

POVB bulletin

Over the past 12 months, numerous critical incidents and situations have occurred across Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW).

These incidents and the increase in assaults on staff have been concerning for the POVB Executive. Many members have raised concerns with their delegates and the POVB that centres are cutting corners, KPIs are more important than staff safety and centre security, and there is an overall discontent in centres and court locations.

Due to this, it was put to our Minister Anthony Roberts and Commissioner Peter Severin that the POVB should be granted an extraordinary Delegate to Management meeting to raise these concerns. This was approved and on 11 and 12 March 2021 delegates attended the PSA.

Prior to the delegates attending, all delegates were asked to list their top five issues state-wide or locally that were affecting their centre.

The top issues were:

1. Hostage Situations MNCC

- Information was given as to some of the initial outcomes from the reviews that have taken place.
- There will be an increase in scenario-based training for all centres. The scenarios will be facilitated by FTOs in the centre and with SOG staff.
- Capital Works has started at MNCC. A review of other centres will take place to see if the same issues from MNCC pertain to other centres.
- All review findings will be disclosed to staff at MNCC. Reviews will take some time to finish and for outcomes to be collated.
- Issues that arise out of the reviews will be tabled to the Oversight Review Committee which will have a POVB Executive Representative on it.

Action

- POVB Executive will give updates to members via bulletins when there is further information to disseminate.

2. Inmate Discipline and Segregation Policy

- After listening to the concerns raised both prior to the DTM and at the DTM, CSNSW has instituted a review of the segregation policy. The POVB Executive has been forwarded policies to review and give feedback on what we believe are the issues.
- Delegates agreed there is an inconsistent approach to how managers are actioning misconduct reports. AC Corcoran stated he had received similar information out of discussions with staff at MNCC.
- Delegates stated that poor outcomes from misconducts lead to a lack of respect for the staff on the ground dealing with inmates daily.



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- Members are to raise any concerns with local delegates in the first instance. Local delegates are to raise these concerns with Centre management.
- If a resolution cannot be achieved, then it is to be raised to the POVB Executive.
- **Note** Staff should keep records of misconducts in case the report goes missing and for future reference.
- The POVB Executive will give updates to members via bulletins when there is further information to disseminate

3. Justice Health

- Justice Health Service to CSNSW is a continual problem. The same issues that have been raised for years were raised again. These predominately being:
- ☐ The number of Hospital Escorts being sent out and often for what are deemed as frivolous matters.
- ☐ Court locations are taking inmates to hospital and they are being prescribed medications that when they return to the court location the on-call Nursing Unit Manager is stating the medication cannot be issued.

Action

- The Minister has the concerns noted and there are meetings scheduled with NSW Health and Justice Health.
- POVB Executive will give updates to members via bulletins when there is further information to disseminate.

4. Use of Firearms and Training

- Currently there is no specific timeframe for a staff member to be recertified in firearms. The POVB Executive is pushing hard for regular recertification within specific timeframes.
- Further consultation will take place in the Firearms and Tactical Meeting. The next one scheduled is on 24 March 2021.
- A motion came out of the DTM stating: "We the delegates to management want CSNSW to phase out .38 pistols and convert to a Glock firearm". This was passed unanimously.

Action

- POVB Executive will give updates to members via bulletins when there is further information to disseminate.
- POVB Executive will continue to push for the phasing out of the .38 pistols.
- POVB Executive to push for a firearm reaccreditation timeframe.



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5. KDWJ Award

- Members in Kempsey, Dillwynia and Wellington would like a review of the awards. They are not happy that they are on an inferior award to the other centres.
- John Morony is on that award as part of the tender process that remained in public hands rather go to a private provider.
- CSNSW is open to discussion on the matter.
- POVB executive is concerned that if we start a consultation process with CSNSW it then opens up for the consultation to be taken to the Industrial Relations Commission (IRC). This could mean the IRC makes a decision that could be at the detriment of majority of our members and could erode our conditions.

Action

- Prior to any consultation, POVB Executive will seek legal advice from the PSA legal in house counsel on whether the below consultation process could be at the detriment as noted above.
- That legal advice will be tabled to members in a bulletin.
- Consultation process if legal advice is in agreement: CSNSW will list the sections from both awards that they would like to see changed. PSA/POVB will list the sections from both awards that they would like to see changed.
- No changes to our awards will be carried out until members have been informed of them and they vote on the changes.
- POVB Executive will give updates to members via bulletins when there is further information to disseminate.

6. Workers' Compensation

- A separate bulletin will be put out to members on Workers' Compensation.

7. Misconducts Process – Staff

- Delegates raised that there are staff that have been under a disciplinary process for extensive periods of time with no outcomes. Why is taking so long?
- Assistant Commissioner Carlo Scasserra gave a briefing with statistics on disciplinary matters. He believes that with an increase in staff in investigation, that matters will be dealt with in a faster timeframe. Also, the PSB Support Unit has been introduced which will assist with contacting staff who are victims, suspended and to assist staff experiencing a disciplinary process.

Action

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- Industrial Officers D. Bartle and D. McCauley to meet regularly with AC Scasserra to discuss individual progress on members' disciplinarys.

8. **Cyclic Rostering**

- The state-wide consensus is that what people were promised with cyclic rosters and flexibility is not happening.
- Staff want what they were promised and not what managers interpret the Business Rules to be.
- There are currently two sets of rules – Rostering Business Rules that were for when we had preferential rosters and Cyclic Roster Rules. CSNSW is using both and this is leading to the inconsistencies.
- CSNSW has given PSA/POVB a revised version of both rules, which it wants us to review and give feedback on. We are concerned that these rules are less flexible.
- There is a meeting on 15 April with POVB representatives and CSNSW on the cyclic rosters rules.

Action

- POVB Executive will give updates to members via bulletins when there is further information to disseminate.
- If consultation breaks down and a resolution cannot be agreed on that gives members consistency and flexibility in the cyclic rosters, PSA/POVB will lodge the matter in the IRC.

9. **Sick Leave**

- Staff are getting cautioned about sick leave and the leave taken for COVID-related illnesses should not be factored in when they are abiding by NSW Health and CSNSW protocols.
- Staff on 12-hour shifts are still being sent sick leave letters after taking only two days. This is an ongoing issue.

Action

- POVB members to raise any concerns with local delegates in the first instance. If it cannot be resolved, then raise the issue to a POVB Executive Natalie Howes or Nicole Jess.
- POVB Executive to raise the 12-hour shift issue in the POVB Consultative forum and in the meeting with HR in the coming months.

10. **Camera in Correctional Centres**

- Several centres and court locations stated that the camera in cells are inferior and do not allow staff to monitor inmates appropriately.
- Director Leon Taylor gave an overview of which centres are getting upgrades.



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Action

- Centres to raise any issues to the POVB Executive
- POVB Executive to liaise any issues to Director Taylor.

11. Staffing Levels

- Several centres have stated they have vacancies and due to these shortages they are constantly doing VORs.
- The centres that have these concerns are:
 - ☐ MNCC – custodial vacancies and overseer vacancies
 - ☐ Wellington – custodial vacancies.

Action

- MNCC has several staff on WC due to the hostage situation and other injuries. Due to this, CSNSW have attempted to move some casuals up there to assist and some staff from Surry Hills. CSNSW is also advertising for Overseer positions.
- POVB Executive to request that vacancies in MNCC be filled by TA permanent staff to assist.
- Delegates to put on centre issues register to request centre management meet to discuss a planned VOR structure. This is in line with Long Bay Hospital and CSNSW ruling out of the IRC.
- POVB executive to assist centres with developing their VOR structure if needed.

12. Talent Pools

- Delegates raised concern with talent pools and the lack of transparency in them. They requested staff be ranked. This was how talent pools were completed prior to the GSE Act being introduced.
- CSNSW stated that ranking is not necessarily beneficial as there may be certain skills set that a position requires and the person ranked 1 may not have those skills set.
- AC Corcoran did state that he has gone through all the feedback from the People Matters survey and he will be attending all centres to discuss the outcomes. One of the main issues was talent pools and the perception of “jobs for the boys” and nepotism.

Action

- Members to raise any concerns about Talent pools to the POVB Executive to address.
- POVB Executive to raise with CSNSW in the consultative forum and with HR meetings in the coming weeks.



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