



14 June 2017

NPWS Award variation update

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The PSA met with Anthony Lean (OEH chief executive), Michael Wright (deputy chief executive) and Sharyn Gallagher (a/director employment Relations) on Tuesday 13 June in regards to OEH's proposal to vary your existing award conditions.

At the meeting, OEH remained firm in its intention to vary your award, specifically in relation to rangers and their classifications. OEH proposed the following changes:

- the re-classification of all rangers and the introduction of a hard barrier to limit the progression of rangers
- automatically making any new position a Mon-Fri role, with no loading.

Despite proposing these reductions in conditions, OEH was not able to offer any tangible increases, or credible reasons why, stating the above two conditions were non-negotiable. They also come after a reduction of 91 FTP rangers positions over the past seven years.

The PSA reminded OEH the award contains a no-extra-claims provision, which disallows claims for reduced conditions of employment being brought before the Industrial Relations Commission. Additionally, the Government's wages policy allows for a 2.5 per cent pay increase, with a higher increase dependant on

increasing efficiency. As the Government has only offered a 2.5 per cent pay increase, it would go against its own wages policy to agree to any cutting in conditions that would achieve the Department "efficiencies".

Despite this, OEH advised it was committed to implementing these reduced conditions. Staff can be sure that if hard barriers were implemented for rangers, it would be a matter of time before hard barriers were implemented for project/research officers, also.

The PSA always negotiates in good faith on behalf of its members, and cannot agree to a proposal that cuts their conditions with no associated increases offered by OEH. If OEH wants to vary the award without the PSA's consent, it is required to have it arbitrated in front of the Industrial Relations Commission.

OEH's proposal to vary your award contained the following:

- an acknowledgement that when rangers were reclassified there is no guarantee that relocation won't be involved
- no production of role descriptions for new classifications, but a "promise" they would be provided
- rejection of the PSA's claim that any new classification would include automatic progression, with OEH retaining 14 competency based increments below the hard barrier

- current temporary rangers would be placed below the hard barrier, regardless of current grade
- no guarantee that specific positions would be replaced if redundancies offered
- a commitment to introduce eight trainee rangers (one per region) targeting either youth, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or disabled/disadvantaged candidates. Whilst a positive plan, OEH should implement these positions as part of its normal operations and not as a trade off for varying your award
- no agreement to provide a proposed draft structure of any planned restructure before agreeing to any award variation
- an offer of voluntary redundancy for rangers. Whilst the PSA is not opposed to voluntary redundancies, OEH has the ability to do this as part of any restructure, and does not require variations to your Award in order to offer VRs.

OEH has stated if the above was agreed to, OEH would “promise” to reinvest savings into future ranger positions.

Quite simply, the PSA will not agree to sell out our members on a promise.

The PSA will be visiting workplaces over the next month to speak to members about the proposed award variation, and to answers any questions there may be. Whilst the above proposal targets rangers, if conditions are varied for one classification it is only a matter of time until they vary other classifications.

The fact that this proposal to compromise your working conditions has come in this the 50th year Anniversary of the NSW NPWS is particularly poor. You can view an address from PSA General Secretary Stewart Little [HERE](#).

<https://www.facebook.com/PSANSW/videos/vb.280130718768016/1318698498244561/?type=3&theater>.

