

Department of Education update: Restructures, flexible working hours and relocations

On 9 June 2021 PSA staff and delegates met with the Department of Education, Industrial Relations for the quarterly Corporate Services and Field Staff Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) Meeting.

Restructures

To track organisational change, the PSA has “Restructures” as a standing agenda item on the JCC. The PSA can report the following:

Schools Infrastructure NSW realignment: was finalised on 8 April and any further recruitment will be on a business-as-usual basis.

Aboriginal Affairs NSW realignment: was finalised on 17 May and its functions have moved in its entirety to the Department of Premier and Cabinet

The newly announced Regional, Rural and Remote Education Policy (RRREP) Directorate: The PSA requested to be briefed on the department’s plans for the creation of the new RRREP Directorate. Acting/Executive Director, Carolyn Hill presented to the PSA at the JCC meeting, outlining the rationale and initial plans and undertook to engage with the Association in formal consultation once substantive plans are formulated.

Transformation Directorate Realignment: The PSA requested to be briefed on change plans for this new directorate, created from reappointing 5 teams from the Senior Executive Restructure in 2020. The Executive Director, Alex Martin, who joined the department in December 2020 met with PSA staff and delegates on 8 June 2021 and is seeking feedback from staff and the Association on change plans. Plans will result in a net increase in roles from 66 to 92 with the number of ongoing roles set to increase from 38 to 62.

The PSA is ensuring the Department adheres to proper placement processes in first matching roles and conducting suitability assessments. We are informed the process is at the design stage and that matching will take place from 21 June through to 23 July 2021. We are assured weekly updates are being provided to impacted staff and there is a dedicated intranet site for feedback. Affected members should contact the PSA for advice and industrial assistance.

The Flexible Working (hours) Agreement

The PSA has communicated with members throughout 2020 and 2021 to ensure they are aware of and compliant with, their Flexible Working Agreement 2019. At consecutive JCCs we have raised issues of non-compliant managerial directions and incorrect information denying access to flexible start and finish times and accrual of flex leave whilst working remotely. Where these breaches have persisted members have provided details to the PSA.



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On 7 June the PSA provided formal correspondence to DoE Industrial Relations. Your union outlined specific examples in certain directorates and our expectation that targeted action should be taken by the Department to remind the offending managers of employees' Crown entitlement to flexible start and finish times and accrual of flex leave. The Department has committed to investigate the examples provided and is preparing a response to the PSA about what action will be taken to ensure compliance with the Flex Agreement. To our members we reiterate that you keep and record accurate working hours on your timesheet and reasonably accrue and request flex leave, as per the Agreement.

Transformation of corporate support services program

In July 2020, the department appointed a new Chief Operating Officer (COO), who has undertaken a significant three-year transformation program. The PSA has put this program on the JCC as a standing agenda item. PSA staff and delegates have met with COO, David Withey and Acting/Transformation Unit, Executive Director, Lorelei Brealey on 28 April and 2 June 2021 to be informed about the program. The Association will be engaged in formal consultation throughout the year, with five meetings scheduled so far. The Association will ensure PSA member/delegate representation across the different impacted areas will be involved in the consultation. We note that following the 2020 review of Corporate Services which produced recommendations for the four functional areas of EDconnect, ITD, Finance and Procurement, this transformation program has a substantially broader scope.

EDConnect partnership agreement

On 10 February and 22 April PSA staff and delegates from both Corporate and Schools met with the Executive Director, Maria Claudia Romero and the leadership team at EDConnect to air concerns about the elements of the Partnership Agreement. Concerns the PSA raised include: unauthorised absences should be managed by a person not an automated process, casual staff should be paid on time in the current fortnight and problems with paying outstanding school invoices, P-card use and Purchase order processes need to be urgently addressed.

The PSA has put formal correspondence to the Department and maintains the issue as a JCC standing agenda item.

EDConnect roles externally advertised

The PSA after enquiry, was advised that the comparative assessments conducted for temporary contractors and those on temporary assignments from grades 1-2 to grade 9/10 were undertaken to meet GSE and capabilities framework compliance. Once completed, staff will be in a talent pool and able to be offered further work at grade. In writing and followed up at the JCC, the PSA noted the process is not yet finalised and 30 June is fast approaching. Staff on Temporary contracts and assignments should be given reasonable notice concerning the ending or extension of their roles, post 30 June.



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Training Services: Relocation to 105 Phillip Street, Parramatta

With the move of Training Services NSW to Phillip Street, Parramatta, members have made enquiries about the provision of lockers for personal secure storage. The PSA notes that not all staff will be back in the office at the same time but has asked the department to outline its plan for those who work from the office to be given access to a locker. A meeting was conducted by the Accommodation Manager with Training Services Staff on 13 May and DOE-IR will follow up on the process for accessing a locker and report back to the PSA.

How to contact the PSA

You can stay connected with the PSA through your local workplace delegates and your Organiser.

You can also raise individual and collective issues with the PSA by contacting our Member Support Centre on membersupport@psa.asn.au or calling 1300 772 679.

Your PSA Organiser

If you would like to arrange for a teleconference or Zoom meeting with your PSA Organiser, please contact us directly via email.

Simone Scalmer sscalmer@psa.asn.au

Your PSA Industrial Officer

Katy Ambler kambler@psa.asn.au

Update your details – have you moved work locations?

Please update your details with the PSA by sending an email (subject: 'Update my work details') with your current signature block to membership@psa.asn.au.

