

Safety Return to Work Support bulletin

This bulletin is to update members on a number of significant issues which are currently subject to discussion.

Bullying

SRWS has convened a small working group that includes PSA representatives to review ongoing issues including those pertaining to the Parliamentary Inquiry. A recent outcome from that group was the establishment of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the mines safety inspectorate in the Department of Industry, Skills and Regional Development (DISRD) and SRWS. This MOU provides a mechanism for either agency to investigate reports of bullying. This gives workers the right to pursue an avenue outside of SRWS / Department of Finance Services and Innovation. This arrangement is to remove any conflict of interest arising where SRWS may be both the employer and the safety regulator. Members are encouraged to review the MOU arrangements on the intranet at http://wca.intra.wca.gov.au/SRWSD/peopleandculture/Health_Safety/Pages/WHS%20Referral%20Arrangements.aspx and familiarise themselves with this information or speak to your PSA delegate. The working group will continue to meet.

The Terms of Reference can be found [HERE](#)

(<http://psa.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Terms-of-Reference---SRWS-PSA-Bullying-Prevention-Working-Party.pdf>)

The PSA signed a [Joint Statement](#) with SRWS in relation to our commitment to improve bullying prevention and response mechanisms within SRWS.

(<http://psa.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Letter-to-Bhatia-ere-Joint-Statement-Bullying-prevention-June-2015.pdf>)

Flex agreement

On 1 July 2015, the DFSI wrote to the PSA notifying of the Department's intention to remove the current flex agreement with a view to creating a single flex arrangement across all agencies within DFSI. Currently, there are in excess of five different flex arrangements operating across this department. SRWS PSA members have a beneficial flex agreement (being able to work a nine day fortnight and accrue six days flex) and have voiced strong concerns over the Department's action.

The main benefit with the current WorkCover flex agreement is assisting members to balance work and life commitments including: childcare and aged care responsibilities; health management (including psychological wellbeing) and study/leisure activities. SRWS PSA members are keen to ensure DFSI negotiate with the union to maintain the current arrangements and bring the other areas of the Department up to the standards of the WorkCover flex agreement. The PSA sent out correspondence on 1 July 2015 notifying of the advice from DFSI and members are encouraged to attend union meetings across the agencies to commence actions to demonstrate a commitment to retain the current flex provisions.

Fair Trading

As members will be aware, following a Ministerial request, WorkCover NSW and Fair Trading have formed a working group to explore avenues where the two agencies can work more closely. A reference group is now reviewing opportunities to align work activities, share resources etc. Many WorkCover inspectors have raised concerns about this activity and what will be the end result of this action. The PSA is monitoring this new development and members will be updated when more information is known.

What can you do?

Change is occurring at many levels and this bulletin provides only a brief account of some of those issues. Never before has it been so important for workers to be part of their union to ensure that a strong collective voice is presented at negotiation and consultation forums. As noted above, workplace meetings have commenced to ask members to participate in actions to demonstrate their intent to retain their flex arrangements. Every member is asked to liaise with those non-members working alongside them to encourage them to join the union and build our strength. The outcomes of your future working arrangements can be positively influenced by a strong union presence.

A members meeting will be arranged in Elizabeth St in August.

Join the PSA

membership.psa.asn.au/join

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