

Update on PSA negotiations with GWIC

As advised in a [previous bulletin](#), the PSA and GWIC had agreed to meet on 25 January. The PSA sought to develop an ongoing dialogue through regular and structured meetings. Whilst we have not reached agreement on a formalised structure as yet GWIC has expressed that it is happy to discuss issues with the union on a day-to-day basis, as well as meeting when necessary.

The PSA was advised GWIC was going through what it called its transitional year. The PSA sought clarification that this was not a restructure and this was confirmed. It was agreed that we would receive a briefing regarding this transition probably in March.

Members responded to our earlier bulletin, allowing us to discuss several matters at the meeting. The PSA welcome comments from our members on the information that follows.

Work Health and Safety Issues

Management advised it has provided equipment that meets the work, health and safety requirements of employees, particularly those in the field. This includes hats, clothing (for hot and cold conditions), sunscreen, first-aid kits and mobile phones. Management further advised that where there are further needs or where something has not been provided, it will endeavour to order on request or, if more urgent, give approval for the employee to purchase the required item and seek the costs back later. Approval should be sought in advance. The PSA sees workers' health and safety as a paramount issue. If a member is refused a reasonable request, please contact us for assistance.

Travel time for stewards

GWIC advised that where an ongoing employee went from home directly to a race meeting rather than travelling to their nominated work base first, only half an hour will be deducted, even if the work base was more than half an hour away.

Stewards also have one-and-a-half hours' preparation time, which can be taken prior to leaving home or at the race track prior to commencement of the meeting.

Meal allowances and meal breaks

Due to difficulty in accessing meal breaks, GWIC advised that stewards receive an additional 30 minutes added to the time they work. Both the PSA and GWIC recognised this was not ideal. We welcome views from our members regarding this. Clearly a preferred situation is where an employee can have a proper meal break.

The PSA advised that ultimately this could be seen as a staffing issue. We were advised six more stewards are being recruited.

GWIC advises that meal allowances are provided to employees at the rates defined in the Award.

Allowance for use of private motor vehicle

Where the employee is requested to use their own vehicle, this is paid at the business rate. Where the employee elects to use their own vehicle, it is at the casual rate.



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Rates of pay

Members had advised previously that in some cases the amount in their initial letter of offer was more than the rate they were paid. GWIC advised this was an error. The amount had included loadings paid, but should have stated the base rate only. Corrected letters have subsequently been provided. If members still have any issues relating to this matter, they should contact the PSA.

The PSA recommends all members ensure they have access to the Award under which they work. That award is the Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2009. It is an award negotiated by the PSA and the more awareness of its contents you have, the more you are able to safeguard your rights. We note, for example, that GWIC provide information documents such as one entitled Entitlements – Stewards & Vets Factsheet. Whilst it refers to Room at Home Used as Office, it does not refer to the allowance applicable in such cases. It is the Award that provides that information.

As you would be aware there are significant issues for our membership across the sector. The PSA continues to advocate for the rights of our members facing significant challenges.

Key issues include:

- Privatisation in the public service
- Casualisation of jobs
- The Wages Cap which prevents pay rises above 2.5 per cent
- An Efficiency Dividend expecting 12 per cent cuts over the next four years.

