



Public Service Association of NSW

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In reply please quote: *NP:cr*

11 November 2020

Ms Bronwyn Jones PSM
Director Corporate, Strategy and Executive Services
Resilience NSW
GPO Box 5434
SYDNEY NSW 2001

By Email: Bronwyn.Jones@resilience.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ms Jones,

Re: Establishment of Resilience NSW

The Public Service Association of NSW (PSA) again writes to provide further comments regarding the establishment of Resilience NSW, and in particular the briefing to staff and the union recently conducted. We also respond to your reply to our initial correspondence.

Particularly in response to the letter from you dated 5 November 2020 note the following points:

- Item 1:** Members continue to hold reservations around the central management of response teams between State Operations Branch and Regional Teams. Members feel there is high risk that the effective delivery of services to the community may be compromised should this concept and related processes not be thoroughly tested. How does Resilience NSW plan to test and assess planned changes to operational practices and procedures prior to go live?
- Item 2:** Members would like Resilience NSW to confirm the current structure does not result in the loss of any current job functions under BAU or operationally.
- Item 4:** It is noted the SERCON is a statutory appointment sitting with the Commissioner. Where does the Welfare Services Functional Area Coordinator sit in the structure? The current structure shows that position under two different areas.

Item 6: In acknowledgement that Disaster Relief Grants (DRG) functionality is moving from the Disaster Welfare Team to Grants & Funding team in Finance and Funding Delivery Division, Members raise concerns that the process of managing grants both in the field requires specific SME and coordination. Further, a large percentage of DRG requires ongoing SME and case management of applications, for months if not years, particularly in cases such as structural rebuilds to people's homes and may require coordination between localised DRG applications and processes. There is a concern that this structure will engender more work, reporting requirements, oversight and poorly present effective outcomes for communities.

Item 8-9: In regard to the placement process the PSA seeks that an appeal mechanism be put in place to enable concerns to be raised in a timely and effective way. Depending on a variety of factors staff will either be matched against roles or have to go through some form of process (including Suitability or Comparative assessment). Where, for example, an employee feels they should be matched in a role or has some other concern regarding any of the processes a mechanism of overview being available will give staff comfort in what is a stressful situation.

Point 13 - Excessive Hours

The PSA requests that a review be done of past flex/time sheets for the organisation to ascertain the level of time worked. We would, of course, make the point that in many agencies there is a significant amount of work not declared on time sheets (more likely to be prevalent in agencies dealing with such critical matters as your own agency deals with) and that should also be factored into any assessment.

More specific support

We understand that a formal report by EAP psychologists was sent onto Management suggesting, that with the high use by staff of the 4 psych visits that occurred in early 2020, that this should be further extended. Further, crisis support (as a result of staff being involved in traumatic events) was requested in this report. Members have asked what happened to this report and why has it not been actioned? Further questions put forward are:

After action reviews - Is it mandatory for each member of the team to be engaged? If so, this did not happen in at least one team.

Why haven't each of the teams also had a debrief? Why is this not mandatory?

How many Resilience NSW staff have taken stress leave/medical leave since the fires? Is this not an indicator of fatigue and issues around time worked?

As you can see the issue of stress, trauma and fatigue remain a concern in the minds of employees.

Further issues raised by members include:

Allowances in SAP

Members have raised an issue with the current SAP System where-by Core Hours are fixed between the Standard Working Hours (eg 7am to 7pm). Members working their core hours (7 hour shift) outside of these hours have been paid standard hours for the first 7 hours of work without any penalty rate allowances. For example, a Member working as a Liaison Officer on night shift between 7pm and 7am is paid the standard hourly rate for the first 7 hours and standard overtime after that. Further, as the restructure has regional roles and with the nature of local government and combat agency local engagement, we may see these roles working out of hours, in BAU as well as operations. Members query if Resilience NSW will be moving to a SAP System that can capture non-standard hours and attract penalty rate allowances for core hours worked outside of standard hours (e.g. 7pm to 7am)? Industry Standards across similar sectors adopt penalty rate allowances for those working shifts and odd hours in recognition to the disruption that non-standard hours have on family life and health.

Royal Commission and Parliamentary Enquiry

Members seek information in regard to where the responsibilities for Royal Commission recommendations/Parliamentary enquiry recommendations sit?

We understand that the Change Management Plan will be provided in the new year and consultation will occur at that time in terms of the next stage(s). As part of that process we seek provision of Draft Role Descriptions and any other information that will impact on employees work, pay or conditions with sufficient notice to enable us to engage in proper and effective consultation.

Please contact Nick Player on 0408 432 439 or by email nplayer@psa.asn.au to discuss this matter.

Yours faithfully,



Nick Player
for **Stewart Little**
General Secretary