26 November 2020

Independent Pricing & Regulatory Tribunal: Joint Consultative Committee

A Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) was held between your union and management on Tuesday the 24th of November, the following issues were discussed:

Relocation to Level 16

The new office will be open on 11 January, 2021. When the office renovation is complete, there will be approximately eight desks for every 10 workers. There will be the capacity for 50 per cent occupancy rates while social distancing precautions are being taken. The process for allocating lockers is currently being considered.

The PSA raised the issue of ergonomics and safety in the new workplace. There will be an occupational therapist coming into the Independent Pricing & Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) from 11 January to help workers configure workstations.

Special requirements for people who need them were also discussed and there will be a new keyboard, mouse and set of earphones as well as new chairs within the office.

The PSA advocated for a standardised, transparent and proactive process for all special needs matters.

If members' have ideas or concerns about the office relocation and would like the union to raise them on your behalf, please contact your PSA delegates, Felicity Hall and Lil Cullen.

Working from home

In line with the Department of Customer Service Guidelines, workers are still encouraged to work from home for the foreseeable future.

The Department of Customer Service is currently considering various models for returning back to the office. The union advocated for flexibility and understanding for workers now and in the future.

Microsoft Teams notice board

The PSA will have a channel on Microsoft Teams that is open to all workers in IPART. We will be posting industrial report, JCC minutes, bulletins and other updates for members.

Service maps

Service maps have been developed by IPART. The PSA pointed out some minor changes that could be made to make these maps more user-friendly. If anyone has any feedback on these service maps, feel free to discuss them with your delegates, Felicity Hall and Lil Cullen.

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WHS Committee

Management acknowledged it should be more proactive when it comes to engaging with the WHS Committee. Management has started a process to this end that will commence in 2021. It is drafting a paper to the Leadership Team in relation to concerns raised by the WHS Committee.

Mental health

There is a new initiative to have Mental Health First Aid Officers. The PSA brought up WHS concerns around the loss of community and human contact that has been a result of the challenges that COVID-19 has created and discussed the importance of managers checking in with their teams regularly and consistently. It was also suggested that the Mental Health First Aid Officers feed back into the WHS Committee.

Employee Assistance Programs

IPART's Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) service provider changed in June this year, it is now Benestar. The utilisation rate of this service is currently very low.

Members are reminded that EAPs provide a broad range of services for workers regarding mental health, financial planning, counselling and many other services. These services are available to be used on work time.

Inductions

The PSA commenced discussions regarding new induction processes. The union has the right to present information at induction sessions for new staff and will be pursuing this issue.

If you know of any new starters in your section, ask them if they are a PSA member. If they are not, now is a great time to encourage them to join at www.psa.asn.au.

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