

Bulletin – Industrial Relations Commission update

The PSA was back in the Industrial Relations Commission on 20 February 2018 as part of the regular hearings. The PSA was represented by our lawyer, Michael Jaloussis, Guy Sim (SEAG), Danny Chundramun and Mark Christensen (COVB), Nicole Jess and Jason Charlton (POVB), Kylie McKelvie and Kathy Dwyer (NCDC), Julie Bond, David McCauley and Evan Cole (PSA Industrial staff).

Ring-fencing

After discussions with both parties, the Commissioner recommended Lithgow, Oberon, Kirkconnell and Bathurst should be ring-fenced together. Commissioner Newall's reasons were that this gives the affected staff a greater opportunity to find a position. This is the same approach he adopted with the Long Bay complex.

Long Bay Hospital

POVB members at Long Bay Hospital imposed bans on acting up and overtime following the breakdown in negotiations over the application of the Safe Staffing Award and VORs. The cause of the problem is continued understaffing. The Commissioner recommended bans be lifted from the beginning of B Watch on 20 February 2018 to allow further consultation on staffing the hospitals. Nicole Jess will be attending the consultation on Friday, 23 February and we are hopeful of a resolution. Corrective Services has indicated it will convert casuals to permanent.

This and the planned CO classes going through the Academy may help the problem in the medium term, but the staff shortage is a problem now.

Any resolution must guarantee staff safety, and this was recognised by the Commission.

Kirkconnell

During the Benchmarking meeting held at Kirkconnell on 15 February 2018, there was discussion about whether Kirkconnell is a small or medium centre. The Commission supported CSNSW's position that because Kirkconnell is minimum-security it qualifies as small. The branches will go back and talk with their members about this. If this remains unresolved, Commissioner Newall has agreed to visit Kirkconnell to listen to both sides of the argument and make a recommendation.

Parliamentary Committee into Benchmarking

Last week the Legislative Council Committee enquiry into Parklea was extended to include Benchmarking. The PSA believes Benchmarking should stop until the report is released and the Government has responded. We raised this with the Commissioner who unfortunately said it was beyond his power to order this. We will write to the Minister asking him to order a halt on benchmarking.

There is a report back on Friday, 2 March 2018.

