



3 February 2017

## PSA response to what Coutts trotted out

On 2 February, Department of Family and Community Services Secretary, Michael Coutts-Trotter sent an email to staff titled "Message from the Secretary - Why we're acting to try to stop disability strike going ahead as planned".

In that email, Coutts-Trotter made a number of assertions that have rightly angered both members and the PSA.

Of particular concern was the following statement by the Secretary:

"....we've worked constructively with them [the PSA] to make sure the Government has heard the views of disability workers. The Government's decision to provide job guarantees, transfer payments and other protections for affected staff reflects that input."

Constructively? Seriously?

Here are the facts:

- The NSW Government and the Department have repeatedly refused to guarantee your current pay and conditions in an federal enterprise

agreement. Without that protection, your new employer may act at any time to cut your pay and conditions.

- The NSW Government and the Department have repeatedly refused to consider a transfer package comparable to that given to ferry workers and others when they were privatised.
- The NSW Government and the Department actually shutdown negotiations with the PSA when your union was attempting to get a better deal for members in relation to the transfer package.

The sudden heart string pulling concerns about client welfare are also laughable.

The fact is the NSW Government and the Department are washing their hands of all responsibility for disability services in this state.

The NSW Government and the Department know all too well that the private and non-Government sector cannot and will not be able to replicate

the quality and standard of care that is currently provided by ADHC.

Certainly not high level high needs care. Cost and profit and only cost and profit will be the great driving factors once disability services are privatised and high level care will be too expensive to provide. It's simple business economics.

**If the Secretary really is concerned about client welfare - stop the privatisation of disability services!**

The fact is the privatisation will mean the most vulnerable in our society and their families are going to be subjected to a social disaster, a repeat of what has been occurring in TAFE with private providers.

The offer of a meeting with the new Minister if the PSA suspended the planned strike was a road to nowhere designed only to disempower members.

The Government is well aware of what the PSA wants: an undertaking about retaining public disability services and a Government safety net.

The Government has had plenty of opportunities to give such an undertaking – or even propose a

compromise – and have chosen not to do so.

The PSA wants certainty for our members – an essential service that is being treated as if it is completely disposable and dispensable – and people with disability, not free fall into a black hole.

We have exhausted every avenue to try and get the Government to really listen to our serious concerns about the privatisation of disability services.

It has been like talking to a brick wall.

That is why we are now finally resorting to strike action.

Don't let Michael Coutts-Trotter try and shame you out of it.

