

21 June 2017

Office of Environment and Heritage member bulletin

Members will be aware OEH has sent out a communication to staff regarding its proposed changes to the current NPWS Award.

This communication confirmed that OEH is seeking to implement a hard barrier to limit the progression of Rangers, as well as automatically making any new position a Mon-Fri role, with no loading. As a "reward" for accepting these reduced Award conditions, OEH has promised the following:

- OEH has acknowledged that when current Rangers are reclassified, there is no guarantee that it will be in the same location. Being reclassified to the same grade has no advantage if your job has been relocated and you do not wish to move.
- OEH has reversed its previous position and "generously" allowed you to keep your current degree requirement.
- The PSA will be given the opportunity to be "engaged on the development of role descriptions" for new Ranger classifications, but only AFTER agreeing to reclassify Rangers.
- Current temporary Rangers will be placed below the hard barrier with no loading, regardless of current grade. This will mean a reduction in salary for temporary rangers currently at Grade 2, 1st Year of at least \$18,222 per year. For a temporary Ranger currently at Grade 2 4th year it represents a pay cut of at least \$30,115 per year.
- OEH would retain "competency"-based incremental progression below the hard barrier. As OEH has stated that 70 per cent of Rangers are currently at the top of the classification structure, and any new position will come in below the hard barrier, the number of Ranger Grade 2s receiving yearly increments will be extremely limited.
- An offer of voluntary redundancies to all ongoing Rangers. Whilst OEH have committed to "offering" VRs, they have not committed to "accepting and approving" VRs.
- OEH promise to re-invest the equivalent salary sum of VRs in new Mon-Fri Ranger Grade 1 roles, but this is limited by the number of VRs that are "accepted" by OEH. In addition, as there is no promise to replace specific positions that are made redundant, there is no promise that the extra resources will be allocated to the same area. This promise comes after seven years of cuts to Rangers, resulting in a reduction of 91 FTP Ranger positions.
- OEH will establish eight trainee Ranger roles, something they have the ability to do without any Award variation.
- The ability for future roles to be converted from Mon-Fri Role to seven-day roster positions only after Executive Director approval. The current Award enshrines seven-day roster positions as the normal, with the ability for OEH to convert positions to Mon-Fri, after negotiation with the PSA through review committees.

Whilst OEH would have you believe the above is a good deal, an examination of exactly what is offered suggests otherwise. The PSA believes the proposal is nothing more than an offer to cut pay and conditions and further devalue Rangers and the important role they provide. 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.

OEH has asked staff to comment on its proposed changes to the Award by emailing npws.ed@environment.nsw.gov.au by Friday 7 July. The PSA encourages members to respectfully let OEH know what they think of the above "deal". You can also provide feedback to the PSA and we will ensure it is passed on.

