

Surveillance Officer decision handed down

Dear member,

On Wednesday 13 March 2019, the Chief Industrial Magistrate (CIM) handed down her long-awaited decision with regard to the PSA's claim of 8.5 per cent loading for Surveillance Officers.

Unfortunately, our application was dismissed, meaning our claim was rejected. The CIM handed down lengthy reasons for her decision, which are currently being reviewed by PSA lawyers.

While the decision is extremely disappointing, the PSA does not back away from taking action for Surveillance Officers, and stand by our arguments put forward in the case. Ultimately however, those arguments were not supported by the CIM.

What does that mean?

The judgement is that Surveillance Officers are not subject to an 8.5 per cent loading for field work. Apart from that, nothing changes. Hours of operation and hours of work set down in Officers' contracts of employment will remain.

What about the disparity between Surveillance Officers working 35 hours?

This remains. What happens with regard to this is effectively up to the RMS. The previous sentiments were the 35hr/week Surveillance Officers were recruited on 35hr/weeks contracts by mistake and as a consequence of Transport Shared Services taking over the recruitment activities. The PSA will seek to have discussions with the RMS on the substance of Surveillance Officer recruitment into the future. Surveillance Officers who are employed as 35hr/week workers

have done nothing wrong and are simply caught up in the mechanics of bureaucracy.

Where to from here?

The PSA will keep members updated as to next steps once our lawyers have had an opportunity to fully review the decision.

In the meantime, the PSA will begin discussions with the RMS and members on the development of the competency framework flagged through our membership survey. The clause is intended to include items such as a transparent grading of Surveillance Officer roles and responsibilities; a program of professional development; and a clear and stepped out career path.

The PSA previously flagged with members that the prosecution was a means to an end; which was the development of a robust working-hours clause for all Surveillance Officers. The PSA was rightfully reluctant to entertain discussions before such time as the decision was handed down by the CIM. With 15 weeks before the expiry of the current RMS Award, the PSA will explore whether there is the same appetite from the RMS to continue with those discussions from previous Award negotiations.

No doubt this is a fundamentally large piece of work that will require input and energy from all Surveillance Officer members. It also may take longer than this current round of Award negotiations.



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The PSA wants members to consider and identify the current barriers, development deficiencies, disparities in grades and inconsistencies that currently exist in the RMS structure for Surveillance Officers.

The PSA will explore what kind of member representation is required/sought to facilitate those discussions with the PSA and in turn, with the RMS. Most importantly, PSA members have a say in how this will be negotiated. Non-members have no say.

