
Investment boost for Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management

The NSW government announcement to invest \$112 million over four years of Catchment Action funding is welcomed by the PSA.

However we are stunned at the timing and release of this information when it should have been known before the Government implemented the restructure and budget cuts for the creation of the interim CMA/AG structure.

The Department has advised that any positions created by this funding will be temporary. The PSA observes that this is another deliberate attack by the Government on the tenure of our members' moving positions from being permanent to temporary.

PSA General Secretary, Anne Gardiner said "This is disgraceful. Our members and the Department should have had this information before any one was forced into a process that has so far seen 190 voluntary redundancies paid as early exits."

We have advised the Department that any positions arising from this investment are made available to our members that may be facing forced retrenchment because their positions will be abolished from 30 June 2013.

CMA/AG recruitment update

The Department has advised that, at this point in time, of the 355 positions advertised 60% have been filled, 20% will be readvertised internally across all of DPI and 20% are outstanding for various reasons.

The PSA encourages members to continue to report any issues they have about processes or recruitment action to Delegates or the Union for resolution. Members are advised if they have been subject to circumstances where management or panel members have made inappropriate comments or exhibited some form of bias against them they should notify a grievance with the Department immediately.

Caring For our Country

The Department has informed the PSA that it would extend the contracts of employment of

temporary officers for a three month period pending the announcement of the Federal Government's commitment to CFoC funding. The Department has anticipated it will be in a position towards the end of May to re-engage the PSA to discuss what continuing positions will be available under CFoC and how they will be filled.

LLS Award negotiations update

The Department has advised the PSA that it will be in a position to begin negotiations on an award for the LLS once they have been given approval from the Government's Wages Policy Task Force.

The Department expects these negotiations to commence from July. The PSA has not been able to draw out the Departments' position on the Award however we can inform the members that they will apply the "no net detriment test." And adhere to Government policy.

PSA Delegates will be involved in the Award negotiations and any draft agreement developed between the parties will be put to a ballot of members for a vote. The Department has been unapologetic in that any new Award must comply with the Government's wages policy and regulation. For more information on this policy follow this link.

http://www.dpc.nsw.gov.au/announcements/ministerial_memoranda/2011/m2011-10_nsw_public_sector_wages_policy_2011

LLS Information

At this point in time the Government has not made its position known to the Department in respect to the recommendations from the LLS Reference Panel.

The Department has advised the PSA of the following:

- 11 / 10 boundaries still to be finalised by NSW Government.
- There are no current plans for office closures other than where LHPA and CMAs have a dual presence in one town, they will be co-located in one premise.
- Allocation of staff to the LLS may be made by transfer under s87 or by an administrative order under s104 of the Public Sector

- Employment and Management Act 2002 (the Act). Here is the link to the Act: [Public Sector Employment and Management Act, 2002](#)
- The LLS will be a non-public service division of the Government Service. This means that you will no longer be considered a Schedule 1 Public Servant under the Act. Effectively this severs any right to apply for internally advertised positions within the Public Service.
- The PSA has advocated that the Department maximises the opportunities for permanent officers in respect to what other redeployment options may be available to them before they are declared excess.

Other matters that arose in discussion with the PSA were:

- The Catchments group at DPI will be caught in the review of the LHPA's State Management Council. There may be parallel functions as both groups' activities would have to be merged into one central governing body that sits over all the LLS entities.
- Upon filling LLS structures there may be additional reviews concerning Management and Administrative roles.
- The current deadline of establishing the LLSs is reliant upon Government finalising its draft legislation and having it ascent the Parliamentary Legislative process.

Update on Actions before the Industrial Relations Commission

The PSA can advise that an 'in principle' agreement has been reached by conciliation between the parties.

Essentially the agreement covers the following;

- The 49 Agriculture focused positions.
- Professional Officers from DPI who win any of the above positions will have their current salary 'grand parented' should the position be at a lower salary point.
- The PSA has also reserved all of its rights to prosecute the application of the DPI Professional Officers Award.

The matter is still within the hands of our legal representatives who have been charged with reducing the agreement into a written form. Once this is finalised the PSA will inform the members.

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