

**Public Service Association of New South Wales**

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In reply please quote: A14/389/MW:mb

Mr Graeme Head  
Public Service Commissioner  
Public Service Commission  
Bligh House  
4-6 Bligh Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Head,

**Re: Psychometric Testing**

The Association wishes to place on record its concerns in relation to the adoption of psychometric testing by the Public Service Commission as a recruitment tool for use in the sector. This has been done without adequate consultation. Nor has appropriate consideration been given to the potential long term impact of this initiative on the sector.

By introducing psychometric testing in conjunction with the significant reforms around the Government Sector Employment Act there has been insufficient opportunity to consider the relative merits of using these tools.

The Association is concerned that personality testing in particular may violate the principles of procedural fairness by predetermining an individual's probability of exhibiting undesirable behaviours. For this reason the Association believes that personality testing is not a merit based assessment tool as it operates to exclude people on the basis of their personal preferences.

The Association requests a written response from the Commission in relation to the following:

- How psychometric testing will be used for culling applications when undertaking bulk recruitment;
- What criteria will be used to determine when testing is appropriate or what kind of testing is appropriate;

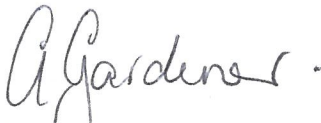
- What kind of data protection exists for a candidate's personal information, especially since the testing is subject to the proprietary interest of companies and not subject to public scrutiny?
  - What mechanisms are available for individuals to challenge the outcome of psychometric testing?
  - What avenues are available for individuals to seek redress where they believe their information has been misused?
  - What access rights do individuals have to data held by companies conducting psychometric testing?
  - What evidence has been relied on to determine that psychometric testing has higher predictive capacity than other forms of assessment?
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- What personal attributes are being filtered out through personality testing in relation to candidate responses and who determines the filter and how?

The Association seeks commitment in relation to negotiation of agreed checks and controls being instituted to address the above concerns.

Until the above information has been provided and appropriate controls are in place, the Association requests that the Public Service Commission suspend the implementation of psychometric testing in the sector.

If you have further queries regarding any of the above, please contact Anthony D'Adam, Director Strategy & Policy on 9220-0906.

Yours faithfully,



**Anne Gardiner**  
**General Secretary**

13 April 2015