

## Transport for NSW – PSA response to hiring freeze and budget cuts leak

Many of you would have read the article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* on 5 October 2017 regarding the leaked briefings to Senior Transport for NSW personnel over the hiring freeze and a 15 per cent reduction in operational budgets for the 2017-18 fiscal year.

The PSA, through Unions NSW, has written to the Transport Secretary expressing concern for the lack of notification or consultation regarding these proposed changes. The combined unions have sought immediate discussions and consultation on how this will affect the TfNSW staff and operations.

The combined unions have made it clear TfNSW is obliged to consult with the unions over the proposed changes.

Considering the vast sums of money TfNSW has thrown at contingent labour, consultants and hidden overruns on major transport projects (all capital expenditures) the PSA cannot understand why the relatively fixed costs in operational expenses is being targeted.

It is clear to the PSA rampant use of contingent labour without the proper controls does not provide for a measurable or value for money service delivery model. It would appear TfNSW staff are now unreasonably in the firing line to suffer for these short-sighted decisions of Government.

The PSA has written to the new Executive Director of People & Culture, Kirsten Watson, regarding NSW Auditor-General report on the use of contingent labour as part of our 'Don't Paint over the Cracks' campaign. This is to highlight the

covert tactics used by TfNSW to contract out the positions of public servants, as agencies shift costs from operational expenses to capital expenses.

As part of that campaign, the PSA has sought information and consultation regarding the use of contingent labour and how TfNSW will meet its obligations under the *Transport for NSW Salaries and Conditions of Employment Award 2017* and the recommendations of the NSW Auditor-General.

It is important that members and non-members reading this take note; the PSA isn't begrudging these staff who work on contract. Many would appreciate all of the benefits that arise from union-negotiated awards. However, it is the exorbitant salaries for some professionals and the subsequent on-costs to recruitment companies that hide the true cost of the administration of TfNSW.

The PSA and TfNSW Departmental Committee will provide updates as more information arises from consultations with TfNSW.

