

PSA National Parks Vocational Branch meeting

On Monday 3 May 2021, National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Delegates met to discuss a range of issues. Also in attendance at the meeting were PSA industrial staff Nathan Bradshaw, Michael Sinclair and Kim de Govrik.

Aboriginal Delegate position on the NPVB

Nathan Bradshaw outlined the requirements under the PSA rules for the establishment of a position on the National Parks Vocational Branch (NPVB) for a dedicated Aboriginal Delegate. A number of options were discussed. This will be further discussed and resolved at the AGM in November. However, if anyone knows of a member that may be interested in filling the delegate role until November please advise a NPVB delegate or PSA industrial staff.

Ranger progression

Clarification of Ranger progression from Grade 1 to Grade 2 is still being sought by the PSA. Whilst some delegates were of the opinion that the matter should be referred to the Industrial Relations Commission, they were advised by PSA industrial staff that this won't be necessary as the Department has acknowledged that the PSA's position on this matter is correct.

Casual staff issues

A range of issues have been raised by NPWS casual staff (who are PSA members) in relation to their employment. These include cash-handling; use of private vehicles; pay increments; leave entitlements; private and secondary employment and conversion from casual roles to ongoing. PSA industrial staff will convene a separate meeting with Department of Planning Industry and Environment (DPIE) industrial staff to discuss these issues.

PSA Salaries application

This year's salaries application was discussed. Whilst the Government has indicated that a 1.5 per cent pay increase will be offered to employees the PSA will be seeking a 2.5 per cent increase. The PSA has previously distributed a survey link for all our members to have their say on how the union will proceed. Please click [HERE](#) to participate.

Laundry allowance

The PSA position on this matter is that any NPWS staff member in the Clerk classification who wears a uniform is entitled to the laundry allowance. This allowance, if not paid already, may be back dated for six years. Discussions in relation to this matter with DPIE industrial staff are ongoing.



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Incident roles in the Award

Members would be aware of a number of incident roles identified in the Award that have, for many years, not been evaluated and, as such, had gone unpaid. After significant pressure from the PSA, DPIE (with assistance from the PSA) has finally evaluated the roles then sought and been given approval from Treasury to fund the roles. It is anticipated that these roles will be paid from the next fire season.

Uniform Working Group

Whilst the Uniform Working Group is working hard to finalise the new uniform, provision of a final product is moving at a glacial pace. However, there is now confirmation that a PPE undergarment will be provided but it will not be Proban-treated. The corporate uniform is still being designed with no final decisions yet to be made on the component parts. It would appear that some new fire fighters have not been provided adequate PPE for firefighting to date.

Gender equality

There is a regional spokeswomen's event coming up at Western Plains Zoo. Naomi Goosen will be attending the event to represent the PSA/NPVB as a delegate. Amongst the many issues to be discussed will include gender equality and the need for psychological safety to enable equity; the DPIE zero tolerance task force to make DPIE a safe workplace; creating a workplace where everyone's welcome; and diversity inclusion.

FMAC

Report back from the latest FMAC meeting included discussion on Parks Programs being included as part of the NPWS firefighting workforce; response by FIMS to the recommendations of the various bushfire enquiries; the preparation of a briefing note to update fire management plans; and discussion of the development and addition of safety equipment to firefighting vehicles.

Law enforcement and compliance

After years of pressure from the PSA and its Delegates, NPWS is planning to undertake a scoping study of an agency-wide DPIE database for law enforcement! There are currently funds available for the scoping study on a database. The committee performing the scoping study only has one operational staff member. However, the NPVB will ask for additional representation from the field, including one female member.

Why temporary and casual staff should join the PSA

Finally, a message to these staff. With all the new and creative funding sources provided to NPWS by Government, many new staff are being recruited. The PSA welcomes them aboard. Unfortunately, the majority are only temporary roles.



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However, it is the PSA's position that you should all be made ongoing. So join the PSA (as some of you have already done) and support our efforts to make staff ongoing so they can enjoy a long and rewarding career with the NPWS!

You can join the PSA today at www.psa.asn.au/join.

