

# COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC SECTOR UNION

STATE PUBLIC SERVICES FEDERATION (SPSF) GROUP - NEW SOUTH WALES STATE BRANCH

## UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE

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THE  
**PROFESSIONAL  
STAFF UNION**

### EB BULLETIN # 3

6 June 2013

The most recent EB negotiation session with the University took place on May 28. The CPSU provided the Chair for this meeting and thanks go to John Collins for an excellent job.

The main agenda item for the May 28 meeting was discussion regarding Part B of the 2010 Enterprise Agreement – *Performance and Conduct*. The University tabled a document stating their principles regarding Part B and describing their approach in aligning each of the desired outcomes and processes to NeW Directions. In summary, this included changing the current PDF process (and possibly its name) to include both objectives and behaviours as well as making the individual objectives and record of performance conversations visible to both the manager and 'one-away' manager. The University is also proposing some changes in areas such as *Probation, Performance Concerns, Unsatisfactory Performance, Misconduct/Serious Misconduct, Incremental Progression*. No changes were proposed to the current clauses relating to *Disciplinary Action, Promotion, Staff Supervision, Managing Staff Workload, Performance of Duties, Classification review*.

We raised concerns that while the principles in the current clause agreed to a large extent with the University's intentions, the current PDF tool encouraged a 'tick and flick' mentality around an annual discussion between staff and supervisors, rather than ongoing meaningful discussions. The difficulty lies not in the agreed process but in the training and software used for its implementation. The CPSU also pointed out that any change to the current process would require a cultural change in the organisation as well as good leadership from supervisors. Other issues raised included unachievable goals being imposed on staff members; lack of clarity around consequences for staff members not achieving targets set in PDF; little support from the unions for another PDF process name change (added confusion); perception of a top-down approach and inability of staff members to align their goals to their manager's targets; lack of clarity around who will make the assessment of what behaviours are appropriate (and what remedies might be applied); and most importantly the potential for the staff development aspect to be lost in this proposed PDF process.

After extensive discussion, the University agreed that they will aim to produce draft clauses associated with Part B – *Performance and Conduct* for the next meeting on June 12, to provide more clarity around their "principles" document. We will then convene a Special General Meeting to discuss this major issue with our members. Hopefully we can distribute this information prior to the meeting so that you can carefully consider the implications for you personally and provide us with feedback which will then inform the CPSU response.

At the previous EB meeting both unions were asked to provide a list of any additional clauses they wished to be incorporated in the next agreement. The CPSU supplied a copy of our previously submitted Log of Claims, freshly notated to highlight new clauses. The CPSU asked for the University's in principle response to our claims.

It was agreed that both unions would table one of the new clauses – *Domestic Violence* – for discussion at the next meeting. This will provide workplace protections to promote a safe environment for victims of family violence.

The priority for discussions at future meetings remains Part D: *Managing Change*, Part G: *Remuneration Arrangements* and Part H: *Employment Arrangements*.

After next week's EB meeting we will confirm the date and venue for a **Special General Meeting of CPSU Members** – at this stage we are proposing it be held during the lunch period on Wednesday June 26, subject to availability of a suitable room, so please pencil that in your diary.

Yours in Union,  
Your Bargaining Team

Lead Negotiator: Sue Freeman (phone ext 15929)