our CPSU representatives can better understand the situation and support our members in being proactive in supporting the University to deal with the difficult times ahead.
- that the University meet with the CPSU representatives to discuss and develop a strategy for the implementation of changes that will be required to meet the budget needs, so that our members can work with the University management to get the best outcome for both the University membership and professional staff.
- that the University provide to the CPSU representatives the number of general staff at each of the HEW levels, and the number of staff (and the nature of their roles) at or above HEW 10, and above Level E.

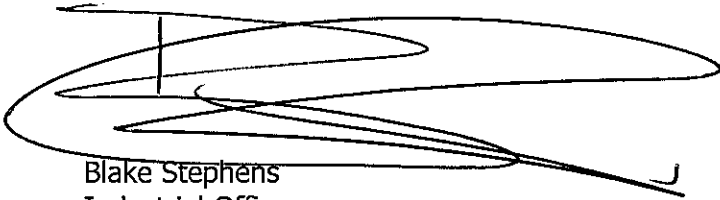
Please respond and provide some suitable times for CPSU representatives to meet with University management and review the University's finances. Our members have already faced a 10% reduction in their budgets last year alone (often impacting on jobs) and they need clarification of the financial difficulties that the University faces. The clearer the picture we have, the better we can support our members to work with you through these difficult times.

We also wish to discuss in more detail how you and your management team can better work with our CPSU members to develop and implement the best strategies that will be effective, equitable

and sustainable and which will ensure the best outcome for the University and for our general staff members.

It was also strongly suggested that the University management should make a firm commitment to implement a reduction in staffing numbers of the senior managers first, and to also seriously consider a further reduction in the salary of senior managers before any further jobs losses or negative impacts are made on general staff. All employees of the University will be affected by the difficult times ahead and it would be most beneficial to staff morale to see that senior managers are not exempt, and that they will be leading the way by example.

Yours sincerely

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Blake Stephens', written over a horizontal line.

Blake Stephens
Industrial Officer
CPSU NSW Branch

Toni Ledgerwood
Branch President
CPSU-SCU Branch