



PUBLIC SERVICE ASSOCIATION
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

General Secretary Stewart Little
President Kylie McKelvie
ABN 83 717 214 309

In reply please quote: **PD/128138**

4 March 2020

Ms Erica Machon
Director People and Relations
Government and Corporate Services
Department of Customer Service
McKell Building
2-24 Rawson Place, SYDNEY NSW 2000

Via email: erica.machon@customerservice.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ms Machon

Re: Births Deaths and Marriages Restructure Management Plan Feedback

The Public Service Association of NSW (PSA) writes on behalf of members affected by the Births Deaths and Marriages (BDM) Restructure Management Plan (RMP).

The RMP was provided to staff and the PSA on Tuesday 18 February 2020 with the consultation period set to close on Friday 28 February, less than two working weeks later. This short timeframe caused considerable distress for our members and a request for extension to the deadline was only responded to 2 days before consultation was due to close. We would not consider this to be best practice.

We note that the Timetable for Implementation seems to be lacking a step between "consultation period closes" and "RMP finalised and approved". Perhaps along the lines of "consider feedback provided and respond" or even "consider feedback provided, make adjustments accordingly and respond".

The PSA understands that following further staff briefings it has been indicated that, due to vacancies within the Grade, there may be only two filled Grade 1/2 roles declared excess in the new structure. The RMP indicates a loss of 34 roles at that Grade. Considering the above and the number of vacancies at the next two higher grades it appears unlikely that any Grade 1/2 staff will be made redundant. It may have saved employees considerable angst had this information been made available sooner.

There have been a number of queries to the PSA about direct appointment, with members concerned about the process and how staff would be selected, suggesting that this part of the

process has not been clearly explained. Members are naturally concerned that they may have to apply for their own jobs. We would request that the Department clarify this point.

A further concern raised was in relation to the use of talent pools and what happens with people who have been temporarily appointed (for months or possibly years) into higher level positions, after being merit selected and assessed. Is there opportunity for these staff members to be considered for positions at the higher level?

Despite the unlikely need for comparative assessment amongst lower Grade positions the prospect remains of concern to members. Is the Department willing to engage in a 'top-down' recruitment process perhaps with advice to each Grade on how the process will work for them?

Can it be confirmed that contract and/or long term temporary staff who have undergone merit-based recruitment will be included in the process prior to any external recruitment activity?

Members have raised concerns that staff numbers may have been reduced below what is actually required to do the work. Can the Department confirm if a workload risk assessment was undertaken? How will the Department handle the number of clients from a non-English speaking background who will require more in-depth assistance? With counter closures that assistance may have to come from ServiceNSW centres who have no direct experience with BDM. This exposes the unit to a potential decrease in quality customer service and a longer timeframe required to supply that service.

The RMP refers to an online click and collect service, with kiosks in the foyer for clients who attend the registry without ordering in advance. Some clients want to pay for an application with cash or a cheque. Cash is still legal tender and may be the only means of payment available to some people. If BDM no longer have cashiers do clients need to be sent elsewhere to make payments and then return for the Certificate?

We look forward to the Department's response to concerns raised by both the Union and our members. Should you wish to discuss any issues relating to this matter please do not hesitate to contact Phoebe Dangerfield via email at pdangerfield@psa.asn.au

Yours sincerely



Phoebe Dangerfield
for **Stewart Little**
General Secretary