



16 September 2014

# Housing NSW work ban update

## ***Work bans lifted as IRC directs further consultation***

The IRC directed FACS and the PSA to undertake further constructive consultation in relation to the changes to office operating hours at a hearing on Friday 5 September 2014.

In response to the Commissions direction the PSA has lifted all relevant work bans.

As directed the PSA met with Senior FACS Officials on Thursday 11 September 2014.

Robust discussion occurred in relation to the consultation process and it was made very clear to FACS that the PSA believes that meaningful consultation did not occur prior to the decision being made.

The following outcomes were agreed to at the meeting:

- That District Plans to be provided to Mr Vevers by Districts to indicate how meetings and training were to occur in offices within the districts. These plans are to be provided by the end of October 2014. The Delegates advised Mr Vevers that this would need to be discussed at the Departmental Committee meeting that took place after this meeting and the HNSW Departmental Committee did not agree with the timeframe and are in the process of advising FACS that they would like the plans submitted by end of September for consultation with the PSA.
- FACS to reemphasise with District Housing Leads that networking and training provided by partner agencies be factored into training/team meeting plans.
- PSA raised the issue of standardising hours

across all FACS agencies (Phone and Counter Services) 9 – 4.30. FACS have taken this issue on board and have advised that it may take a few months to research and identify various operational times and have committed to consult with the PSA after gathering this information.

- FACS have committed to ensure that process are reinforced in offices that only provide tenancy management in relation to how to deal with homeless clients.
- It was proposed to FACS as an interim measure by the PSA that as a result of the opening of offices on Wednesday morning that phones would not be answered between 4.30 and 5.00pm. FACS advised they would not consider this proposal.
- It was also suggested by the PSA that Wednesday morning be by appointment only and FACS advised that a pilot program was to be undertaken at the Penrith Office for a 6 week period and then an evaluation of this pilot would be undertaken to determine if this was a viable option. The Housing Contact Centre will be involved in this pilot program.

FACS have committed to have further discussions with the PSA and once these have occurred we will advise you.

The Bans have now been lifted but while the discussions continue the Housing NSW Departmental Committee wishes for members to **“Work to Rule”**.

The PSA would like to thank the Departmental Committee and members for their commitment and support.