



21 October 2013

EB BULLETIN # 11

This bulletin covers the bargaining session commencing 9 a.m. on 21 October 2013. Sue Freeman took the chair, and the University's team was led by Professor Andrew Parfitt. The meeting discussed Performance Review and Development, Organisational Change, Intellectual Freedom and Organ Donor Leave.

Performance Review and Development

Professor John Germov on behalf of the University conducted a presentation on the procedure being rolled out to staff in road-shows over the next few weeks. A document "PRD Executive Summary" was distributed. The University believes that the clauses in the current Agreement provide the industrial basis, describing the process as "refreshed" rather than "new". It seeks to action the elements of "ongoing dialogue and feedback", "involvement and ownership", "alignment of institutional and individual goals" that seem to have been lost to compliance practice in the current PDF process. The refreshed procedure will support staff development but will also emphasise performance review by clarifying expectations and through informal and formal interactions in the course of daily management. PRD will necessitate the identification of a new structure of PRD Mentors, each with no more than 10 direct reports for PRD, who will receive training for the role and hold appropriate authority to deal in the first instance with issues such as workload and probation. Although the process is ongoing, and performance review and development are acknowledged as interdependent, the process has been articulated to allow for performance review and goal setting in the period November to February, and development planning and review in the period May to June. This can happen at the team/cohort level as well as with the individual.

The inclusion of "behaviours" in the discussion of performance again proved to be a difficulty for the Unions. The University advised that two other documents that will address behaviours are in preparation and will be provided as soon as available: "Leadership Framework" and "Lifting Performance". The meeting agreed to defer the discussion of these elements. The chair also requested the NTEU to refrain from referring to material that the other parties did not have on the table.

Questions raised but not answered conclusively included appropriate grading and payment of PRD Mentors, and 360 degree feedback on the PRD process – on this the University said it had conducted a trial but was at this stage unsure about the fit of 360 with PRD.

CPSU observed that ever since the University flagged in NeW Directions a need to renew the Performance Development Framework, we have been trying to understand where the deficiencies in the existing system are perceived to be. In bargaining the University presented a group of clauses which did not seek substantive change, and in discussion it emerged that the problem was not with the clauses in the current Agreement so much as with the way they had been implemented and administered. The University subsequently withdrew its proposed clauses and proceeded to develop a framework consistent with the current Agreement, to properly implement what had already been agreed in 2010, and this is what is now being presented in road-shows during early November.

When the topic of "Performance Management" was discussed with the Union over two decades ago it did present initially as a punitive tool, but over the intervening period our persistent theme of "Development" as the key to performance has been listened to and taken up in succeeding versions. The current version, "Performance Review and Development", seems to be attempting to strike a balance, recognising the daily contributions of staff, providing opportunities for development and processes for improvement that are open and fair. The detail will be in the further documentation that the University is still preparing and in the training that ensues.

The matter is held over to the next session on 5th November.



THE UNIVERSITY IS CONDUCTING A SERIES OF ROAD-SHOWS ON THE NEW PRD FRAMEWORK.

We encourage all members to attend and seriously consider what is being presented. We need to hear your questions (personal answers guaranteed) and receive your comments and observations to guide us at the bargaining table.

Managing Organisational Change

The University is still reviewing the CPSU draft clause tabled at the previous meeting. Meanwhile the University has drafted its own clause and tabled this for discussion. Paul Munro presented the clause, and described it as modelled on the Modern Award and Fair Work clauses. The major alteration proposed is the deletion of several key points of consultation with staff and their Unions. The Unions were very vocal in opposition to this. The University was challenged to show that current consultation processes had adversely affected outcomes.

Dorothy Molyneux for CPSU rejected the University's statement that Fair Work and the Modern Award provide a basis for the proposed changes. Further, she questioned whether the proposed clause actually complies with the object of the Act "to provide a balanced framework" ..."enabling fairness and representation at work" ...and "effective procedures to resolve grievances and disputes". The CPSU log of claims developed by the members primarily requires there be no diminution of conditions from the existing Agreement. CPSU representatives also drew attention to the existing clause 69 Consultation, which establishes a Consultative Committee to "consult on the implementation and application of, and on matters arising from, this Agreement". Organisational Change must be maintained as a crucial element of this.

The University undertook to review its draft. This and the CPSU draft will be discussed at the next session on 5th November.

Intellectual Freedom

Describing the existing clause as a "motherhood" statement, NTEU tabled improvements to the clause proposing a number of more specific commitments. The University will respond at a later meeting.

Organ Donor Leave

NTEU tabled a clause providing paid leave for staff participating in approved organ donation schemes. To date Macquarie is the only university in Australia to make this commitment. The University will consider its response.

The meeting closed at 12 midday.

Next Meetings

5 November (Tues) 10.00am to 1.00pm :

10 - 11: General stock-take of progress to date. Review of how far from agreement the parties are on the range of clauses already discussed and parked, with a view to concluding as many as possible and identifying the obstacles in the others.

11 - 12: Performance Review and Development. Discussion following provision by University of further documentation that was not available on 21 October.

12 - 1: Managing Change. Discussion of University clause, and University response to CPSU clause previously tabled.

22 November (Fri) 10.00am to 1.00pm : Matters arising from the stock-take of clauses.

Read all our previous bulletins here: <http://psa.asn.au/university-of-newcastle/>

If you need more on any of these issues, or have some information or a point of view to communicate, please send an email to:

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Ring Sue Freeman on (492)15929 or Ron Hunter on 92483370.



Yours in Union

Sue Freeman

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and EB Lead Negotiator