

Light vehicle dispute update

The PSA and combined unions met with representatives of the RMS to progress discussions on the current light fleet vehicle policy dispute. This was as a consequence of recommendations from the NSW Industrial Relations Commission after conciliation on 15 January.

What was discussed?

The PSA has always had concerns the policy statement did not support the needs of the operational nature of some work types that primarily use the car as a pseudo-workplace. The PSA and combined unions were effectively able to demonstrate the consequences of the denials of home garaging applications in the massive employment related cost spikes as well as the degradation in service provision.

Put simply, what the RMS thinks it will save from this process has the potential to be swallowed up by these costs and the costs to the RMS in terms of consumer confidence and service delivery.

Overtime Vs Ordinary Hours Vs Excess Travel Time

The PSA and combined unions have always maintained that the direction to staff to claim excess travel time from a home station to a temporary work location is an incorrect interpretation of the *RMS Consolidated Salaried Award 2017*. The PSA asserts that hours worked after attending a home stations should be considered as normal hours and therefore, any direction to work over shift allocated times requires compensation. That compensation is located in the overtime provisions in the Award.

The PSA has been provided with documentation from members who are working up to 3.5 extra hours a day as a consequence of being directed to travel from home stations. Any normal hours that are worked before 6:00am require compensation in the form of a shift penalty.

Members have been advised to make application for overtime rather than excess travel on the basis that:

1. The PSA maintains that this is the correct entitlement
2. The PSA is now able to demonstrate the mounting financial implications of the denial of home garaging arrangements and service delivery degradation as a consequence of the collapse of mutual benefit. w

Much of the discussions from the RMS revolved around whether there was a necessity for COIs and BSOs to have fleet vehicles to fulfil operational duties. The PSA and combined unions have demonstrated the service delivery impairments by the denial of home garaging applications.

Further discussions revolved around the ability of the RMS to direct staff to work at temporary locations. Whilst there is capacity for the RMS to direct staff to temporary locations, the PSA maintained that the fleet vehicle was still required for operational purposes. If staff are required to obtain a fleet vehicle from a home station, there is no temporary work location.

The issue surrounding the provision of amenities to staff for worksites in conjunction with home



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garaging denials was also discussed at length. The PSA provided a list of those home locations without the appropriate showers, lockers and change rooms. The PSA also pointed out those amenities that did not meet the appropriate standards.

Lastly, the PSA asserted that anything which provides for an entitlement to staff in the RMS Award cannot be extinguished by the elements contained in the light vehicle policy. This relates to the denial of private usage of fleet vehicles as part of a salary packaging agreement.

What are the implications?

If staff are travelling instead of working there is no requirement/ability for staff to assess heavy vehicles as they travel along NSW roads. Could you imagine the implications for road and water users where COIs or BSOs turn a blind eye to unsafe trucks or boats/jet skis because they cannot stop these vehicles as they aren't working and on their way to another operation?

The PSA isn't talking out of school when the NSW Roads Minister specifically told the PSA that she wanted to see more, not less on-road enforcement. The PSA assumes this would include more on-water enforcement too.

In a time where there are more heavy vehicles and marine vessels on NSW roads and waterways than ever, the PSA and combined unions can't understand why the RMS would curtail frontline service delivery.

Where to from here?

The PSA and combined unions have another conciliation with the NSW Industrial Relations Commission on 1st March where the PSA and combined unions will progress our arguments regarding the payment of hours. There are two implications, the costs associated to longer working hours or the fundamental reduction of service to accommodate work in ordinary shift hours.

In the end, the PSA and combined unions are seeking the RMS to come back with a different plan for home garaging applications that doesn't interfere with service delivery or place unreasonable demands upon staff.

