

RedTape



Public Service Association of NSW
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Privatisation regulation in PSA's sights

The PSA is leading the fight to block a new regulation that strips redundancy rights from all public sector workers in privatisations.



Anne Gardiner, Glen Barlow from Corrective Services, Jane Howrylak from Trustee & Guardian and CPSU/SPSF Branch President Mary Court from schools

- understand whether members are prepared to take action over the regulation if lobbying and legal avenues do not achieve the desired outcome.

The PSA secured a meeting with the Reverend Fred Nile, who controls the balance of power in the Legislative Council.

In August, PSA General Secretary Anne Gardiner was joined by CPSU/SPSF Branch President Mary Court from Schools, Glen Barlow from Corrective Services and Jane Howrylak from Trustee and Guardian (pictured) to meet Reverend Fred Nile. The delegation sought Reverend Nile's support for a disallowance motion to stop the regulation that is being put to the Parliament by the Shadow Minister for Industrial Relations Adam Searle.

The PSA had called members looking for Christian Democrat Party supporters and active participants in Evangelical churches to find people willing to talk to Reverend Nile.

Nearly 60 members told Organisers they would meet the Christian Democrat leader to seek his support on the issue.

Under the proposed GSE regulation, a government worker whose sector agency is transferred to a non-government sector body is not entitled to any severance or redundancy payment if offered

comparable employment by the non-government sector body. At the moment, transfers have involved compensation for public servants.

The planned changes mean employees are not eligible for compensation if the non-government sector job is 'comparable'.

'Comparable' may fail to properly account for:

- the medium-term risk to wages and conditions via new Enterprise Agreements
- possible exposure to less redundancy pay
- reduced job security
- loss of favourable provisions
- the risk of working for unscrupulous operators.

Recent transfer arrangements to other privatised bodies have been more generous, although offers have diminished over time.

The Government Sector Employment Amendment (Transfers to Non-Government Sector) Regulation 2016 under the Government Sector Employment Act 2013 was brought in by the Baird Government without consulting public sector unions.

Staff in the PSA Organising Directorate have been telephoning

a cross section of our members to speak about the regulation.

The list of names, generated by the PSA's Strategy and Policy Directorate, comprises of approximately 6800 members randomly selected from a representative cross section of worksites from our database.

The purpose of the telephone calls was to:

- educate members on the regulation and its effect
- ascertain whether members had read our e-bulletins on the regulation
- brief members on our political strategy to have the amendment disallowed in Parliament
- invite members to participate in lobbying politicians to support a motion of disallowance

There is still time to vote to keep the PSA strong



Do you know how many of your services Mike Baird plans to sell?

Stopthesecondselloff.com.au



Anne Gardiner

From the General Secretary

Defending public services is exactly what we have done

When I was voted into office as PSA General Secretary in late 2012, the union did not have a focus to underpin its work.

It did not have a central clearly defined rallying point it was working towards or under which it was operating.

No organisation can function effectively without a blueprint and a goal which was why I introduced – via the PSA's Central Council – the union's first ever Strategic Plan.

But more than an internal driver was needed.

What was additionally required was a clear statement of intent to members, in the face of the relentless attacks under firstly the O'Farrell and now the Baird Government, that the PSA was fighting for you and the services you provide so expertly each day across NSW.

A declaration to the community was also needed, to inform the public that the PSA is fighting to preserve and, where possible, expand the services they require and rely so heavily upon.

For that reason we decided the work of the PSA would be under

the banner of Defending Public Services.

This overarching campaign was kick started in August 2013 with a series of meetings across the state. The PSA's cars were badged with Defending Public Services.

In April 2014, the PSA launched its first ever statewide advertising campaign to promote the importance of our members' work.

Titled "Which direction are we headed?", it alerted the community to the attack on public services.

The ad was launched by respected political commentator Jane Caro and screened on television, in cinemas and online.

By the end of the campaign in July, it had generated almost 68,000 views on YouTube.

The ad was subsequently rescreened in cinemas in Sydney and regional areas between January to March, 2015.

In addition, billboards were displayed highlighting the work of specific groups.

An online campaign using youth-focussed Friendlyjordies promoted our vital work.

It is through the Defending Public Services campaign and the hard work and dedication of the PSA's staff and delegates that the union has now become the go to brand for the media and within the broader community as the defender of public services in NSW. The PSA, the important work of members and concerns about the provision of public services to the community now receives regular coverage in the media.

We have even broken into *The Daily Telegraph* which traditionally has not exactly been sympathetic to either the public sector nor the union movement.

In fact we have made media inroads to the point where we are now asked to write opinion pieces on issues important to the union in what is a clear sign of the degree to which the profile of the PSA has been elevated over the last few years.

We have had several articles published on matters from prison overcrowding and child protection to the importance of union governance.

On the back of these efforts the PSA has taken another major

step in its efforts to signal to the community what they risk losing.

The secret sell-off

A second advertising campaign titled "Stop the Secret Sell Off" has now been launched.

The theme was determined by this year's Annual Conference attendees.

A 30-second advertisement was aired on radio in Sydney, Goulburn, Newcastle, Bathurst, Wollongong, Tweed Heads, Central Coast, Dubbo, Grafton and Wagga.

It is being supported by roadside billboards in prominent locations across the state, including a prized site on the Alfred Street Harbour Bridge approach.

A website has also been set up at stopthesecretselloff.com.au.

Once again, the aim is to alert the community to the fact the NSW Government is selling off everything it can to the highest bidder who in turn provide a cheap low cost (to them) service.

The decimation of TAFE is a tragic example in which the Government is blindly giving countless millions to cheap private operators who are unqualified to train anyone in

anything and some of whom are being investigated for fraud.

TAFE is a world-class vocational trainer that equips people with the skills the state needs moving forward.

Pray that the electrician you call has done more than a two-week private training course.

Similarly with ADHC, which is being totally privatised, leaving no safety net for those with high-end needs, and no choice for others.

The private sector isn't going to offer the same specialised services as ADHC currently does. Why would it? How will they make a profit if they do that?

Keep up the good work highlighting Mike Baird's secret sell-off.

It's a secret that is far too important to keep – for the sake of the future of NSW.

Anne Gardiner
General Secretary

Win for PSA in Pillar fight

More than 90 percent of Pillar employees who voted have accepted a three-year agreement preserving conditions in the face of the potential privatisation of this government business.

The first year will see a 2.5 percent pay rise, followed by two percent and 1.5 percent rises over the following two years.

This important win means greater security of conditions and entitlements.

Ninety percent of responses to an earlier survey submitted by PSA members supported accepting the three-year agreement.

Two earlier staff ballots were held and lost.

The first rejected Pillar's proposal for a one-year agreement, and the next threw out a two-year enterprise agreement.

The PSA ran successful campaigns against both the earlier ballots.

The PSA will continue to fight to keep Pillar in the Illawarra.

Pillar plays an important role in Wollongong's economy.
Photo Adam Taylor, Destination NSW

PSA/CPSU wins redundancy provisions for Newcastle University

The PSA/CPSU has been in dispute with the University of Newcastle (UoN) over its treatment of members in Infrastructure and Facilities Services whose positions were slated for outsourcing.

UoN declared our members detached on 31 May, even though they were required to continue in their jobs until an external contractor could be obtained and the outsourcing process completed. The Go-Live dates were September for Logistics and October for Security.

The PSA/CPSU claimed UoN was in breach of the enterprise agreement by detaching staff whilst they were still required to perform their duties.

The dispute revolved around the interpretation of clause 22.1.1, which reads "where a position is no longer required the incumbent may become a detached staff member. The detached staff member will be notified in writing as soon as possible."

The matter was progressed to the Fair Work Commission and

a formal hearing occurred in Newcastle on 16 August 2016, where Commissioner Saunders was asked to determine the correct interpretation of the enterprise agreement regarding the circumstances of when an employee can be detached.

With a number of affected members in attendance to show their support for the dispute, Commissioner Saunders handed down his decision that afternoon, favouring the PSA/CPSU's interpretation of the agreement.

It is now clear UoN cannot detach staff whilst still requiring them to perform their usual duties.

Members will remain in their positions until the outsourcing takes place at which stage they can be notified of becoming detached.

Once notified, members will then have an opportunity to choose voluntary separation or redeployment.

UoN has been ordered "to withdraw the detachment notices issued by it to employees in the Infrastructure and Facilities Services area, other than those employees who have already notified the University of their election for voluntary redundancy, and not re-issue a detachment notice to any such employee until such a time as the position occupied by the particular employee is no longer required".

This great win will provide clarity and surety for our members as UoN continues its program of extensive restructuring.

Billboards keep prison message in public eye

The PSA will continue to promote its campaigns against privatisation with a number of billboards throughout NSW.

As reported in the previous issue of *Red Tape*, billboards near Dubbo and in western Sydney highlighted the importance of public-run prisons.

These billboards are now in Cessnock and Grafton.

In addition, Stop the Secret Sell-Off, a campaign aimed to highlight the Baird Government's underhanded fire sale of public assets is underway, with billboards near the Sydney Harbour Bridge and in Wagga Wagga, Bathurst, Lithgow and Wollongong.

The image for Stop the Secret Sell-Off was voted on by members at the PSA Annual Conference this year.



Sign to help Stop the Secret Sell Off of NSW public services

Unlike other states, NSW has not given the Auditor General legislative powers to follow the money.

The Baird/Berejiklian Government is the only administration in Australia without the necessary laws for independent financial scrutiny and accountability.

This is despite billions of tax payer dollars already being handed to the private sector. But you can make a difference.

Go to stopthesecretselloff.com.au and sign the PSA petition calling on the NSW Government to:

1. protect our valuable public services from privatisation
2. introduce "follow the money" laws for financial scrutiny and accountability.

Member profile

Carmen Wells

Unit leader, Community Corrections



What does your job involve?

I am a unit leader at Nowra Community Corrections, Corrective Services NSW. Community Corrections is responsible for the provision of Pre-Sentence, Home Detention, Community Service Order, Extended Supervision Order, Intensive Correction Order and Pre-Release Reports to Local and District Courts and the State Parole Authority. In addition, we supervise offenders on Parole, Probation, Home Detention, Extended Supervision Orders, Intensive Correction Orders, Bail Supervision and Community Service work.

In 2012-13, Community Corrections managed more than 16,000 offenders on community-based orders, provided approximately 21,000 pre-sentence reports to the courts and provided more than 3,500 pre-release reports to the State Parole Authority. Our main aim is to reduce the impact of offending on the community and provide effective management and supervision of offenders in the community.

What is a typical day at work?

A typical day at work for me as a team leader involves the allocation of all community-based work to the officers, with consideration to workload and other impacting factors like training

and leave. I then review any offender files with regard to considering the risk assessments and case plans as developed by the Community Corrections Officers (CCOs). I might also be required to vet any reports that are required for the courts or the State Parole Authority, and meet with CCOs to discuss any contentious issues related to an offender or their management. My job is essentially to make sure the Service Delivery Standards and Key Performance Indicators are met, whilst also providing leadership and mentoring to officers.

What do you enjoy about your job?

There is a wealth of research that proves, with effective and targeted supervision and intervention, we can make a considerable impact on offending behaviour. I believe the work Community Corrections do is often forgotten in the broader Justice environment, with the focus usually on our uniformed colleagues. But it is an essential part of the greater response to crime in NSW. I enjoy knowing that the work I do can and does impact on recidivism and enjoy learning about new research and strategies to further the vision of Community Corrections.

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The PSA faces many challenges

We currently have one of the most popular leaders in the country running our state.

Mike Baird is a Premier who says all the right things socially but acts in a fiscally conservative way, running a very neoliberal agenda.

Big popularity and small government with limited services are his aims.

Recently, as part of the PSA's capacity building, our Strategy & Policy Unit invited the University of Sydney's Associate Professor Damien Cahill to speak to staff on the durability of neoliberalism – the ideology promoting a reduced role for government in the economy and society, a greater reliance on private enterprise along with the belief that competitive markets will solve all of society's ills.

In his talk, Damien told us that neoliberalism is deeply embedded in the reward systems and decision making processes of governments and all of society's institutions. For example, in the public service, performance indicators for the senior ranks may be linked to reducing staff expenditure.

At the PSA Annual Conference, we heard from Kerry Barlow, a political economist, about the government reforms and the labour market.

She outlined the "need for capital to constantly carve out new areas of profitability, and the ideological push to break the back of unionism which has been traditionally strong in the public sector".

This began with Thatcher in Britain and is still rolling on strongly.

But around the world there are signs people have had enough of a system which benefits an elite few rather than society as a whole. The rise of Alexis Tsipras, Jeremy Corben and Bernie Sanders, together with Greece's repeated rejection of the EU's austerity measures and even Brexit, are all seen as indicators that people are rejecting this philosophy. There appears to be resentment against being forced to increase our dependence on private enterprise for services to which we all should have equal, unfettered access.

In Australia, unions have proven to be the leading force for positive change against these ultra-conservative agendas.

Federally, the ACTU's 'Better Futures Campaign' which asked voters to 'put the Liberals last', highlighted the Turnbull Government's plans to outsource Medicare, reduce funding to education and cut public services. It was this union campaign that almost rolled Turnbull out of Government. Certainly the message for Turnbull was clear: don't privatise and don't cut government spending.

In NSW, the effect of this is now being seen with Baird's recent decline in popularity where the August ReachTEL poll result puts Casino Mike slightly behind the Opposition Leader as preferred Premier.

At this year's PSA Annual Conference, Professor of Employment Relations at Griffith University David Peetz outlined the decline in unionism in Australia and worldwide. He also highlighted the effects of public

sector changes and how public sector employment is declining as a share of Australian jobs.

So why then, when unions are saving Australians from ultra-conservative agendas, are we facing a decline in membership?

The ACTU recognised the continuing decline in unionism and following a leaders' forum early in the year, their March Executive endorsed a program of six union-wide taskforces comprised of union officials and senior staff to "investigate opportunities for innovation and growth". The PSA proudly participates in these taskforces.

This is an exciting step forward for our movement which needs to do better at working together. Too often we work in isolation from each other but by working together on our common challenges, combining our resources, we can reshape the debate about quality work and rights in Australia.

Arguably, unions could have acted differently and sooner. Australia-wide, unions have been declining since the early 1990's. Closer to home, the PSA's membership decline started in 2005 which was also the year our numbers peaked at 46,244 members.

By 2012, the PSA membership had fallen seven percent. This is despite working under a state Labor Government, a relatively comfortable operating environment and increasing numbers of PSA industrial staff.

Still over that whole time we didn't change how we operated. We just kept looking in dismay at the declining figures, hoping for a different result.

But in 2013, this all changed. We began thinking about how we could use the resources we had to get the union the influence it needed in the now hostile Coalition Government environment.

We re-organised our internal resources to allow us to continue to provide services in a time of increasing need while building the union's capacity across the membership. We transferred the PSA's Training Unit into the Organising Directorate to ensure that delegate development and training was member-focused.

We built the Member Support Centre to ensure that all members had equal access to industrial support.

This also helped free up Organisers to focus on member engagement and development, campaigning and building PSA visibility and network development in the workplace.

We began trialling outreach activities in workplaces and in the community, like workplace blitzes, community door-knocking; outbound calling and our member listening programs. We even began using social media in earnest.

We started working with other unions, like APESMA, ASU and the MUA in Transport NSW and RMS; the ETU in our door-knocking work; ASMOF and the NSW Nurses in ADHC; and again with the Nurses and Teachers Federation in our schools.

We made it easier for people to join the union by enabling online joins and giving all Organisers a laptop to take into workplaces with them.

We are looking at how to better fit our organising efforts with today's economy and alternative models of membership. For example, we are currently trialling our first ever member-reward program.

We are investing in communication to help us shape and prosecute a persuasive public argument for a government that invests in building a great society.

And our figures show that its working and we are beginning to arrest the decline. In 2014 and again 2015 we had more people join the union with less leaving than each previous year.

Are we finished? No. Is there still much more to be done? Yes.

The MSC is still new, we need to continue to refine and build on what has been achieved so far. We need to keep listening to members and broaden our accessibility. We need to keep investing in communication and building upon our member networks and training of our delegates and activists. We need to keep developing more and more resources for members to access when they need them and we need to keep building strategic alliances with other unions and public sector stakeholders.

So yes, the PSA faces many challenges, but we are not alone. Unions are the sum of many parts. Together we are all members of a great, supportive union, that is itself, part of a strong and vibrant union community that will fight for each other now and for the long term.

Steve Turner
Assistant General Secretary

Worker safety is for all, PSA tells inquiry

The PSA is pushing for an enquiry into the safety of emergency workers to apply to all public sector workers.

The PSA has completed a submission on behalf of members to the NSW Legislative Assembly's Committee on Law and Justice.

The Inquiry, launched in May 2016, is investigating violence against emergency service personnel.

The PSA has made it clear the issue is much wider.

PSA General Secretary, Anne Gardiner, was interviewed on this subject in 2014 by *The Daily Telegraph*, where she was quoted: "As communities are getting less tolerant in general, our public servants are being placed at more risk."

The PSA's submission highlights the many and varied roles carried out by PSA members and the risks they face on a daily basis while performing their duties on behalf of the community, and therefore recommends it cover "all public servants at risk of violence while performing their duties".

"The PSA has over 10,000 members in high-risk roles within the public service who are not considered by the terms of reference in this inquiry," reads the submission.

Two years ago, Department of Environment and Heritage inspector Glen Turner was murdered by a farmer over land-

clearing investigations, while last October public servant Curtis Chen was shot outside State Police Headquarters in Parramatta.

The PSA submission points out "approximately 5000 Corrective Service Personnel, both within custodial and the community ... frequently face violent situations", citing the cases of Correctional Officer Jason Gould, who was struck in the face with a pool ball, suffering serious injuries in 2011, and Correctional Officer Wayne Smith, who was killed by an inmate in 2007.

Other sections of the PSA membership were included in the submission:

- "In Community Services, workers in Child Protection roles face risk on a daily basis"
- "In Disability Services the members working in group homes also face severe risk of violence"
- "Court officials in many jurisdictions remain at increasing risk from violence within their work environment"
- "Juvenile Justice members face risk every day in the custodial environment"
- "Despite the increasing responsibilities ... standing watch as frontline security on major government buildings, [special

constables] are not classified as Emergency Service personnel, nor do they have additional protections, despite the fact they are authorised to use firearms in their duties"

- "Legal Aid solicitors and Public Prosecutors ... can find themselves as targets for defendants and the victims of crime."

The full submission is on the PSA website.

Individual submissions are encouraged; submit them via parliament.nsw.gov.au.

ADHC members march to Mike

PSA members marched on the Manly electoral office of Premier Mike Baird to protest the privatisation of Disability Services.

In July, members met at the Manly ferry wharf, then marched through the seaside suburb to the Premier's office.

Speakers included Assistant General Secretary of the PSA, Steve Turner, Shadow Minister for Family and Community Services Tania Mihailuk, and a number of PSA members employed in Disability Services whose conditions are under threat.

The march received favourable coverage in the local press and *The Daily Telegraph*.

Supporters from other unions joined the march.



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Sue Walsh

From the President

Baird off balance

He is not even half way through his new term in Government but the gloss is coming off Premier Mike Baird.

His once permanent beaming smile is now faltering. Nothing dramatic has occurred, but rather his handling of a succession of issues have lead to a fall from grace and all by his own hand.

The Premier has established himself it seems as a law unto himself.

No consultation for him, not even with colleagues, just, it seems, Captain's calls.

There was his decision to merge councils which was about nothing more than making life easier for developers.

Then there was his move to stop the greyhound racing industry in its tracks along with countless associated livelihoods, which is now, not surprisingly, the subject of a backlash from within the Government's own ranks.

All while he and his colleagues are madly giving the green light to the sell off of as much of the public sector in NSW and the state itself.

In turn, those private operators will provide the service for the least cost to themselves – which means quality for the consumer falls through the floor – while forcing them to pay a premium for the pleasure.

The Liberals have never been great friends of the NSW public sector, dating back to Nick Greiner's massive slash-and-burn exercises, but Baird and co have reset the benchmark when it comes to contempt for you as public servants and the services you provide.

The past few years, firstly under O'Farrell and then Baird, have been difficult to say the very least for the NSW public sector.

Members have done a terrific job, continuing to provide first-class service to the people of his state under very trying circumstances.

But we must stay united and strong.

The PSA and only the PSA provides the buffer to shield members from the worse of what this Government has and will continue to throw in our direction.

Attempting to fight back on your own or worse, just give up, is exactly what this Government's wants you to do.

Back the PSA and it will back you.

And sign up any colleagues who are not PSA members.

Our strength is in our numbers.

**Sue Walsh
President**

PSA supports anti-asbestos action

The PSA joined the Electrical Trades Union (ETU) in marching on Premier Mike Baird's office over the NSW Government's inaction on removing asbestos from power boxes.

The ETU says documents obtained through freedom of information showed at least 29 current and former Ausgrid employees had been diagnosed with asbestos-related diseases – including asbestosis, mesothelioma, and lung cancer – between 2002 and 2012.

ETU organiser Mark Buttigieg says that with the imminent sale of the company, workers feared the NSW Government was trying to pass the buck, leaving a future owner to deal with the problem.

"Huge amounts of asbestos remain across the electricity network, from substations in the city to transformers in suburban streets," Mark Buttigieg says.

"Most concerning is the fact that much of this asbestos is friable, which means the individual fibres are loose and – when disturbed – can easily be inhaled.

"This is the most dangerous form of asbestos, with even the smallest number of asbestos fibres capable of causing debilitating and even deadly diseases."



PSA meets with FACS Secretary over workload

After recent correspondence and media attention over workloads, the PSA met with FACS Secretary Michael Coutts-Trotter and Deputy Secretary Deirdre Mulkerin on Monday 15 August.

Steve Turner, Assistant General Secretary, led a delegation that included Thane Pearce, Senior Industrial Advocate, Micah Thompson, Caseworker and Brendan McMenamin, Chair of the DC.

In recent weeks the PSA has been visiting staff and talking about the challenges they face at work.

The meeting with the FACS Secretary followed recent correspondence highlighting staff concerns over resourcing, workload pressures and their impact on staff health and wellbeing.

The Secretary stated FACS shares the PSA's concerns on workload and the need to properly support staff.

As part of this discussion, the PSA pushed for greater use of the workload planner, the benefits of better planning and the importance of managing workloads, including regular quality supervision.

FACS supported this approach and the PSA agreed to revisit, review and where relevant update the tool following the roll-out of Child Story in 2017.

In a joint statement, FACS and the PSA agreed to a position on the work load planner.

Additionally, Dr Martin Daly at the School of Human Ethics at Western Sydney University is undertaking research into the health and safety of employees working in child protection.

He has asked the PSA to distribute his details so people can contact him if they are willing to participate in the research.

The PSA encourages all workers within Community Services in FACS to participate as this will provide valuable information and inform future discussion on health and safety and workforce planning.

School GA wins fight

The PSA lodged an application for unfair dismissal with the NSW Industrial Relations Commission for a General Assistant who was terminated due to allegations of poor performance.

Whilst individual details are confidential, the application by the PSA in support of this member resulted in a win the member was happy with.

As part of this individual matter, the transport of dangerous goods by the General Assistant in his private vehicle was a serious consideration.

As a result, PSA staff and General Assistant representatives have taken the transportation of dangerous goods to the DoE Schools Joint Consultative Committee.

The PSA will continue to push the transportation of dangerous goods until a resolution which considers the WHS requirements and protects the rights and health of General Assistants has been secured.

There have also been a number of enquiries from PSA members relating to General Assistants in schools being placed on

formal and informal performance management programs.

As a result the PSA has been assisting a number of members who are in this situation.

PSA staff and representatives have also succeeded in forcing the Department of Education to consider a standard operating procedure for resetting circuit breakers.

The PSA will provide an update on the final standard operating procedure once the Department has considered the feedback from the PSA.

PSA assures staff over injections

The PSA reiterates to members in schools they should not perform injections as this is regarded as an invasive procedure and outside of their statement of duties.

The PSA is aware the Department, without consulting the union, has requested members 'volunteer' to perform injections for students as part of diabetes management.

The Department's position is:

- an SLSO can volunteer to undertake this procedure under a 'diabetes management plan'
- the SLSO can undertake a procedure if they are trained
- the procedure falls within 'prescribed medication'
- the SLSO is eligible for an allowance under the prescribed medications policy.

The PSA disagrees insulin injections fall within prescribed medications and believes the procedure should not be performed by SLSOs.

The PSA regards diabetes management including such things as blood sugar level testing, injections and anything involving the administration of insulin into a child's body as an invasive procedure.

The PSA is concerned for the safety of the student and the SLSO because of the potential risks associated with these serious procedures – an incorrect dosage

of insulin can be fatal or seriously damage a child's health.

There are also risks with using needles such as needle breakage, needle stick injuries, bleeding and the potential biological risks to the staff member that must be assessed and managed.

The PSA holds the view that clinical issues such as dosage, where to inject, how to inject, correct needle use and the correct timing of insulin injections are all issues best dealt with by a qualified and competent health care professional.

It is also noted that the 'training' provided for prescribed medication does not cover injections.

The Department has third party providers they can go to in order to provide health care for students with complex health care needs.

By law, the child has a right to an education and your refusal to perform medical procedures does not abrogate this right or mean the child won't get to go to school.

However, performing the procedure may enable the Department to avoid its responsibilities to students.

If members are coerced or pressured into "volunteering" to perform tasks outside their statement of duties, they should contact the PSA.

PSA takes stand at people's privatisation inquiry



The PSA has made a submission to an inquiry on privatisation. Hosted by Public Services International, the People's Inquiry Into Privatisation took place in early September in Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong, looking into the community effects the sell-off agenda is having on bodies such as TAFE and hospitals. Assistant Secretary Steve Turner and other PSA representatives gave evidence.

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Arts college fight imitates life

Sydney College of the Arts staff give first-hand accounts of their work to resist the University of Sydney's move to 'reimagine' the Faculty into non-existence.



As professional staff and proud PSA (CPSU) members at the University of Sydney, we have cautiously celebrated a big win in the first battle to save Sydney College of the Arts (SCA).

The University signed a Heads of Agreement that proposed a 'merger' with both the National Art School and the University of NSW Art and Design (UNSWAD), which was made public to staff and students in June.

It was not clear how many academic staff would be employed at UNSWAD, but the University was clear that all professional staff positions would be lost, along with major facilities essential for students to complete the courses and degrees they had signed up for, including the Glass, Ceramics and Jewellery and Object studios and workshops.

SCA Glass workshop is internationally recognised for its progressive approach and is the only remaining facility in NSW.

The Jewellery and Object studio is only large-scale jewellery studio in NSW that offers highly respected and technically comprehensive national workshops.

This studio hosts both visiting artists and international masterclasses and provides an opportunity for artists to work on both large and small scale projects.

The Ceramics studio attracts many esteemed ceramicists from all over the world.

The University pulled the listing of the Bachelor of Visual Arts degree

from its website, shutting down enrolments for 2017.

Many postgraduate students have invested a lot of money to travel to Sydney to engage with the unique facilities and specialised teaching programs on offer at SCA.

Lack of meaningful consultation with both staff and students resulted in angry town hall meetings with both University and Faculty Senior Executives.

Public student actions – supported by staff, the Sydney arts community, PSA (CPSU) members – included an impressive 'silent vigil' on the steps of the Art Gallery of NSW at the opening of the Archibald Prize.

Five weeks after the proposed merger was made public, Vice-Chancellor Dr Michael Spence notified all staff and students the Heads of Agreement had been terminated; a huge win for us all.

However, the University was ready with its Plan B: downsizing SCA into a part of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, which meant a move from its unique current location in Callan Park, Rozelle to Camperdown; essentially a dissolution and dismemberment of SCA.

Meanwhile, both professional and academic staff waited anxiously to receive the Draft Plan Change (DCP) from University management.

Seven weeks later, the DCP document arrived, with few surprises as it confirmed the Universities thinly veiled intention

to diminish and ultimately 'disappear' the visual arts faculty.

What is at stake with the move to main campus is the loss of a significant and globally respected centre for excellence in art education including specialist world-class 'making' facilities, highly skilled technical staff who are professional artists in their own rights and a unique approach to art education.

So, as professional technical staff, our next battle begins, with help from the PSA (CPSU), to respond to the DCP document.

On 17 August, students, staff, PSA (CPSU) members and community groups including Friends of Callan Park rallied on main campus, with the PSA (CPSU) and the Students' Representative Council providing buses to transport students from Rozelle to Camperdown and printing and distributing flyers and posters.

With passion, focus and intelligence, our collective voices reverberated around the sandstone facades of the Main Quadrangle to the windows of the Vice-Chancellor's office.

What he heard was cheering in acknowledgement of the first battle won, and a determined cry for a fight that is far from over.

A further rally opposing the changes was held on 7 September.

PSA helps keep art schools independent

The proposed merger of the universities' art schools was scuppered after action from the PSA and other organisations.

On 21 June, Sydney College of the Arts (SCA) staff were advised that the University of Sydney planned to allow UNSW Art & Design to merge the fine arts courses, effective January 2017.

Conflicting reports over the weeks that followed indicated the National Art School may also have been involved in the deal.

As technical and administrative support staff at all three organisations would have been affected by any proposed changes, the PSA (CPSU) expressed grave concerns about job security, lack of consultation, and the practicalities of accommodation and timeframes.

When Industrial and Organising staff met with PSA/CPSU President Grant Wheeler on 4 July to devise a strategy to best approach this situation, it was agreed the primary focus was to be on stopping the takeover of SCA by UNSW.

Following this meeting, Organising staff developed a campaign strategy which involved liaising with student groups, alumni, supporters within community, and the NTEU.

PSA (CPSU) Delegates and staff attended several meetings and rallies in protest of the takeover plan.

Industrial staff approached the various Institutions to gather information in relation to the Heads of Agreement, and to seek a more detailed understanding of the proposed changes.

To this end, PSA (CPSU) wrote to UNSW Vice Chancellor Ian Jacobs on 6 July.

Despite the schools' merger being stopped, there are plans to move Sydney College of the Arts to the Camperdown or Darlington campus next year.

In August University of Sydney students and staff of the rallied at The Madsen Building to protest the University's relocation plans (see story left).

The PSA (CPSU) supported this student 'strike' and their right to protest against this counter-productive plan that jeopardises both the quality of education at the University and the jobs of its members.

PSA exhibits quality gallery and museum staff

The PSA's submission to an inquiry on cultural institutions has linked "deleting the positions of trained and experienced public servant employees and the quality of services offered to the public in NSW galleries and museums".

In its submission to the Government's Inquiry into Museums and Galleries, the PSA stated "we observe that funding and support for galleries and museums has been under attack by the NSW Government, including via wider programs of cuts such as the efficiency dividend".

Stating "efficiency dividends for arts and science prevail at Commonwealth and State levels", the submission advocated their removal from the Powerhouse Museum.

The submission, which has been sent to the NSW Upper House inquiry, made a number of recommendations:

- the NSW Government ensures decisions on funding and reform of museums, galleries and the arts more generally
- the NSW Government provides public data on Full Time Equivalent staffing trends for all its galleries and museums and the reasons behind these trends
- the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences be made exempt from

the efficiency dividend, with overall staff numbers restored to 2005 levels

- cuts to the Australian Museum be reversed so it has professional expertise commensurate with its collection and status
- Art Gallery of NSW management should operate in a way which ensure senior management remains truly accountable to staff
- although the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences opening a site at Parramatta is unanimously supported by members, it must also maintain its presence in its current Ultimo site
- the NSW Government investigate the decision to effectively abolish the NSW Migration Heritage Centre, which was part of the Powerhouse Museum.

Galleries and museums have suffered under Baird.

Valuable exhibits at the Australian Museum are now protected by low-cost contractors, the Powerhouse Museum's Ultimo site is being circled by property developers and there have been staff cuts at the Art Gallery of NSW.





Remembering John Kaye

This year the PSA lost one of its most celebrated members, Greens NSW MP John Kaye. Dr Kaye, a member of the Legislative Council in the NSW Parliament since 2007, died in May from a devastating and unrelenting cancer.

I was lucky enough to work closely with John in his office for more than five years. He was a mentor, a friend and a comrade. Like many people in NSW, I miss him dearly. When he was elected to Parliament John joined the PSA, being the union with coverage of Parliament House employees. In my five-and-a-half years as a workplace delegate at NSW Parliament House, John was the only MP to attend mass meetings of members.

That is how John saw himself, a public servant and a union member. In 2013, the NSW Coalition government passed legislation that made MPs the hirer and firer of their own staff and allowed MPs to sack electorate officers for no reason whatsoever, with little notice and reduced redundancy entitlements. John not only railed against the passage of the bill on the floor of Parliament and voted against it, but even after it became law, he flatly refused to accept that he was our manager.

I often joked with John that as a PSA workplace delegate at Parliament House I was free to be as militant with the chamber's management as I wished because John, as my hirer and firer, was the most unlikely of MPs to take advantage of his new power. Certainly, in an industrial relations sense, he was the best "boss" one could imagine.

In his academic career before politics, John was a member of the National Tertiary Education Union. He was so attached to his previous union, he continued his membership once he became an MP despite also being a PSA member.

What struck me after John's death was the public commentary on the extraordinary breadth and depth of his contribution to NSW politics. From political donations to Packer's new casino, John seemed to be everywhere. The NSW Opposition Leader Luke Foley joked in his address to Parliament following John's death, that the ABC would have to find new content for its morning news radio bulletins, as it seemed like every second day featured grabs from "Greens MP John Kaye" on one topic or another.

However, PSA members would be most familiar with John's work in support of the public sector and public services. He campaigned alongside many PSA members and organisers to stop the

privatisation of TAFE, travelling to colleges across the state to meet with students, staff and teachers and their union representatives and hear their stories firsthand.

John loved these trips, returning to our Macquarie Street office two or three days later brimming with his typical unending enthusiasm and inspiration for new strategic directions for the campaign to stop cuts to TAFE.

He was a media darling. It didn't matter how small the media outlet or how remote, journalists could always be assured of a few choice quotes and a media release from John Kaye. He put TAFE issues on the map long before it became popular to do so, but it gave him no pleasure when his dire predictions about the privatisation of TAFE were proven to be accurate.

When John became too unwell to work, he spoke often about how desperately he wanted to get better so that he could get back to his Save TAFE campaign. One of his proudest parliamentary achievements was securing the support of the majority of MPs in the Upper House for his Save TAFE private members legislation.

John kept his wicked sense of humour right to the end, providing those closest to him with a tremendous amount of comfort. In his final days he told his friend and Greens colleague David Shoebridge that he was considering requesting #saveTAFE be carved into his tombstone.

Many PSA members would also be aware of John's strong opposition to the privatisation of ADHC, and his deep concern for the plight of some of the most vulnerable members of our community. After his speech in Parliament on the National Disability Insurance Scheme Enabling Bill 2013, many ADHC members contacted our office to thank him for the most articulate explanation of the impacts of the legislation they had heard from anyone anywhere.

It wasn't just the workers in TAFE and ADHC whose pay and conditions John fought hard for. In 2011 he spoke for more than six hours in Parliament in the filibuster against Barry O'Farrell's wage freeze legislation. He told me later that it was a piece of cake and he could have spoken for longer, but he did not want to pass the record set by his colleague

David Shoebridge on the same debate the previous night. I knew it was true. Such was his commitment to collective action and the protection of quality public services for the community, that he did not want to reduce the issue to a mere "pissing contest", as John put it.

He was beloved by Greens NSW members. He was preselected three times by the membership to winnable positions. Once in 2004, as the lead Senate candidate for NSW, second on the ticket behind Lee Rhiannon for the NSW Upper House in 2007 and lead Upper House candidate in the 2015 state election in which he was comfortably re-elected.

In that election, I believe it was testament to his unparalleled work ethic and dedication to public service that saw him achieve the highest number of below-the-line votes by any other NSW Legislative Council candidate.

A number of honours and tributes flowed John's way since his death. The NSW Teachers Federation created a new Public Education Champion Award to be presented at their annual conference, and John was the inaugural recipient. The Federation's TAFE Teachers Association conferred on him life membership. Unfortunately, he was unable to fight

his relentless illness for long enough to accept it in person. However, the news of that life membership gave him enormous pleasure in his final days.

The May 2016 PSA Annual Conference also passed a motion to posthumously confer life membership on John in recognition of his contribution to not just the PSA, but to public life and to the union movement in particular.

Later that day, many PSA conference delegates and staff travelled from the conference venue to the City Recital Hall to attend a public memorial in John's honour along with up to 1000 Greens members and supporters, MPs from across the political spectrum and other comrades from the trade union movement.

John was farewelled by family and friends at a small private burial at Waverley Cemetery. He is survived by his partner of 30 years, public school teacher and union activist, Lynne Joslyn.

By Kelly Marks, former long-term staff member in John Kaye's office, former PSA NSW Parliament House workplace delegate and Central Councillor



Parks dispute taken to IRC

The PSA has launched a dispute with the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) over the deletion of five area manager roles.



Fire-fighting is just one of the roles filled by NPWS employees, such as Jules Bros and Kim De Govrik.

Two of the five roles are in Narooma, with additional positions in Wollongong, Coonabarabran and Tenterfield in the firing line.

The PSA believes the OEH made the decision without consulting the union, failing to prepare a change-management plan and sought to replace critical area managers with Grade 9/10s who would not have the necessary skills to undertake these roles.

The PSA argued OEH did not follow the Consultation Arrangements Guidelines 1997.

The lost area managers are just part of the Baird Government's attack on the state's national parks system.

The Voluntary Redundancy Program Guidelines states a VR offer must not be made in circumstances where its acceptance would: "adversely affect the delivery of services".

Also, OEH did not follow the Agency Change Management Guidelines, Clause 4.2 – agencies or part of agencies, undergoing significant organisational change are required to prepare an organisational change-management plan and submit to the Director-General of the agency cluster for approval.

OEH reported to the IRC these area manager roles are not significant to the running of NSW National Parks.

The Commissioner provided assistance and supported the principles of the PSA's application and requested OEH write to the PSA and clarify what additional transitional arrangements would be put in place after the removal of the five roles.

The PSA requested a role description for the transition roles and also requested information on who would be eligible to apply for those roles.

The PSA also requires information on what functions would be undertaken by Regional Managers in supporting the transitional roles.

The Commissioner supported the PSA and believes that OEH should have had a Change Management Plan in place prior to allowing the regional managers to leave the organisation

The Commissioner supported the PSA request the matter be stood over for four weeks and have it relisted if the PSA was not satisfied with the response from OEH.

Fewer area managers puts at risk the security of the 30 million annual users of the NSW national parks system.

The lost area managers are just part of the Baird Government's attack on the state's national parks system.

Facilities at threat of privatisation include camp grounds at Lane Cove National Park, the most accessible camping facilities for residents of Sydney.

Ranger ranks have been reduced from 261 to 202 in five years.

Going to bat for injured workers

A PSA submission to the State Insurance Regulatory Authority has demanded that overtime be taken into account when determining shift workers' pre-injury average weekly earnings (PIAWE).

In a letter to the authority's executive director, Carmel Donnelly, the PSA said instead of working on average weekly earnings, it should be determined on a daily method for shorter periods.

"For periods of less than seven days, the calculation should be based on the percentage rate of daily income," she wrote.

"For example 95 percent of PIAWE for a seven-day period with two days' workers compensation can result in almost \$0 payment for lost time.

"In contrast, calculation by the daily income results in a living wage payment for the time lost.

"The calculation should be amended from PIAWE to PIAD; pre-injury average daily earnings."

The PSA recommended non-pecuniary benefits not be included in any calculations of the PIAWE, as this would devalue the workers' compensation payment.

"Many of our members are in modestly paid roles and this could have significant negative impact.

"For instance, shift workers who work in remote locations benefit from subsidised residential accommodation. The rationale of this is to entice employees to locations where employers experience difficulty recruiting staff.

This would place further financial hardship on employees who make a workers compensation claim."

PSA forces greater consultation from FACS

In March 2016, the PSA took the Family and Community Services (FACS) to the NSW Industrial Relations Commission (NSW IRC) over its failure to consult on transfer arrangements in the planned privatisation of Disability Services.

As an outcome of the dispute, the NSW IRC recommended a minimum six-month moratorium on directed staff transfers and the establishment of a "specific purpose" consultative committee to deal with transfer arrangements for staff.

Since the last hearing in the NSW IRC in May, the PSA has been meeting regularly with FACS and NSW IRC representatives to raise issues of concern to members and push for fairer protections. However, our main area of disagreement is what we are

consulting on. The Department will not consult on many issues raised by the PSA such as:

- no forced transfers
- protection of salary increases post transfer
- an improved employment guarantee period
- legally binding enforcement of protections
- improved transfer payments.

In June 2016, the PSA received formal correspondence from Treasury affirming the agency's stance and outlining the proposed terms and conditions of staff transfers to the non-government sector.

This letter does not address many of the concerns of members.

The PSA will continue to fight for fair transfer arrangements and has written to NSW Industrial

Relations formally lodging our claims.

The union is discussing the following at the Disability Transfer Committee:

- conversion of all eligible long-term temporary employees
- district transfer planning
- conscientious objection for genuine religious, cultural or other discriminatory reasons
- consultation and supports for clients without family or advocacy support
- mobility pathway information.

Land Council agreement

Bargaining is underway for a new Aboriginal Land Council enterprise agreement.

Since March, the PSA/CPSU Bargaining Team has met with Management six times. Management and staff representatives on the Bargaining Committee reached in-principle agreement on the complete package of proposed changes on 2 August.

The list of agreed changes was presented to the NSWALC Executive on 19 August.

For the most part, their response was positive.

However, they did not approve all of the changes recommended by the Committee, and there are still some outstanding issues.

While negotiations are still ongoing, the PSA/CPSU has secured some wins, including:

- no increase to core time
- adjustable bandwidth provisions will now be available to all staff, not just those in the zone offices
- better dispute resolution procedures, such as the right to request independent investigation
- the retention of travel provisions
- access to paid domestic violence leave
- paid parental leave entitlements for foster carers
- non-primary caregivers will now have access to two paid weeks of other parent leave
- NSWALC will pay superannuation during periods of paid parental leave

- access to two days' compassionate leave for each instance of death or serious illness of a family member.

Purchase leave provisions will remain unchanged.

The Executive has asked for more time to consider the PSA/CPSU's request for the following additional improvements to current conditions, including:

- a vastly superior consultation clause with a clearly defined process, and a commitment to genuine consultation
- clear guidelines for the restricted use of temporary employment, and a process for conversion of temporary staff to ongoing/permanent
- access to long service leave pro-rata after seven years.

PSA/CPSU and the other staff representatives agreed to put forward a pay claim of 3.75 percent for the first year, and 3.25 percent for each of the remaining three years of the new EA.

The response from the Executive is to tie a pay rise to performance.

The PSA/CPSU has made it clear it is opposed to any moves to link pay to performance. In particular, we have grave concerns about how performance will be measured, what milestones need to be met, and how to deal with staff adversely affected by operational decisions beyond their control.

Community Corrections flex agreement under attack

The PSA is pushing to ensure employees in Community Corrections retain their flexible working conditions.

The push from the NSW Government and the Wages Policy Taskforce (WPT) is for Departments to have one agreement.

However, the PSA is working to ensure employees with special conditions attached to their employment retain special provisions, including all Corrective Services staff.

Currently members in Community Corrections have a maximum of five day banking, a four-week settlement period and 10 hours' carry over.

This enables staff to take up to nine days' flex leave in a period.

Staff in Community Corrections are often required to work after-hours, meeting with clients who are holding down daytime work.

In a letter to Commissioner of Corrective Services, Peter Severin, PSA General Secretary Anne Gardiner pointed out "to reduce the current Flexible Working Hours Agreement will not only be detrimental to members, but also Corrective Services NSW as our members within Community Corrections hold a pivotal role in achieving participation in programs and reducing reoffending".

Anne Gardiner added the officers play an important role in addressing the state's spiralling rates of incarceration.

"To improve inmate productivity is to ensure that they are participating in programs to reduce reoffending."

PSA pushes to keep sport centres open

The PSA is fighting the Government's threats to privatise the Office of Sport (OoS).

Despite a Chief Executive's recent report praising Sport and Recreational Centres and the high service standards staff provide, the continued uncertainty regarding the future of these centres has caused major stress and anxiety for members.

The PSA has written to the OoS Chief Executive, Matt Miller, expressing its concern for the future of the eight affected centres, and your union has a contact person in each centre to keep members up to date with changes.

The PSA has written to members of both houses of NSW Parliament to seek support for the continuation of the Sport and Recreational Centres, which are run by highly qualified, professional public servants who presently are bringing in more revenue than ever before whilst offering a very high standard of service for the community.

The union will also contact the Teachers Federation to seek support and assistance for our opposition to any form of privatisation in the Centres.

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The Public Service Association is an active, member driven union that successfully asserts members' interests and advances the value of public services for the people of NSW.



Looking back on LPI

By Phil Ireland

As the PSA fights to stop Land and Property Information being parcelled out to the private sector, one retiring member looks back at a career in a public service vital for the people of NSW.

After just over 40 years of putting in an appearance at the 'salt mine', I have decided to call it quits.

It's been quite a journey; looking back I can't believe where the last 40 years have gone!

I started at Land and Property Information (LPI) in May 1976 as one of the first local intakes, I was assigned to Joan Campbell in Rural Cadastral. Joan was a true cartographer in every sense of the meaning and you learnt very quickly to adapt to her very strict expectations or you were in for pages of corrections.

After a while of this and being prompted by a colleague, I transferred to Photogrammetry where most of my time was spent plotting medium-scale topographical maps on Kern PG2s and the old A6 under the supervision of some of the characters who are remembered for many antics that no longer would be tolerated in today's work environment. There were the stints on shift work in the Orthophoto Groups on the Topocart as well as Large Scale Mapping on the B8s.

I had the opportunity to go to Western Samoa to kick start their mapping program, initially for one year, which at the request of the Samoan Government turned into two years. I was asked to stay on but family needs bought me back to Bathurst. It was a memorable time.

When Medium Scale Mapping was wound back, there were stints in the GNB, Urban Cadastral and in the early digitising group when the DCDB kicked off.

Then came the opportunity to become involved with mapping the entire Western Division of NSW in four years. Almost 12 years later we nearly finished, I think there were only two areas to complete but technology had made the Kern PG2s redundant so the project came to a halt.

Those years I consider were the best years of my time with LPI, mapping blocks then the field work that ensued afterwards. I had the opportunity to travel nearly every road in western NSW, carry out aerial field completion on occasion and visit many places that otherwise wouldn't be seen.

There was a brief involvement in the NSW Road Directory, when Western Division mapping finished, which gave the opportunity for more field work visiting many of the towns to ensure quality control of the product. I enjoyed the many kilometres driving around NSW.

Next came the steep learning curve of new technology, LiDar. This took a lot to get my head around it and many would agree; I still haven't got my head around it. It has been an interesting process and viewing many locations in a different light. This has taken me up to the present date and is my final involvement in my work with LPI.

Much has been said about your workmates that you meet on the journey. How true it is to say that your colleagues make your work life. Yes, some you don't get on with, but most you do. That is normal in any organisation. The laughs along the way, touching on many day to day experiences of people that become friends over the years; these experiences make it all worthwhile.

Finally, I'd like to encourage you to consider your union and become involved. Over the many years I've been, firstly as a POA Councillor then as a Delegate with the PSA as well as Vice Chair in the OFSI DC. I have personally witnessed the dedication of people just like you to help maintain what many of you take for granted, your pay and work conditions. The constant fighting with the Government for your pay and conditions and what goes on behind the scenes with Court battles, negotiations and such.

The PSA is trying on your behalf to ensure your standards that you've become used to. Remember though, the union is you. Being organised is your ticket to success in the current volatile environment. Remember your membership benefits as well; Did you know that you have insurance coverage as a member for travel to and from work? Non-members don't!

I wish you all the best for the future. It's been a pleasure to know you all and don't forget to say g'day if you see me in the street. I'm retiring in Bathurst; I like the place and plan to do more of my many hobbies, pushbike, motorbike, radios, hiking, travel, work around the house and of course no doubt much running around with my five grandchildren.



Trustee and Guardian staff walk off job

Staff at the NSW Trustee and Guardian walked off the job in September as part of an ongoing dispute over damaging reforms that seek to reduce staff from 182 down to 120 positions and close 11 out of 19 offices across NSW.

A pilot implemented to trial new systems has failed to address the numerous concerns raised by the PSA and a report prepared by Price Waterhouse Coopers indicates that the proposed new method

of service delivery is much less efficient than the old method.

Further meetings with the CEO following the release of the report have failed to address members' concerns.

Members are fighting hard to protect the services provided by the Trustee and Guardian to the community and save jobs and to ensure that a workable system is implemented.

PSA submission into police oversight

The PSA has made a submission to the NSW Government's review of the state's police force.

The NSW review and analysis of oversight of NSW Police aims to create a single oversight model that holds Police to account.

The oversight function is currently undertaken by NSW Police, the NSW Ombudsman's Office, the Police Integrity Commission and the Parliamentary Committee on the Ombudsman and the Crime Commission.

Critical incident investigations into Police are conducted by the Coroner and WorkCover NSW.

As the union which represents civilian staff in Police and the aforementioned agencies, the PSA is a major stakeholder in this process.

On 9 July 2015 the PSA met with Andrew Tink, the person commissioned by the NSW Government to undertake the review and provide recommendations.

In our meeting with Mr Tink, the PSA stressed that any amalgamation should not displace our members currently undertaking roles pertaining to Police oversight.

That is, members in such roles should not have to re-apply for their positions.

US turns its back on private prisons

The US Justice Department has announced a plan to phase out privately run federal prisons.

In a memo, Deputy Attorney General Sally Yates said private prisons "simply do not provide the same correctional services, programs, and resources; they do not save substantially on costs; and as noted in a recent report by the Department's Office of Inspector General, they do not maintain the same level of safety and security".

The memo says declining numbers of prisoners in the federal system has reduced Washington's dependence on private operators.

As such, all contracts between the federal government and private prison operators will not be renewed as they lapse.

The decision affects only the 195,000 inmates in federal prisons, a small percentage of 2.2 million people in US jails.

Many states will continue to house prisoners in private facilities.

The Department of Homeland Security will continue to use private immigration detention facilities.



PSA puts prison benchmarking under watch

The PSA lodged a dispute on benchmarking on Monday, 1 August 2016. The President of the NSW Industrial Relations Commission called the parties to attend the Commission on Wednesday, 3 August 2016 to discuss the matter prior to allocation.

The President has subsequently allocated the dispute to Commissioner Tabba.

The dispute listed by the PSA seeks the assistance of the Commission in the following areas:

- Failure to consult on proposed changes to staff and Correctional Officer numbers

- Failure to consult and provide details of proposed changed responsibilities and details of changes to roles and functions

We further seek the assistance of the Commission to have Corrective Services NSW provide risk assessment documentation that supports the stated intent of increasing safety of staff and inmates.

We also seek the assistance of the Commission in having Corrective Services NSW place on hold the pilot benchmarking until such time that issues raised have been satisfactorily answered.

Workers comp – change for better

The PSA has been working tirelessly to roll-back unfair changes to workers compensation laws made by the NSW Government in 2012.

The PSA will make a submission to the review of these laws by the Law & Justice Committee of the NSW Legislative Council, highlighting the issues of most concern to our members and their families.

Unions NSW will also be making a submission, focussing on the experiences of injured workers returning to work.

Push for diverse leadership

An inquiry by the Human Rights Commission has found leadership in Australia, including that of state public services, is overrepresented by people of Anglo-Celtic backgrounds.

The report, *Leading for Change*, found 82.26 of federal and state public service secretaries and heads of department were Anglo-Celts, with 15.32 of other European background, 1.61 of an overseas non-white background and 0.81 identifying as indigenous.

Records battle continues

Local media has supported employees at a government authority under threat of privatisation: State Records.

The *Western Weekender Penrith* covered a visit to the Kingswood facility by Prue Car, the ALP member for Londonderry.

Privatising State Records will not just put staff conditions at risk; it will potentially put confidential information about NSW citizens into the wrong hands.

PSA Assistant General Secretary Steve Turner met with State Records Authority director Geoff Hinchcliffe in March this year.

State Records manages the NSW archives collection.

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General legal advice

As members of the PSA you are entitled to the first consultation free of charge. To make an appointment, call 9233 4744 and quote your PSA membership number.

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

Delegates handbook hits PSA shelves



The PSA has released its most recent Delegates Handbook.

The latest version of the handbook keeps delegates up to date with how they can better represent PSA members.

There are guides to organising the workplace, handling members' issues and information on industrial relations law.

There is also practical information on matters such as meeting procedures and dealing with workplace complaints.

Copies are available for delegates from the PSA via the website or by calling 1300 772 679.

Delegates
Handbook



Keep the faith and remember, you're still in the driver's seat

Andrew Vogt

Australia's 45th Parliament has now officially resumed, with superannuation central to the Government's budget-repair measures.

Since my last article, the Coalition was re-elected with a one-seat majority in the Lower House and a new collection of cross-bench MPs holding the balance of power in the Senate. Still awaiting passage at the time of publication is \$6.5 billion in savings, including a raft of super changes. Generally, both the Coalition and Opposition have stated their commitment to a more equitable super system, which is good news for the average fund member.

Among the proposed changes to super are:

- A new lifetime cap of \$500,000 on after-tax contributions for those up to age 75. This would take effect from 3 May 2016 and apply to all after-tax contributions made since 1 July 2007.
- A lowering of the annual cap on before-tax contributions to \$25,000 for everyone regardless of age. This means the current caps of \$30,000 and \$35,000 for those under 50 years of age and those aged 50 years or over respectively are no longer expected to apply from 1 July 2017.
- If your super balance is under \$500,000, and if in any one year you don't reach your before-tax contribution limit, you will be permitted to 'catch-up' by carrying forward your contributions for up to five years.
- A \$1.6 million cap will be placed on the total amount of super you can transfer to a tax-free income stream.

Keen readers will also know that, as a result of the 2015 Federal Budget, the Age Pension assets test will change from 1 January 2017. This means fewer people will be eligible for a part-pension.

It's attracted little coverage, but could impact your savings goals and retirement lifestyle. One estimate has the proportion of couples expected to achieve a comfortable retirement income reducing from 62 percent to 51 percent. This will mean tighter criteria will apply to the amount of assets that can be held before the Age Pension is reduced.

Between the proposed changes and the known changes what should super savers do? How should you manage your super right now and plan ahead?

Regardless of the outcome of proposed changes, being proactive about super is a positive way to take control and to assess your options – super remains a highly tax-effective way of saving for retirement. All major parties see the need to have a superannuation system in place, so super savers should keep their faith in the system. Also, debate about super and its rules isn't always bad. It can lead to a better system. Super has never been static, which is why we suggest planning proactively and considering trusted advice on complex changes.

Another tip is to learn as much as you can. Read widely, follow public debate and stay grounded with reliable information. I like the Australian Securities & Investment Commission's MoneySmart website, for example. Or spend a regular half an hour browsing your super fund's online resources.

It's also helpful to stay focused on your savings goals. Ask yourself, what sort of retirement do I want to have? If retirement feels too far away, crunch some numbers. Find out how much you'll need

and what you should try to save in the meantime. Surprisingly few people know what they'll need to live on in retirement. Thinking about these sorts of things is time well spent.

At some point, your trust in the super system may need to combine with your trust in a super expert to help you further improve your savings. Licensed financial advisers can help you develop a savings plan if needed. (That's useful if you're juggling mortgages and kids, and can't decide how much to contribute or how.) An adviser can also adapt the plan when your circumstances and the super rules change.

For those new to the idea of advice, it may feel challenging to lay out your finances to a stranger. A good adviser should build genuine trust with you over time, and give you priceless peace of mind that your savings are under control. A good starting point is your super fund's helpline. Most funds offer general limited advice at no cost to members. You can also ask about fee for service advice, if your finances are complex, and as well the qualifications of their advisers

Remember, stay proactive and keep your faith in super. The system is still a concessional environment with tax-free withdrawals from age 60. That's not bad! Expect ongoing public discussions about improvements to super from time to time – each time this happens super savers get a bit savvier. It's still your super and your savings: which makes today a good day to start your own discussion with your super fund, financial adviser or both.



Andrew Vogt is First State Super's General Manager of Financial Planning.

This is general information only. Financial planning advice is provided by First State Super Financial Services Pty Ltd AN 37 096 452 318, AFSL 240019.

Unions stop Heritage sell-off



Action from the PSA and CFMEU has kept the NSW Public Works Heritage Services in state hands.

Like so many other NSW assets, Heritage Services were in the Baird Government's sights to be handed to the private sector. Around 40 stone masons, scaffolders and roofers have been maintaining some of Sydney's oldest buildings for over 20 years but in June 2015, Finance Minister Dominic Perrottet announced their jobs would be outsourced.

However, the Government failed to consult and was forced to the Industrial Relations Commission three times just to release information on proposed sale

The PSA and CFMEU campaigned around the unique skills the workers have and what a loss to the community it would be if their jobs were privatised.

NSW Public Works Heritage Services care for structures such as the Department of Education building on Bridge Street, Sydney (pictured).

Death of statutory body sees slew of sell-offs

The dismantling of the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority (SHFA) has opened the floodgates for the Baird Government to sell off its prime harbourside properties.

As reported in *The Daily Telegraph*, "five hotels hugging the Harbour – the Four Seasons, Shangri-La, the Ibis and two Novotels – along with the West Quay apartment building overlooking the Sydney Opera House and a swath of public recreational land in the Darling Quarter will be sold in coming months".

These planned changes, teamed with the sell-off of public housing in Millers Point, are yet another result of the sell-everything mantra that has gripped the Baird Government.

PSA implementing better standards



The PSA is committed to meeting the highest standards of internal governance.

- In May 2015, the PSA Rules were amended to reintroduce a prohibition against donating any funds or resources of the PSA to any political candidate, group or party.
- The PSA's first Strategic Plan was introduced in June 2014, which includes a commitment to implement and report against recommendations made by the ACTU in its *Union Good Governance Handbook*.

- A dedicated Employee Relations and Governance Officer was engaged on a full-time basis in November 2014.
- The PSA published information on its financial management, including annual financial statements and the remuneration levels of the General Secretary and the Assistant General Secretary, which have been confirmed by Mercer Consultancy to ensure they accord with equivalent work done by public sector workers.

- The union negotiated and implemented the first ever PSA Staff Enterprise Agreement in May 2016, with the three PSA internal unions.
- A merit selection process is promoted when engaging PSA staff.
- A Member Complaints Resolution process was implemented in August 2015. Members can be assured that the PSA manages our collective resources properly and promotes transparency and accountability.

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WOLLONGONG
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SOUTH WESTERN REGION

WAGGA WAGGA
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Privatisation advocate sees the light



A former advocate of privatisation has finally come around to the PSA's way of thinking and labelled privatisation "severely damaging" for the economy.

In an address to the Melbourne Economic Forum, chairman of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission Rod Sims (pictured) said privatisation had resulted in too many public assets sold as private monopolies, with higher prices the result.

"So what happens is they become privatised, of course you get

these lovely headlines in *The Financial Review* saying, 'gosh, what a successful sale, look at the multiple they achieved,'" he remarked.

"Well of course they bloody well did – the owners have factored in very large price rises, because there's no regulation on how they set the prices in the monopoly. "How dopey is that?"

General Training Courses

SYDNEY METRO

Dealing with bullying in the workplace
 Tuesday 20 September

Dealing with member issues
 Wednesday 19 October

Achieving workplace flexibility
 Wednesday 26 October

Role of the Delegate
 Tuesday 1 November +
 Wednesday 2 November

Dealing with restructures
 Tuesday 15 November

Dealing with member issues
 Wednesday 7 December

REGIONAL TRAINING

Wollongong
Role of the Delegate
 Tuesday 18 October

Newcastle
Dealing with member issues
 Tuesday 6 December

COURSE OUTLINES:

Role of the Delegate

TWO-DAY COURSE: discusses the role of the delegate and active members: what delegates do, delegate protections, organising skills, recruitment, working with issues, union values and involvement. Any member can learn from this course and is welcome to apply.

Dealing with Member Issues

ONE-DAY COURSE: for delegates who want to develop their ability to assist members with individual workplace issues. The course will look at how to deal with individual issues by using the problem solving framework, and by developing advocacy skills.

Dealing with Bullying in the Workplace

ONE-DAY COURSE: designed to assist members and delegates in dealing with bullying and harassment at work.

Achieving workplace flexibility

ONE-DAY COURSE: this course looks at the benefits of workplace flexibility and what flexible work practices exist in the NSW public sector. It will examine what you can do to access and implement these flexible work practices, by providing negotiation and organising strategies.

Dealing with restructures

This one-day workshop outlines the PSA's whole-of-union approach to supporting members through restructures, and provides resources and strategies for members undergoing workplace change. It utilises case studies, discusses the role of members, delegates and staff, and can be targeted to specific agency situations.

INFORMATION

These courses are available at no charge to PSA/CPSU members.

Non-members wishing to attend our training will need to submit a membership application first.

Participants are responsible for their own travel and other costs incurred in attending training.

Venues

All training courses are held at PSA House, 160 Clarence St, Sydney – unless otherwise stated.

NB: Lunch is not provided. Tearoom facilities available with tea, coffee, fridge and microwave.

Special needs

If you have a disability and/or special needs, please contact the PSA training staff when you enrol.

Special leave for trade union training

Most state public sector members are entitled to paid Trade Union Training Leave. Your delegate/organiser will be able to provide the details.

CONTACT BY EMAIL: training@psa.asn.au

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Your life preserver when the going gets tough

The PSA takes its members' fights straight to the top. Whether it is a march on the Premier's electoral office or a case in the Fair Work Commission, your voice is stronger when in unison with others, so join your union, the PSA.

United we stand, divided we beg.



To join the PSA, call **1300 772 679**
or go to **www.psa.asn.au**

(Feel free to cut out this page and display it where it can be seen by your colleagues.)



Are you receiving emails from the PSA? If not, you may need to update your details. Go to www.psa.asn.au and update online or call 1300 772 679 and make sure we can contact you.