



Public Service Association of NSW

General Secretary Stewart Little **President** Kylie McKelvie

160 Clarence Street, Sydney NSW 2000 GPO Box 3365, Sydney NSW 2001

☎ 1300 772 679 📠 (02) 9262 1623 ✉ psa@psa.asn.au 🌐 www.psa.asn.au **ABN** 83 717 214 309

In reply please quote: *NP:cr*

25 November 2020

Ms Lisa Havilah
Chief Executive
Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences
500 Harris Street
ULTIMO NSW 2007

By email: Lisa.Havilah@maas.museum

By email: Belinda.Christie@maas.museum

Dear Lisa,

Re: Visitor Services Move

The Public Service Association of NSW (PSA) writes on behalf of our membership in the Powerhouse Museum Visitor Services Department.

Members have raised extensive concerns regarding the proposed arrangement to move Visitor Services Officers from the Powerhouse Museum level 5 to the Harwood building.

The PSA has undertaken a survey of all PSA Powerhouse Museum members. The survey revealed PSA members overwhelmingly oppose the proposed move.

In the survey, the membership was candid in their remarks, discussing a consistent perception of inadequate consultation. Below is an unedited example of a typical comment:

“There was no official consultation with VSOs in the early stages of planning and no official communication about why the move is happening; most of us heard bits and pieces by word of mouth from our workmates before any official email or discussions. While our direct managers have been understanding it is yet again another example where we feel ignored and undervalued by the rest of the organization with others making decisions that don't affect them but negatively impact on us trying to do our job.”

Further, PSA members have raised numerous concerns regarding the proposed move. These include:

Work Health and Safety Concerns

- that, reportedly, a Work Health and Safety analysis of the move has yet to be undertaken;
- that, reportedly, the relevant Work Health and Safety Committee has not been engaged regarding this move;
- that the First Aid Officer will now be based on their breaks in the Harwood building, as opposed to the Museum;
- concerns about Powerhouse Museum Visitor Services Officers and Visitor Services Managers being based in the Harwood building during emergency evacuations. In the event of a fire, there will be a reduced amount of front-line staff to safely escort visitors from the building. This is a particular concern in school holiday periods;
- that as Visitor Services management offices will be based in the Harwood building, there will be reduced support for front-line staff as they complete their duties;
- the increase of staff entering and exiting the Harwood building security area every day. If used as envisioned, it each staff member would use the crowded security foyer 8 times per day. During COVID-19, this increase in foot traffic is a concern.

Facilities

- that current facilities (bathrooms, kitchenettes, change rooms) in the Harwood building are not sufficient to service an increase in staffing arrangements. PSA members have reported that the facilities do not adequately service current staffing arrangements (for example, consistently long lines for bathrooms);
- that there is no break room for front line staff in the Museum;
- that there are no lockers in the Museum for staff to leave essential personal items.
- the lack of storage spaces within the Museum accessible to staff;
- the lack of dedicated change rooms in the Harwood building for front-line staff;
- that there are poor access requirements for less mobile staff in the Harwood building;
- concerns about where front-line staff radios will be placed, so they can have efficient set up at the commencement and conclusion of their shifts;
- concerns about operational efficiency of the new space in the Harwood building; specifically, how noise will be kept from the ticketing team;
- that computers should to be accessible within the museum for SAP access and emails of importance.

Consultation

- the perception that the feedback already provided to management has not been taken seriously, nor have suitable changes been enacted as a result;
- the perception that management moves the Visitor Services Officers without proactive consideration for their wellbeing;

- a lack of understanding about why other areas in the museum aren't explored for the creative residency program;
- the perception that alternative areas have not been explored for a new visitor services break room that is in the museum;
- that consultation has been limited. At the 28 October Joint Consultative Committee, the PSA has in their notes management agreed with the statement that the move was a "*fait accompli*".

Miscellaneous

- the concern that this will mean Visitor Services Officers will be more inclined to take their breaks in public view;
- the distance, front line staff points of placement in the Museum and the Harwood building, impacting on front-line staff break time. From certain points of the Museum, members have timed this as being nearly 5 minutes each way;
- that front line staff will have to leave the Museum, in the open air, to reach the proposed Harwood break room. A specific concern of this matter includes the weather.

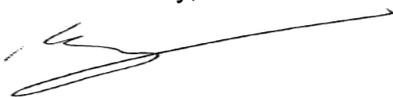
Given the PSA membership's opposition and numerous concerns, the PSA seeks management reconsider this decision. We seek that the Visitor Services Department maintain their current arrangements in level 5 of the Powerhouse Museum.

The PSA further seeks a meeting with management, in which options are canvassed, in the hope that an agreeable outcome can be reached.

The PSA seeks your reply as a matter of urgency.

PSA Industrial Officer Nick Player can be contacted at Nplayer@psa.asn.au.

Yours faithfully,



Nick Player
for **Stewart Little**
General Secretary