

## Bulletin to members: Christmas closedown

### The Christmas closedown and you

The NSW Government has announced its planned Christmas closedown arrangements:

- 2016: Monday, 26 December 2016-  
Friday 6 January 2017

You can read the announcement [HERE](http://arp.nsw.gov.au/m2016-01-premiers-memorandum-christmas-closedown-2016-2018).  
(<http://arp.nsw.gov.au/m2016-01-premiers-memorandum-christmas-closedown-2016-2018>)

### Can I work during the closedown period?

While the NSW Government encourages all non-‘frontline’ areas to shut down over the Christmas-New Year period, you are not required to put up a justification or a ‘business case’ to explain why you do not want to take leave.

As per the RMS fact sheet, staff who intend to work should be contacting their general manager with their proposed dates.

Some agencies will be required to maintain full or reduced services. This

means at least some staff will have to work through this period.

Unless you can be directed to take leave (see below), it’s your choice of whether you work or not. If your office is going to be shut, a reasonable alternative work arrangement must be made available for you. If practicable, this could include working from home for some or all of that time. You may have to work at a different location, but you cannot be expected to travel unreasonable distances and you may be entitled to be reimbursed for the additional cost of your travel.

### Can I be directed to take recreation leave due to the closedown?

You can be told to take recreation leave only if you have an ‘excess’ balance as follows:

- (e) The Employer may notify Salaried Employees when accrued annual leave reaches six weeks.

Salaried Employees may be directed to take at least two weeks annual leave within three months of the notification at a time convenient to the Employer.

- (f) The Employer may notify Salaried Employees when accrued annual leave reaches eight weeks. Salaried Employees will be directed to take at least two weeks annual leave within six weeks of the notification at a time convenient to the Employer. Other than in these scenarios, you cannot be directed to take recreation leave. However, the PSA encourages members to regularly take recreation leave for their own health and welfare.

### **Can I be directed to take extended (long service) leave or leave without pay?**

You cannot be directed to take extended leave, long service leave or leave without pay under any circumstances.

### **Concessional leave**

If you are working on the morning of Christmas Eve (Saturday 24 December), you are entitled to concessional leave for the afternoon after you have worked a

standard half day. If you have to work the afternoon as well, you can take your concessional leave on the afternoon of New Year's Eve (Saturday 31 December).

The PSA write to NSW IR to ask that concessional leave be available to staff working on Friday 23 December. However, the response was that only those working the morning of Christmas Eve, that is, Saturday 24 December, will be entitled to the concession leave in the afternoon.

### **Public holidays for Christmas and New Year**

The following dates are public holidays in the 2016 Christmas closedown period:

- 2016 - Sunday 25 December, Monday 26 December, Tuesday 27 December
- 2017 - Sunday 1 January, Monday 2 January

Many agencies also have a public service holiday around this time, usually 28 December.

### **Need help?**

If you're a member and have any questions or need the support of your union, please speak to your local PSA delegate or contact the PSA's Member Support Centre on 1300 772 679.

