

## SES members' meeting Q+A

Thank you to all the members who attended the video conference meeting on 16 October 2019. During the meeting members heard from Stewart Little, PSA General Secretary; Anne Kennelly, Manager; Julie-Ann Bond, Senior Industrial Officer; Monika Wunderlin, Industrial Officer; and PSA Organiser Latu Sailosi.

You can see the conference meeting [HERE](#).

The meeting was a great way to connect and consult with SES members across the state. The PSA has scheduled further meetings with members for next week. These meeting will be face to face and will occur on the following dates:

- **Tuesday 22 October, 1pm-4pm, Sydney Olympic Park**
- **Wednesday 23 October, 12pm-1pm, Wollongong**
- **Thursday 24 October 9am-12pm, Goulburn**

Further, to progress member concerns raised during the meeting, the PSA will be meeting Deputy Commissioner Fatima Abbas next week.

### Questions about the field allowance

The PSA acknowledges the frustration some members feel in relation to the loss of the 15 per cent field allowance following the transformation last year.

As members will be aware, the PSA engaged lawyers and lodged a dispute over the matter.

The PSA was advised that, although letters of appointment for members may have provided for a 15 per cent allowance, the *Government Sector Employment Act* allows the employer to assign (transfer) employees to a different role that does not attract that allowance: see section 46 of the *GSE Act*.

While the section talks about no loss in remuneration, this is a reference to the salary and not to any allowance that is paid because the role attracts it.

Section 46(4) of the *Government Sector Employment Act* does not state that the employee being reassigned will continue to receive the remuneration they were receiving before.

It is a constraint upon the employer reassigning someone without the consent of the employee concerned in circumstances where that reassignment will involve a reduction in remuneration.

Here, there will clearly be a loss in remuneration because the new role will not require the employees to perform the work that otherwise attracted the 15 per cent field allowance. If the employee does not consent to the reassignment, the employer can assign them to another role that attracts the allowance or retrench them.

While the PSA knows that many members are disappointed by the outcome, the PSA did everything in its power to try and maintain the allowance. This included getting the SES to agree to grandparent the allowance for members on the grounds of financial hardship.

### Further questions from video conference

*Has the PSA also read the results from the People Matters Survey as the SES also did not fare well in this report?*

The PSA is going over the survey results and will be raising the matter with the Deputy Commissioner Fatima Abbas in a meeting next week.

*What information has the SES provided to the PSA regarding future restructures and changes?*

Apart from the restructures, which are already underway, the PSA is unaware of any further restructures. However, like other Public Service agencies, the SES is required to consult with the PSA in relation to restructures and changes prior to implementation.

*How many SES staff responded to the PSA's workloads survey?*

The PSA received 41 responses to the survey.

*With regards to the issues raised today, will the PSA only be looking at the organisational level or location or will they assist individuals?*



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The PSA is currently looking after both the collective issues and supporting individual members.

At the time of transformation 12 months ago, we were told we would be given training and assistance in moving forward in the new structure and new roles. This has not happened and changes in processes, lack of staffing and being frontline staff supporting volunteers has taken its toll on many staff members with morale being very low. What will the PSA do about this as nothing has changed

This is a serious concern for the PSA. We will be raising the matter with Deputy Commissioner Fatima Abbas next week.

### PSA Workloads Survey UNPAID OVERTIME AND WORK

- The recent PSA Workloads survey results demonstrates that workloads have increased, with the majority of respondents have accumulated more than 20 hours of unpaid work in the past six months (72.5 per cent)
- 94.87 per cent of respondents have experienced some kind of workload pressure (such as not being able to take breaks, working to unreasonable deadlines)
- The biggest factor members cite in work overload is insufficient staffing, followed by inadequate resources and technology to perform their role
- 89.19 per cent of respondent felt that workover load was adversely affecting the delivery of service provided by the SES
- On a weekly basis 35.29 per cent of respondents found it hard to take time off to balance family and work commitments
- The majority (50 per cent) of respondents rated their work stress as 4 out of 5, with 20.59 per cent rating it 5 out of 5
- Majority of respondents have not been able to take unpaid time as time in lieu

- 26.47 per cent of respondents have heard of performance management in relation to work overload issues in their area
- 11.76 per cent of respondents have experience performance management as a result of work overload issues
- Nearly half (48.48 per cent) of all respondents reported that they had spoken to their doctor about workload stress.

### DIRECTION NOT TO DO UNPAID OVERTIME

Accordingly, the PSA directs all members not to perform unpaid overtime, and not do the work of deleted roles.

### What can you do?

- Ask a work colleague [join the PSA today](#)
- Make the union strong by forwarding this bulletin to your colleagues
- Attend PSA meetings at your worksite
- Get involved become a PSA Delegate

### Not a member? [JOIN online!](#)

### Your PSA staff

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