



# SAS Staff News

November 2013

**Please circulate this newsletter to all PSA members, including GAs, School Learning Support Officers & Aboriginal Education Officers**

## LEARNING MANAGEMENT BUSINESS REFORM (LMBR) UPDATE

The PSA would like to thank all members for providing feedback regarding the ongoing implementation of LMBR. Your feedback is collated and raised with the Department at our fortnightly meetings. These meetings are an essential point of reference ensuring your issues and concerns are delivered directly to the LMBR implementation team. In the October bulletin, the PSA reported on the feedback provided; listed below is some additional information:

- Terminology is difficult to grasp
- Presentation rushed – not allowing time to read the information on the screens
- Training environment didn't work or only worked for one session
- The presentation was blurry and unclear
- Attendees felt extremely frustrated and felt that they would have to start from scratch with the online training
- SAM's felt that they were not equip to assist their colleagues with training
- A total lack of support from the Department

The PSA would like to encourage all members at the 229 focus schools to continue providing the PSA with this material. The information we supply to the Department is vital as it will directly impact the rollout of LMBR to the remaining 2000 schools.

## SCHOOL LEARNING SUPPORT OFFICERS' (SLSO) UPDATE

The PSA would like to inform all members of the 'Special Education Working Group' (SEWG) which meets at PSA House quarterly. This group consists of school learning support officers' from varied setting across membership. On 20<sup>th</sup> November the committee will be meeting to discuss a range of topics such as:

- SLSO Pre-school 'Statement of Duties' draft proposal.
- Performance development framework
- SASS Reference Groups
- SLSO Bulletin

After the meeting the PSA will circulate a specific bulletin for SLSO's which will include the names of the SEWG committee. The PSA encourages SLSO's to contact members of the committee with topics they would like placed on the agenda for discussion, guaranteeing effective communication between the membership and the PSA.

## MEMBER INSURANCE

As a PSA member you are covered by a number of insurance policies. For further information please click on the links below or contact the PSA Schools team for further information:

- [Journey Personal Accident Insurance](#)
- [Personal Injury Insurance](#)
- [Provident Fund](#)

## SAS STAFF WORKING IN HOME SCIENCE

SAS Staff are reminded that they are not catering officers. The organising of morning teas, luncheons etc do not form part of your statement of duties. For staff working in home science, your statement of duty clearly states:

- Within home science areas washing up, spot cleaning of floors, spot cleaning of windows within arm's reach whilst standing on the floor, laundering of home science tea towels, aprons etc.

The laundering of items is to be performed at school using the appropriate equipment provided. The PSA has received many calls requesting clarification regarding the cleaning of ovens. *Spot cleaning* includes ovens; which means simply wiping out with a damp cloth, no use of chemicals. If ovens require anything more than a *spot clean* contractors will need to be engaged.

## SASS REFERENCE GROUP (SRG) UPDATE

The RSRG's will now be known as the SASS Reference Group (SRG), reflecting the new model of support to schools.

The PSA and the Department's High Performance Unit met again to discuss the future structure of SRG's. It is anticipated that 'Expression of Interest' nominations will be available through Schoolbiz shortly.

## **EMPLOYMENT STATUS:**

The PSA continues to receive calls on employment status. Members are advised that Crown Employees (School Administrative and Support Staff) Award does not provide for 'casual' employment of SAS Staff in NSW Schools.

There are three contracts of employment in NSW Schools:

- Permanent employment (including part time)
- Long Term Temporary is for SAS Staff employed on a regular basis over more than one full school term, you are a long term temporary staff member.
- Short Term Temporary is for SAS Staff employed for a school term or less (paid a higher loaded hourly rate).

Note: Nominated transfers have priority over service transfers.

Members with concerns around their employment status should contact their PSA Organiser.

## **ONSITE INFORMATION SESSIONS**

PSA Organisers are always keen to visit your school to run an information session at a time that is convenient for members. If you are not sure who the Organiser is for your area please contact the PSA Schools Team.

## **ONGOING BANS**

Members are asked to continue supporting these work bans:

- FM Web
- Cash Flow Budgeting
- SMS texting to parents
- Online absences – Primary schools
- Use of 3rd Party software

## **WORKCOVER FACT SHEET**

PSA organisers are receiving numerous calls on the new Workcover scheme which drastically reduces injured workers entitlements. For the information of PSA members, the following extracts are provided from the Workcover website.

In June 2012 the NSW government introduced changes to the Workers Compensation Scheme. Here are answers to some frequently asked questions about those changes.

### **What are the changes to workers compensation?**

Recent changes to workers compensation involve transitioning injured workers' claims to a new benefits system, which includes changes to weekly payment calculations, entitlements to lump sum payments, and time limits for claiming medical and related expenses.

### **Who is exempt from the changes to workers compensation?**

Those exempt from the recent changes to workers compensation are police officers, paramedics, fire-fighters, coal miners and workers who make dust diseases claims.

However, these workers need to submit the new certificate of capacity, which has replaced the old medical certificate, when making a claim (as do all other injured workers).

### **What is a certificate of capacity?**

The *WorkCover NSW – certificate of capacity* (catalogue no. WC01300) has replaced the WorkCover medical certificate for all workers compensation claims from 1 October 2012. It helps the insurer to assess the worker's work capacity.

Parts A and B of the certificate are completed by the injured worker's treating doctor. Part C is a declaration by the worker as to whether they have engaged in any form of employment since the last certificate was provided.

The worker is responsible for providing a completed certificate of capacity to the employer or insurer to be eligible for weekly payments.

### **How are existing claims transitioned to the new benefits?**

If you made your claim prior to 1 October 2012, it will be transitioned following a work capacity assessment and decision by your insurer in 2013. Until then, your entitlements will continue under the old benefits system.

If a decision on your work capacity may adversely affect your entitlements, you will be contacted by your case manager at least two weeks in advance to give you the opportunity to provide information about your injury or claim. You will get three months' notice before any change to your weekly payments as a result of a work capacity assessment.

### **What do work capacity assessments involve?**

Work capacity assessments involve a review by the insurer of your medical, functional and vocational status, and help to inform decisions about your capacity to return to work in suitable employment and your entitlement to weekly payments.

They consider all available information, including your self-report and injury management plan, information from the employer, reports from treating providers and independent medical reports. The file may also simply be *reviewed*, not engaging a medical specialist.

### **Why is returning to work important?**

Returning to work after an injury is important because evidence shows you recover from an injury better at work than at home.

Staying at work, or returning to work as soon as safely possible, is good for your health and wellbeing – whether it's on reduced hours in your normal job or on modified or alternative duties.

Long term absence from work can lead to isolation and poorer health.

### **What if I disagree with a work capacity decision?**

If you disagree with the insurer's decision on your work capacity, you can seek a review from the insurer. If you disagree with their subsequent decision, you can then seek a review by WorkCover NSW. If still unresolved, you may seek a review by the WorkCover Independent Review Officer [www.wiro.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wiro.nsw.gov.au).

### **What changes are there to claiming medical expenses?**

The changes to workers compensation limit payment of reasonably necessary medical and related expenses for most workers for up to 12 months after they stop receiving weekly payments (or from when they first claim if they are not entitled to weekly payments).

Seriously injured workers, greater than 30% permanent impairment, are exempt from this 12 month limit.

### **What impact do dependants have on weekly payments?**

Dependants are no longer included in determining entitlements to weekly payments, under changes to workers compensation.

### **What benefits are there for seriously injured workers?**

Seriously injured workers, who have a permanent impairment of more than 30 per cent, are exempt from the five-year limit on weekly payments and the 12 month limit for claiming medical and related expenses. They are also exempt from undergoing work capacity assessments, unless they request one as part of exploring their return to work options.

### **Retirement**

For all workers, benefits cease when they reach Commonwealth retiring age

### **More information**

For further information please contact the PSA Schools Team or [workcover.nsw.gov.au](http://workcover.nsw.gov.au).

**For further information please contact the PSA on 9220 0900 and ask for the Schools Team**

**If you are not a PSA member: Join the union NOW**

**On-line application: [membership.psa.asn.au/join](http://membership.psa.asn.au/join)**