

Transport for NSW Award Negotiations – Member Update

Members would be aware that the PSA and combined unions have been negotiating the *Transport for NSW Salaries and Conditions of Employment Award* since early 2019.

The previous bulletin had outlined the PSA's and combined unions' Log of Claim and the strategy for the negotiations. Some of these claims, such as Travel Passes for all, were considerably expensive.

What has happened since?

Re-elected NSW Government

The re-elected Liberal Government will continue with the current Wages Regulation which caps public sector salaries at 2.5 per cent. To enable salaries above the 2.5 per cent cap, the PSA and combined unions would need to offset those increases by finding 'employment-related cost savings'. These consist of two matters – employees' jobs or employees' conditions of employment. Neither are matters the PSA will negotiate upon. Therefore, the PSA and combined unions have sought to augment their claims so that there are less requirements on finding offsets.

NSW Government decision to subsume RMS functions

On 1 April 2019 the PSA and combined unions were informed of the Government's decision to subsume RMS functions via leaked material in *The Sydney Morning Herald*. Whilst the PSA and combined unions can continue to negotiate and ratify these Awards, there are much larger questions of how this will work as part of the subsuming of RMS functions into TfNSW. With

roles in each agencies that could be considered the same, is there potential for disadvantage?

What are the priorities now?

Term of the Award

Previously, the PSA and combined unions were agnostic on the term of the Award. TfNSW had previously offered one-year, with 2.5 per cent increases. With the re-election of the Liberal Government and the decisions to subsume the functions of the RMS, the issue of term has become far more important. Accordingly, the PSA and combined unions have sought a much longer term: three-years. This is done to protect the salaries and conditions of TfNSW staff whilst the amalgamation processes continue.

Job security

As a managing 'non-operational Award', there was little in job security provisions. With subsumption of RMS operational functions, the notion of job security provisions has become far more important – especially with this re-elected Government and its ideology of public sector privatisations.

Flexible working hours provisions

The PSA is still continuing with the claims for better and more flexible working hours provisions. TfNSW is one of the only 'super departments' that does not have a comprehensive working hours agreement. With lost and unrecognised hours remaining as an issue for members, an agreement would partially offset some of this disadvantage.



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Sydney Metro Statutory Authority Incorporation

With the creation of SMSA in July 2018, the PSA and combined unions agreed to a nexus between the conditions of employment and SMSA staff and the TfNSW Award. As part of these negotiations, TfNSW has sought to make the nexus permanent by incorporating SMSA into the TfNSW. The PSA and combined unions have now agreed to this process.

What remains outstanding?

- » Agreement on the length of term for the Award
- » Agreement on job security provisions
- » Agreement on a Flexible Working Hours Agreement
- » Agreement on Domestic Violence and Altruistic Surrogacy provisions
- » Agreement on a Disciplinary matters clause
- » Agreement on a Local Agreements guidelines.

Some of these claims must be approved by central government processes and that has taken up vital time when the 30 June 2019 deadline is fast approaching.

Next steps

The PSA and combined unions are set to continue to negotiate the TfNSW Award to an 'in-principle' position. The terms of that position can then be voted on by the PSA membership as part of the democratic processes within our union.

The timeframes are important, as a consent application must be filed with the IRC and ratified by 30 June in order for members to receive the 2.5 per cent increase at the earliest date possible.

