

Transport for NSW to Cannibalise RMS... Well sort of...

Combined unions Meeting with Transport Secretary 4 April 2019

The PSA and combined unions met with Transport Secretary Rodd Staples on Thursday 4 April 2019 to begin discussions regarding the recent announcements for TfNSW to subsume the functions of the RMS. As a part of that announcement there was a confirmation the RMS would cease to be an entity from 1 July 2019.

The high-level meeting with the Transport Secretary was called by Unions NSW Secretary in response to the lack of clarity and consultation regarding the machinery of Government changes contained in the *Administrative Arrangement (Administrative Changes – Public Service Agencies) Order 2019*.

What was discussed?

The Government's need for a new business model that incorporated all modes of transportation under the one division. This was further broken up into urban and regional aspects of the Transport cluster.

The need for certainty and understanding around the change, that will inform and involve those staff affected by the proposed change. At this stage there is no change to any role, function, Award or any entities within the cluster.

The current status of the ongoing Award negotiations for the TfNSW Award and the four Awards contained in the RMS.

The concern that the transition is a precursor for the privatisation of services currently provided by RMS employees.

The staged process of the reform is as follows:

- » **1 April 2019**
Engaging with TfNSW and RMS leaders on changes and why.
- » **1 July 2019**
Transferring existing business areas under a new structure, work continues on locations and accommodation.
- » **July 2020 and onwards**
Redesign business areas where required, embed new system and ways of working.

Members are concerned TfNSW is working towards a divisional structure that was only three months and now another, could be made in two days with an effective date of 1 July 2019.

The requirement to change legislation or regulation to fulfil some of the regulatory or compliance functions contained in the RMS.

The concern that this process will strip current conditions of employment from staff.

There is no mention of the role and position of NSW Maritime in any of the correspondence sent to staff.

The functions or industrial mechanisms TfNSW will use to transition staff into TfNSW.

The combined unions have sought agreement from the Transport Secretary that TfNSW and RMS will facilitate paid meetings with staff to facilitate questions with members and their unions.



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What were the outcomes?

TfNSW Secretary has agreed to continue the process of consultation with the affected union groups as a priority.

TfNSW and the RMS will continue the Award bargaining process as business as usual. The negotiations might continue with more involvement in both Awards from TfNSW representatives.

Affected staff will be involved in a co-design process providing input into the structures and ways of working with TfNSW.

There are no plans or directions from Government at this point in time to privatise any functions that currently exists in RMS divisions. There are serious questions then as to why TfNSW would subsume those functions if privatisations were not on the agenda.

Why are the unions disappointed?

From the onset, the combined unions, through the Unions NSW Assistant Secretary, sought to convey how disappointed the union groups were that TfNSW had failed to involve the chief stakeholders before staff read about these changes in *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

The PSA and combined unions have been discussing the reductions in TfNSW business divisions since December 2018. That proposed structure was to take TfNSW into the future. Now, on a political whim, after two days we have another structure that will take us into the future. This looks like the back-of-a-napkin-over-a-couple-of-martinis kind of planning.

There are some serious questions as to how this kind of policy on the run, provides any level of certainty for our members and those people tasked with a once in a generation infrastructure spend.

These announcements, with little context or information, only serve to provide a level of anxiety in the Transport cluster and provide little faith that these announcements will provide a robust and lasting workplace structure where our members can just get on with the job.

As major stakeholders, union groups were not even informed. We had to get the information leaked from *The Sydney Morning Herald*. It shows just the kind of contempt this Government has for its workforce.

Where to now?

Unions NSW Assistant Secretary informed the Transport Secretary that it was their intention to file a dispute with the NSW Industrial Relations Commission over the lack of consultation.

The Transport Secretary will set up the process of discussions and consultation over the proposed changes.

The PSA and combined unions will continue with the process of negotiating the *RMS Consolidated Salaried Award* and the *Transport for NSW Salaries and Conditions of Employment Award*.

The combined unions have discussed at length the Award, seeking to extend the offer provided by TfNSW and the RMS over a one-year agreement.

For those of you who are non-members and reading this information: [Join Your Union.](#)

