

POVB member bulletin

Industrial Relations Commission – Risk Intervention Policy Court Locations

Since being elected, we have raised in many meetings and on numerous occasions our concerns with the Risk Intervention Policy for Court locations. We feel the policy is greatly inferior compared to the policy for Centre locations and it leaves our members vulnerable in the court locations if there is a death in custody.

It was felt our concerns were not being addressed so it was lodged in the Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) and the matter was heard on 7 March 2018. From this, there will be meetings designated to address our concerns. It is hoped a Commissioner will visit Amber Laurel Centre, Surry Hills and the MRRC in terms of viewing the process in dealing with inmates in Court locations compared to Centre locations.

We will continue to update members with information with the outcomes of these meetings and the Commissioner's visit.

Industrial Relations Commission – One Out Staffing in Court Locations

This matter has been an ongoing matter around the State in country Court locations and it came to a head in Albury Court location last week. Albury was going to put bans and limitations in place and gave three days' notice of their intent. Mr Dave McCauley, Industrial Officer, lodged the matter before the IRC and it was heard on 16 March 2018 with David McCauley and Jason Charlton present.

The outcome from the IRC is that meetings are to be held to address our concerns. When we have further information, it will be distributed. We are committed to addressing the issues of one Court location.

CSI Meeting

Jason Charlton and I attended a meeting with Steve Thorpe and Brent Maughan. The following was spoken about:

Cessnock

It has been raised by members at Cessnock that the ratio of one staff member to 15 inmates should not be uniform across the work locations and that risk assessments should be carried out in each work location.

CSI is not open to changing the ratio as there is no evidence that those ratios are unsafe. In terms of risk assessments, Mr Thorpe stated the risk assessment tool does not address the ratio of inmates to O/S; it highlights the risks based on High, Medium or Low. Mr Thorpe used an example of an individual previously conducting risk assessments for asbestos removal. The result was that that process changed work practices to reduce the risk which he said was a good decision.

Mr Thorpe stated that South Coast CC engineering have no issues with the ratio of inmate to O/S and have greater production than Cessnock. He did say however that he will look at a proposal that can be submitted to him.



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Mr Thorpe is also going to supply us with some statistics on how we fare compared to community workshops with regard to work health safety.

Silverwater Complex

Mr Thorpe said the changes he spoke to staff about at MRRC on his recent visit will start in April. DDL needs to make changes to its purposeful day, as he is not happy with the hours inmates will be working. Currently they only have inmates engaged in work activity for five hours.

Windsor Complex

Dillwynia will get a laundry O/S looking after the cleaning of greens and undergarments for female inmates in all metro gaols.

JMCC

Is currently struggling under the new model due to not all work locations being fully functional. The buy-up unit will be operational in three to four weeks, engaging 60 inmates. CSI will be installing hatches in JMCC to be able to distribute meals, with meals to be reheated in the centre using a retherm machine.

Grafton

To receive two O/S relief staff. He is looking at redeploying excess positions from Wellington or Bathurst.

Glen Innes

The sawmill is not doing as well as it would be hoped and running at a loss. This is due to various issues mainly is that it is cheaper to get wood from China.

There was a serious injury to an inmate and the inmate praised the staff for their response which helped save his life. We have asked that this incident be placed in the Bulletin. It showed great qualities in both Glen Innes staff and Tamworth staff. Tamworth assisted in the hospital escort and both areas worked together to get the best possible outcome which was to save the inmate from death. CSI is looking at replacing the sawmill and building modular homes. All staff would be retained and retrained. This has not been confirmed and will take years to achieve.

Mid North Coast CC

There is a very large HIPU in the minimum security which is engaging the majority of workers in programs. Because of this, Industries are looking to move to the new build when it is completed and get the inmates from that centre to Industries.

Mr Thorpe spoke about the stripping of the lining in the pop-ups and replacing to be fire-compliant. It is a huge job that will cost a lot of money. Mr Thorpe also spoke about using a misting system as opposed to fire sprinklers in cells. The misting system has been fitted to the segregation cells at Long Bay.

We meet with Steve Thorpe every month, so please let Jason or myself know of any issues that you want us to raise at our next meeting which is on Thursday, 12 April 2018.



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Peak Justice Meeting

Jason attended the Peak Justice meeting on Thursday, 15 March 2018. This meeting is chaired by Mr Andrew Cappie-Wood.

At this meeting, Jason raised the following issues:

Benchmarking

The POVB Executive believes that throughout this process there has been bullying across all ranks to conform to set numbers. It is also felt that nepotism has increased and this is shown in the lack of consistency in the acting up.

Ring fencing

It was raised that now that Long Bay is being ring fenced, along with the four Central West locations, there will be jobs loses for some. It is felt nepotism will have a factor in this process.

Meal breaks

Under benchmarking, centres are not addressing meal breaks to allow staff to eat away from the workplace. Members are being encouraged to remain in work locations one out. We do not agree with this process. Your meal breaks are an award condition. If this is happening at your centre, raise it in the form of a motion that you want your meal break situation addressed and the ability to have them as per the award conditions. If this is not addressed locally then we will take carriage of it and address it with the Areas Director.

Functional manager duties

We have raised this issue in various meetings and at the IRC. We have made it very clear to CSNSW what the roles of the SCO are. Jason raised that once a centre goes into the final phase of benchmarking, we have the same issue happen where FMs are attempting to push down their responsibilities. Jason raised that we should not have to keep raising this issue and CSNSW needs to make clear statements to FMs about this issue as currently the message is not clear.

Sight or Sound

This is in our award. However, there is no policy for it. Jason raised in this forum that it has been raised in many other meetings and as yet still nothing from CSNSW. We are committed to a Policy for Sight or Sound. See COPP section for further information.

RIT policy court locations

Jason raised this issue which is now before the IRC due to the fact that we had a death in custody at Amber Laurel. We believe this issue is a clear deviation from adequate care of inmates in court locations and is far inferior to the RIT Policy in Centre locations.

Consultation

Jason raised that there is a lack of consultation and that we usually meet with our Delegates twice a year before our Commissioner. CSNSW wants to meet only once a year. We feel that to be insulting, especially with all the reform and restructure that is taking place in CSNSW.



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We raised this in the forum as again we are not getting anything positive from CSNSW.

Custodial operations policy and procedures

The transition phase will be complete by the end of April. We encourage all staff to look through the COPP and provide any feedback back to the email that is supplied on the intranet. This is our time to get it right.

Also, we have asked for a Sight or Sound Policy. It is in our award that we should always be in sight or sound. There are concerns CSNSW will take this to mean that sight can also mean on camera and sound can mean via a radio. The POVB Executive will not accept this and has asked for a policy to address our concerns.

Further information will be distributed when we have more to give on this issue.

Staff assaults

The POVB Executive believes staff assaults are on the increase. When a staff member is assaulted, we would like to know. At times, we do not get told as it is felt the assault is minor. We want to know all assaults on staff so we can record the information and also offer any assistance to the individual/s.

We have raised on numerous occasions that we want an Assault Committee in each centre/court location to meet after every assault. CSNSW has stated it is drafting a Memorandum of Understanding for the Committees. As yet we have seen nothing. We have informed CSNSW at our last COPP meeting on 6 March 2018 that if we have nothing by April we will look at what action we will take from 1 April 2018.

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