

Joint Consultative Committee update

On 29 October 2020, the PSA attended a Joint Consultative Committee meeting with management. The following issues were discussed:

COVID safety plan

The Department provided the PSA with an update on COVID safety plans, returning to the office and working in the office. A Return to Office/COVID-19 Safety Plan for DCS is being drafted.

Some major sites, including 4 Parramatta Square and Gosford will have consultation over the COVID safety plan through the Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs).

In the meantime, the public health orders remain in place and workers are encouraged to continue working from home where possible or continue current working arrangements.

The PSA asked about how the Department will manage the fact that hot-desking is happening across all offices. There will be increased cleaning to mitigate some of these risks. The Department also indicated it is looking to coordinate the amount of people returning to offices at any given time. Management also stated it is identifying ways to make buildings safe places for returning workers.

Your union questioned whether there is a different strategy for regional areas. Management contended that each worksite is different and will open up according to their individual COVID safety plans, once those are completed.

Mental Health Month

October was mental health month. Utilisation rates for Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) have increased to 8.8 per cent over the past month. The industry average is approximately six per cent. The PSA reminds all members this service is there for them. Additionally, if you have Health and Safety Representatives, they are there to support your mental safety as well as your physical health.

Management confirmed it is putting together a four-week program utilising the EAPs provider Benestar. It will have a focus on nutrition, sleeping, movement and laughing. Mental Health First Aid Officers are also being identified.

Workers Compensation Commission restructure

The progress of the current restructure at the Workers Compensation Commission (WCC) was discussed. The Department said an updated timeline for this process will be released in early November.

Your union raised strong concerns that in Edition 4 of the Towards the PIC Newsletter, there seems to be an indication the WCC would be “abolished” at the end of February 2021. The Department claimed to be surprised by this development. The PSA demanded clarification as soon as possible. We also requested we be put on the mailing list for further editions of this newsletter.



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Project Revamp and the Personal Injury Commission

The PSA discussed members' concerns regarding Project Revamp and its implications for members in the Workers Compensation Independent Review Office, the WCC and the State Insurance Regulatory Authority.

The Personal Injury Commission was also discussed, the implications for PSA members are currently unknown. A number of statutory offices are currently being filled. Management will report back to the PSA on this matter at the next RJCC in two weeks.

Births Deaths and Marriages Risk Management Plan

Management provided an update that there is recruitment occurring at the Clerk Grade 5/6 level. If members have any concerns or questions on this process, contact the PSA on 1300 772 679.

Customer Engagement Integration – Wave 2

We are in the consultation phase of the second wave of the Customer Engagement Integration Risk Management Plan. Members are encouraged to raise issues and concerns.

Revenue job titles

The PSA has been alerted that there are potential changes to role titles for workers in Revenue. Although not the appropriate forum to raise this, your union took the opportunity to discuss these concerns with the Department and is awaiting a response on why the changes may be made.

People Matters Survey

The PSA genuinely encourages members to fill this out. The PSA has used these surveys to highlight problems, from bullying to mismanagement to restructure process concerns, over a number of years. While some members may have “survey fatigue”, filling out this survey honestly and directly is a useful tool to bring about positive work force change and to highlight problems.

The survey closes on Friday 13 November.

