

Taronga Conservation Society industrial update: allowances, casuals and consultation

First Aid allowance

On 19 March 2021, staff at Taronga Zoo Sydney and Taronga Western Plains Zoo Dubbo were provided with an email advising them first-aid allowance would be paid on a daily basis. The PSA has been advised that other allowances such as the laundry allowance have also been paid on a daily basis.

This advice is factually incorrect as first-aid allowance is paid either on a weekly or annual basis as per the *Taronga Conservation Society Australia Salaried Employees Award* which states:

10.1 ... An employee who is a qualified first-aid attendant and who is required to carry out the duties of a qualified first-aid attendant shall be paid an additional amount as provided in Item 2 of Table 2 - Other Rates and Allowances, of Part B, Monetary Rates. It is the intention of the parties to this award that such allowance shall be paid in a weekly amount equivalent to that available to members of the Public Service as defined under the Government Sector Employment Act 2013 and shall be varied to maintain that equivalent relationship. The weekly rate applicable will be referable to the annual allowance payable pursuant to the Crown Employees (Public Sector - Salaries 2019) Award and any variation or replacement Award and calculated as follows:

Annual Allowance/365.25 x 7 = Weekly Allowance

Taronga has no right under your Award to pay this allowance on a daily basis and the PSA will pursue underpayment in cases that this has occurred.

Casual audit

On 16 February 2021 at a Joint Consultative Committee meeting (JCC), the PSA raised concerns regarding long-term casuals being paid as a Trainee Keeper Level 1. The PSA requested Taronga to undertake an audit of casuals. More recently, the PSA requested information on how many Trainee Keepers have been offered the Trainee Skills Assessment Workbook to complete, which is a requirement under your Award

On 18 March 2021 Taronga advised, “the audit of Trainee Keepers/casuals... is currently underway, with further information to be provided next week”.

If you are a long-term casual and you have not been provided with a Trainee Skills Assessment Workbook, and thus denied the ability to be paid at a level commensurate with your skills and experience, please contact the PSA Member Support Centre at membersupport@psa.asn.au.



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Lack of consultation around workplace change

The PSA has ongoing concerns with Taronga management failing to provide information to the PSA with respect to matters affecting our members, even though the PSA has reminded the zoo's management on numerous occasions what constitutes consultation with the PSA.

As a result of this ongoing failure to properly consult, the PSA has lodged a dispute with the Industrial Relations Commission of NSW in an attempt to resolve these issues. The PSA will keep members up to date with how the dispute progresses. In the meantime, if you are in a situation where workplace change is being implemented, please contact the PSA to ensure we are aware.

