

Less Executive Assistants, WHS, performance development plans and more: Ministry of Health – Joint Consultative Committee meeting report 14 August 2019

1. Executive Assistants replaced by Executive Support Coordinators

We expressed concerns about the Ministry's failure to invite the PSA to a recent meeting when staff were briefed about changes on the Executive floor (level 11) where Executive Assistant roles will be deleted and replaced by Executive Support Coordinators. Other areas such as Offices of Deputy Secretaries will also be affected as a result of new reporting lines. These changes are more significant than initially presented and a formal change management plan should have been prepared in accordance with Agency Change Management Guidelines. The very brief documentation provided to the PSA makes clear that some staff will be redeployed or offered voluntary redundancies if they do not meet the capabilities of the new role. The PSA further expressed concerns about what this change means for other Executive Assistants. We were categorically assured there are no other current proposals to change this role in other branches. However, such careful wording does not rule out future changes which would impact most on women in lower paid roles in the Ministry. We urge members to be vigilant and contact the PSA immediately if they become aware of proposals to change roles.

2. NSW Government Work, Health and Safety Sector Plan

A self-assessment of all health agencies was conducted and presented to the Secretary's Board. As a result, an action plan will be developed for NSW Health and tools for fatigue management will be reviewed. Seven NSW

Health agencies will be reviewed by a peer agency which is the Justice cluster and Health will conduct a similar review for Justice. We emphasised the importance of consultation with staff and WHS Committees. The PSA suggested a state WHS committee for NSW Health would be appropriate given the importance of this Government initiative. The Ministry agreed to consider this proposal.

3. Performance Development Plans

Despite assurances to the contrary at our previous JCC, we know from members that their comments on their PDP are not being recorded after the manager's review. Advice has been provided that the system cannot accommodate employee comments and if you wish to comment you should do so separately which can then be shared with the manager and recorded on your personnel file. We advised that this was completely unsatisfactory and sought further clarification. When we receive this information we will provide directions to members about the performance review process.

4. Flexible working and flex time

We requested statistical information about flexible working as the PSA is hearing from members that there is resistance from some managers which means there is not fair and equitable access across the Ministry. We are also aware of instances where members are denied flex time. In addition to Award entitlements there is a flexible working hours' agreement with the Ministry so if you are unable to access flex time please contact the Member Support Centre in the first instance on 1300 772 679.



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5. New building and interim moves

Staff will most likely start moving to the new building from August 2020 and:

- each floor is 3000 square metres
- there will be more places to sit than people
- not all desks will be fully adjustable
- there will be a focus on noise reduction through the use of acoustic reduction materials and soft furnishings.

The PSA will provide the Ministry with further information about risk assessments to be undertaken prior to the next move. Interim moves have been completed and the Ministry will provide more technology training sessions and act to ensure that lunch rooms are not used as meeting rooms.

6. Contractors and Recruitment

Refer to [attached report](#).

7. PSA Noticeboards

Despite the requirement of the Award there appears to be no PSA noticeboards in the three interim locations. We requested that the Ministry quickly rectifies this.

8. Next meeting of JCC and sub-JCC – Wednesday, 16 October 2019

If members have items they wish to place on the agenda, please contact your delegates at least two weeks before the next meeting.

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It is now more important than ever to be a member of your union. Union membership is the only way you can ensure you have a say in your workplace and be part of a collective effort to improve your rights and conditions.

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