

Light Vehicle Policy – 18 December meeting & dispute

Many members would be aware of the consternation caused by the new interpretation of the RMS Light Vehicle Policy. The PSA has a number of members in different parts of the RMS who will be negatively affected by the denial of home-garaging applications by Executive Directors. Much of the angst relates to the demonstrable reduction in operational efficiencies, once that were deemed part of the mutual advantage between members and the RMS.

The PSA and combined unions met with Light Vehicle Policy Owner and IR Representatives on Tuesday 18 December to provide a firsthand commentary on the implications of the RMS Light Vehicle Policy. This was done in the context of previous commitments with the combined unions not to disrupt the operational efficiency of the RMS.

The combined unions appreciated the time given by the Principal Manager – Commercial Analytics as he provided answers with regard to the multitude of questions and subsequent scenarios provided by the combined unions.

The combined unions were concerned that the information surrounding operational efficiencies were not being properly considered by the individual divisions and that the respective Executive Directors were:

1. not receiving information on Home Garaging requests
2. looking on these requests negatively because it was perceived that the RMS wanted them to

3. paralysed in terms of decision making for home-garaging requests that were totally demonstrable, reasonable and that would have detrimental impacts on business delivery and operational efficiency.

The second reason being the industrial impacts upon the RMS with the Light Vehicle Policy and industrial entitlements under the RMS Award and Work/Health/Safety legislation. These included:

1. the requirement to provide amenities at Home Stations to accommodate staff members who come back dirty, sweaty, wet or generally unclean from field duties
2. the ability for staff to securely store all of their uniforms, PPE and assigned items in lockers
3. the interpretation of travelling time in context of ordinary hours and overtime
4. the direction to travel outside of shift times, including both industrial and fatigue considerations.

The third reason was the different rationale for approving home-garaging requests. Previous requests had provided the same information and had been received with approval. Now without any changes to the Light Vehicle Policy on thresholds, these applications were now being declined. The combined unions could not reconcile what the new requirements were as there were no changes in the documentation for home garaging requests.

The fourth and most pressing reason was the potential cost to the organisation both in dollars and reputation and whether the policy changes to the operational sections of the business BSOs



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TCs and COIs would be cost effective, considering the spiking costs in other employment related areas and the obvious diminution in operational efficiency.

The notion of mutual benefit was brought up on several occasions by the combined unions. It is unclear on what mutual benefit now means to the RMS and clarification will be required. These changes are very much skewed in favour of the RMS and once again the patience and morale of the staff are being tested.

The RMS have now provided an update to the combined unions and staff on the RMS Light Vehicle Policy that provides detail on the rationale.

However, there are still a number of outstanding issues that are now subject to dispute in the NSW Industrial Relations Commission.

A summary of the matters in dispute include:

1. the provision of infrastructure and amenities at work locations including but not limited to showers, change rooms and locker facilities to carry work uniforms, Personal Protective Equipment and RMS assigned items
2. the interpretation of excess travel time in conjunction with the normal hours and overtime provisions in the *Roads & Maritime Services Consolidated Salaried Award 2017*

3. the requirements to meet home-garaging thresholds
4. the interpretation of being directed to travel outside of the designated shift
5. the operational efficiency of the RMS, the ability to continue service for on-road enforcement operations in adherence to the *Roads & Maritime Services Consolidated Salaried Award 2017*.

The combined unions wanted the RMS representatives to take back this information to the RMS CEO and simply rethink (with all of the information) whether the administration of the policy to operational areas was in the best interests of the RMS. In the end all members want to show the RMS and road users that the use of cars is a highly important tool to deliver quality, responsive service. And we all know what happens when there is less regulation of heavy vehicles on NSW roads.

The PSA will provide updates to members as the matter is conciliated, beginning on 15 January 2019.

