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2023

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17 **Join the club**
Following in the footsteps of greats



Help is at hand **29**
How a union benefit saved a life



34 **Women's voices heard**
Highlights of the 2022 conference

CONTENTS

-
- 04** **From the General Secretary**
Real jobs, real wages
-
- 05** **News**
The latest from our workplaces
-
- 06** **From the President**
A woman's place is in Parliament House
-
- 08** **From the Assistant General Secretary**
MPs rush to the exit
-
- 24** **Aboriginal Conference**
Back after a two-year break
-
- 26** **Membership**
Benefits of being union
-
- 30** **Real jobs, real wages**
Working for NSW and the economy
-
- 38** **Work Health and Safety**
Avoiding burnout
-
- 44** **Schools Recognition Week**
Celebrating our amazing members
-
- 46** **Women at Work**
Issues facing our members
-
- 48** **Reviews**
Latest books and podcasts
-
- 56** **Training**
Getting ready for polling day
-

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The Public Service Association of New South Wales and Community and Public Sector Union (SPSF Group) NSW Branch acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and the places in which we live. We pay respect to Ancestors and Elders, past, present and future. We recognise the unique cultural and spiritual relationship and celebrate the contributions of First Nations peoples to Australia.



All members of CPSU NSW are also members of the Public Service Association. The PSA is the associated body that manages and resources CPSU NSW.





ENDING THE EMPLOYMENT LIMBO NEEDS REAL JOBS AND REAL WAGES

Our nation's prosperity was built on secure, full-time work.

The State Government fills many roles delivering services and protecting the people of NSW. It also has a less celebrated role, creating the foundations of a secure, full-time workforce.

The NSW Government is Australia's biggest employer, with more than 400,000 employees providing essential services across the state.

For many families, a state-government employee is the main breadwinner, providing stability and security, as well as providing services for the wider community.

Some regional centres would have far less secure economies were it not for the Public Sector workers using local businesses and services.

“THE NSW GOVERNMENT IS AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST EMPLOYER, WITH MORE THAN 400,000 EMPLOYEES”

Yet for too many government employees, these full-time, secure roles can be elusive. Our Organisers and Industrial Officers regularly deal with cases of people who have been in insecure roles for more than a decade, employed in a permanent limbo where jobs can be whisked away at the stroke of a pen.

Our schools, for example, hire staff such as School Learning Support Officers on a year-to-year basis depending on the number of students needing support. Enough

children move on to another school and the roles vanish and there is one less Public Sector worker in employment.

This employment-status limbo can sometimes last for more than a decade.

There are similar stories in the TAFE and university systems, which run along using an army of insecure employees who are not sure they will have a job in a year.

Employees hired in insecure roles are less likely to want to be branded a “troublemaker” and speak up, ask for a raise or a promotion, or point out an unsafe workplace.

Away from work, they are less likely to gain access to credit and are more likely to suffer from stress brought on by their uncertain work future.

There is hope, though. We recently had a visit from the Shadow Education Minister, Prue Car, who vowed to do more

to reduce the school system's reliance on insecure work. The PSA/CPSU NSW hopes, should her party win government, this will be repeated in other parts of the state's Public Sector and its universities and TAFE campuses.

The emergence of Australia's thriving middle class came about thanks to real jobs and real wages.

Our country needs people in full-time, secure jobs drawn from both the public and private sectors. And regardless of what party is in power, the State Government has a role keeping that prosperity going.

On behalf of all the executive and staff here at the PSA/CPSU NSW, I'd like to wish all members and their families a Merry Christmas, a Happy New Year and a prosperous, well-paid 2023.



MINNS VOWS A LABOR GOVERNMENT WILL END THE SALARY CAP

A change of government in NSW will mean more money in Public Sector workers' pockets.

NSW Labor Leader Chris Minns won plaudits at the State Labor Conference when he vowed to end the wages cap that has existed for Public

Sector workers since 2011.

Speaking at the 2022 NSW Labor Conference, held in Sydney Town Hall, Mr Minns said it was “essential we start building our public services”.

Mr Minns pointed out that for this rebuilding to commence, the wages cap has to be removed.

“The Liberal and National Government wages cap has held back wages in the public and indeed in the private sector,” he said. “It has left industrial negotiations up to lawyers.

“Labor will scrap this broken system. We will abolish the wages cap.”

PSA General Secretary Stewart Little welcomed the announcement, saying it would remove a policy that unjustly suppresses members' wages.

“Inflation is running rampant, yet we are stuck with a policy restricting wage increases up to 2.5 per cent,” said Mr Little. “The policy was a bad one when legislated by the O’Farrell Government. In the current economic climate, it is even worse.”

The PSA has long demanded the State Government relinquish its control over Public Sector salaries and instead allow the Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) to properly set wages and conditions for the state’s workers.

“Our members’ wages and conditions should not be a political football,” said Mr Little. “They need to be set by a totally independent umpire – the IRC.”

At present, the IRC’s powers to set wages rises are stifled by the state government wages cap that, as inflation has increased, has wiped out a decade of pay increases.



“This needs to change,” said Mr Little. “We need to let the IRC return to its original role as an independent court of law that can exercise its powers to award you fair wages and conditions without undue interference from a government determined to wage war on the Public Sector.”

Mr Little proposes that the State

Government step away from setting wages, in a similar way that the Federal Government leaves interest rates to an independent body: the Reserve Bank of Australia.

“This would have spared the Government the sight of PSA members marching for better wages in June this year,” said Mr Little.

2022 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR CPSU, COMMUNITY & PUBLIC SECTOR UNION NSW BRANCH

The 2022 CPSU-SPSF NSW Branch financial statements can be accessed at:

- PSA NSW website at: www.psa.asn.au/financial-statements
- CPSU NSW website at: www.cpsunsw.org.au/financial-statements



NO LONGER JUST A MAN'S WORLD

Women thrive in male-dominated workplaces. We need them in our halls of power.

As I work in a male-dominated sector myself, I was heartened to see more discussions about what women face in what have been seen as long-standing male occupations and industries at this year's PSA/CPSU NSW Women's Conference.

Our new Women's Council Chair, Leanne Smith, for example, works at Ausgrid, which is 84 per cent male. Women account for only two per cent of employees in the field.

Despite the male dominance in Ausgrid's workforce, Ms Smith was able to push for stillbirth leave to be included in the Ausgrid Enterprise Agreement.

This is impressive work, as one of the biggest problems facing women in male-dominated occupations is not having

issues of importance to female workers taken seriously by management and even colleagues.

There is another male-dominated workplace that needs changing: our parliamentary chambers. The NSW lower house has among the worst levels of female representation among state and federal legislative bodies. The lower house – the Legislative Assembly – is where the government of the day is formed, so it is vital that more women are elected to this chamber.

It should come as no surprise then, that your union's proposal to have superannuation paid on the unpaid portion of parental leave was largely ignored by the State Government.

This is despite the fact this proposal would have helped reduce the massive gender difference in men's and women's superannuation balances on retirement.

This is why so many women members are denied real, permanent, full-time jobs that pay substantial wages.

The recent federal election delivered a large increase in women sitting in the House of Representatives, including an impressive nine of the 10 independent crossbenchers. However, just 11 of the Coalition's 48 MPs in the lower house are women, with a paltry two caucusing with the National Party.

While there is a higher ratio of Coalition women in the Senate, they are still outnumbered by men.

Improvements for women in the workplace require more women in power. Our party structures need to give women more winnable seats to make sure this happens.

“IMPROVEMENTS FOR WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE REQUIRE MORE WOMEN IN POWER”



JOBS AND SKILLS SUMMIT RESETS INDUSTRIAL BALANCE

Industrial cooperation was on show in the Canberra talkfest. But not all NSW politicians have caught on.

The sight of employer groups and unions talking side-by-side about common goals is a positive sign for the Australian job market, said PSA/CPSU NSW General Secretary Stewart Little.

Convened by the new Albanese Federal Government, the Jobs and Skills Summit made progress towards finding solutions to Australia's wage crisis, after a decade of low wages and real wage cuts for workers.

Since the summit met, unions and employer groups have differed over issues such as industry-wide bargaining and the definition of a small business. However, the industrial-relations inertia of the previous nine years seems to have stopped.

"Wage growth is a critical issue for our country," said the Secretary of the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), Sally McManus. "There has been some great progress made over the last two days, but the hard work begins now."

"We are also pleased that the issues of gender equity and the removal of structural barriers for women, First Nation's people, people with disabilities and other marginalised groups have led discussions."

The ACTU came to the summit with the goal of modernising the bargaining system, investing in skills and training, pushing for better opportunities for women, and ending exploitation and underpayment of migrant workers.

"After nearly a decade of industrial friction, the summit showed what is possible when a government brings workers and employers together to find a way forward," said Mr Little. "The sight of employers and unions together was heartening."

"It is a pity, though, that at the same time NSW Treasurer Matt Kean was firing the opening shots in what looks like an anti-union election campaign."



Top: Business Council of Australia Chief Executive Jennifer Westacott and Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) President Michele O'Neil. Bottom: ACTU Secretary Sally McManus and Council of Small Business Organisations Australia Chief Executive Alexi Boyd

Federal Opposition Leader, Peter Dutton, was notably absent from the summit. The Liberal Party Leader instead preferred to issue negative media statements about union leaders who attended the event.

However, the same union leaders he publicly demonised were photographed with leaders of employer groups such as the Business Council of Australia and the Council of Small Business Organisations Australia.



RESIGNED TO OPPOSITION

Can the last LNP MP to leave the House switch off the lights?

This year has been billed as the year of the “Great Resignation”, when employees, inspired by historically low unemployment rates and having experienced more flexible working practices during the pandemic, change careers *en masse*.

It has been said never has there been a time when the labour market is so in favour of workers that changing careers has been so inviting.

One sector, though, appears to be experiencing the great resignation right now in greater numbers than others – NSW conservative politicians.

PSA members will recall last year, just as we collectively stumbled out of the darkness of lockdown and into the daylight, Premier Gladys Berejiklian packed up her desk and headed to the more lucrative but arguably now equally tumultuous arms of Optus. Whilst this came as a surprise to many at the time the subsequent revelations of ICAC made her decision a case of jumping before she was pushed.

She was followed almost simultaneously by her Deputy, John Barilaro who appears to have spent the preceding months in office positioning himself for the most lucrative of gigs on the public dime, notwithstanding he had spent most of his underwhelming parliamentary career disparaging our members and the public sector in general.

Now with the 2023 NSW Election looming and the polls looking shakier for the LNP than Waqa Blake under a Nathan Cleary torpedo bomb, State LNP MPs are charging for the exit like a Boxing Day sale.

In March LNP Upper House MPs, Don Harwin and Catherine Cusack, pulled the pin. The former won't be given a fond farewell by our members at the Powerhouse Museum, having presided

over the disastrous relocation project to Parramatta, while the latter did so in protest over Scott Morrison's flood-relief pork barrelling before voters even got to show her the door.

In July Gabrielle Upton, a former Minister more famous more for her inability to make any decisions than bad ones, announced she was leaving the plum seat of Vacluse.

In August, the Premier's inbox overflowed with resignation letters. Victor Dominello Minister for Customer Service and Member for Ryde resigned sadly due to family health issue. Kevin Connolly, MP for Riverstone, advised he was leaving the backbench for someone else. Grafton koala-hater and private sector gaol advocate Chris Gulaptis headed for greener pastures. And then former Roads Minister, Member for Oxley Melinda Pavey, sang “Take this job and shove it” after being unceremoniously dumped from cabinet by Mr Perrottet.

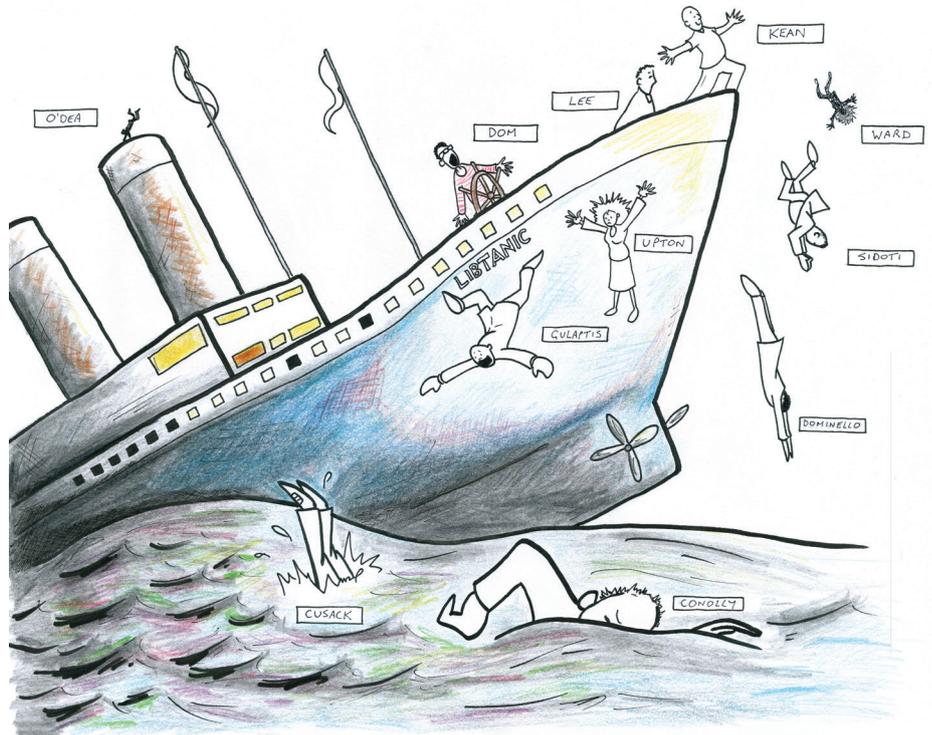
Rob Stokes and Geoff Lee are gone and Health Minister Brad Hazzard must think his party's chances are crook, so he's out.

Ironically one of the Government's most scandal-ridden members, nominal independent Gareth Ward, is among the few that haven't tendered resignations from Parliament and intends to run again. John Sidoti, however, has gone.

Is it a case of career changes or MPs evacuating their posts voluntarily before the electorate does it for them?

What it appears to be is a 12-year-old stale Government that even its own members don't want to face the consequences for.

Whatever the case, the result in March 2023 will be a Government full of fresh faces. For PSA members, hopefully this means fresh ideas replacing the oppressive wage policies, privatisation agenda and unimaginative restructuring of the incumbents.





THANKS, BUT NO THANKS

PSA members and the volunteers they support get served a volley of insults by the government that slashed their budgets.

Every year, the State Government applied its clumsiest cost-saving instrument, the efficiency dividend, to the State Emergency Service (SES) and the Rural Fire Service (RFS). Had it not been slated for eventual extinction, Resilience NSW also would have been subjected to regular cuts to its operating budget.

Yet, as floodwaters receded in northern NSW, the State Government began a frenzy of finger-pointing, culminating in a plan to cut services even further with the merger of the SES and RFS operations

and the handing over of Resilience NSW's operations to the state's Police Force.

"The announcements in relation to the NSW flood inquiries caused considerable concern amongst the PSA membership of SES, RFS and Resilience NSW," said PSA/CPSU NSW General Secretary Stewart Little. "In particular, our SES members are hurting because they were unfairly targeted by a report, seemingly designed to take the focus away from Government mismanagement of flood emergency planning and response to that of public service failure."

Mr Little said the Government's plans to merge the offices was simply following its failed strategies of the previous 12 years.

"Streamlining of services has always been code by this NSW Government to mean job losses," he said. "It is unclear how the streamlining of services or using

the words 'merging back-office functions' will provide support to the communities across the state when dealing with these types of emergencies.

**“
IN PARTICULAR, OUR SES
MEMBERS WERE UNFAIRLY
TARGETED BY THE REPORT
”**

"With the effects of climate change expected to create more flooding and more fires, surely it makes sense to ditch the efficiency dividend folly and instead invest more money into the agencies the people of NSW rely on when things get tough."

SOUTH COAST WORKERS TALK TAFE



ACTU Secretary discussed the changing political landscape with unionists.

The PSA/CPSU NSW was represented at a two-day conference held by the South Coast Labour Council.

Secretary of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, Sally McManus, was keynote speaker. She discussed the importance of TAFE and the changing industrial landscape with a new federal government.

“Wollongong and the South Coast have long been a union stronghold,” said PSA/CPSU NSW Regional Organiser Shane Elliott. “As our economy evolves, it is vital that a thriving union movement is there for workers.”

BETTER FUNDING MODEL NEEDED

Training should take precedence to address Australia's shortage of workers.

COVID-19 shut Australia's borders, resulting in a skills shortage as immigration slowed. According to PSA/CPSU NSW Assistant General Secretary Troy Wright, a properly funded TAFE system is primed to fill the skills gap.

Since the Liberal/National Coalition came to power in NSW, enrolments at the state's TAFE system have dropped by 70,000 students. The biggest decline was in regional areas.

“TAFE has been attacked a number of ways under this government,” said Mr Wright. “The first and foremost is the disastrous funding model.

“Essentially it is a voucher system; so rather than TAFE receiving block funding, where it receives a certain amount of money to teach a certain amount of students at a certain number of campuses.

“Instead the funding is attached to an individual, who chooses where they study.

“Suddenly NSW was awash with all these funny little private providers popping up to teach particular programs. The most obvious ones were ones teaching personal training. We didn't have a skills shortage in personal training, there are no jobs in personal training, but this is what the Liberal Government thinks the market will decide.

“Meanwhile TAFE is left with the heavy-industry stuff, like vehicle courses or commercial cookery. They were too capital-intensive for private operators that just stole the cheap end of the market.

“We saw a lot of providers collapse and people graduate with worthless qualifications.”

Mr Wright said this resulted in a skills shortage that the previous federal government was happy to plug with immigration. However, COVID-19 cut that flow of labour, leading to businesses scrambling for skilled workers.

“Training and skills shortages cannot be solved by a market-based system, it needs the heavy hand of government,” said Mr Wright. “It is not enough to do it the State Government's way, which is ‘go study what you want, with whoever you want.’”

Mr Wright said vital sectors such as aged care and disability support have been let down by the free-market free-for-all.

“A couple of years ago TAFE was cutting back on health-related courses,” said Mr Wright. “This is a problem across NSW, but particularly in regional NSW, where campuses are being replaced by Connected Learning Centres (CLSs). These are little buildings with a classroom with a video screen.

“You can't teach a lot of the practical skills through a TV screen.”

Mr Wright said the town of Scone, for example, had a local TAFE that suited the area's thriving equine industry. However, this was replaced by a CLC and the state-of-the-art TAFE campus was sold off.

At the recent Jobs and Skills Summit, 60,000 new fee-free TAFE places were promised, by the incoming Albanese Government with an additional 120,000 existing courses made fee-free to address shortages in the employment market.

The CPSU NSW TAFE Departmental Committee welcomed the new fee-free courses, but the Executive expressed concern that current staffing levels will be overwhelmed by the influx of students.

The Committee has moved that the State Government needs to increase staffing to match the new places.

CPSU NSW NAILS NEW AGREEMENT

Negotiations will commence again next year.

CPSU NSW industrial staff and Delegates have negotiated a one-year Enterprise Agreement for TAFE employees.

If passed, the agreement will give members the maximum allowable pay increase of 2.53 per cent, plus superannuation, with wages to be backpaid to 18 September 2022.

The agreement will include a flex agreement clause, which is enforceable.

In addition, all entitlements paid out to those who are leaving the organisation or exited after 18 September 2022 due to redundancy will be at the new rate, including Voluntary Redundancy payments.

“The one-year agreement means we hope to be negotiating the next agreement in a different political environment, namely a Labor State Government that has ditched the wages cap,” said CPSU NSW Industrial Manager Thane Pearce. “We’d like to bargain without the cap hanging over us.”

Despite operating in the federal industrial relations system, members in TAFE are still bound by the wages cap imposed on NSW Public Sector workers since 2011.



TAFE MEMBERS WIN PERMANANCY

Union members no longer in insecure roles.

Action by the CPSU NSW could see a widespread cut to the number of TAFE workers employed in casual positions.

The Fair Work Commission (FWC) found that TAFE does not have reasonable grounds to refuse to make offers of conversion to any casual employees to convert to full-time or part-time employment.

However, the Commissioner only made

orders in relation to the three casuals who gave evidence as a part of the hearing. CPSU NSW has written to TAFE seeking that it makes offers to all casual employees who meet the criteria, which state the employer has to have been employed for more than 12 months and has worked a regular pattern of hours in the past six months on an ongoing basis which, without significant adjustment, the employee could continue to work as a full-time employee or a part-time employee.

TAFE has until 7 December 2022 to appeal the decision.

“The ruling of the FWC, means that any casual employee who meets the criteria

for conversion under the act should be offered permanent employment,” said CPSU NSW Legal Services Manager Alison McRobert. “Criteria will include length of service and a regular pattern of hours, as is required under 66B of the *Fair Work Act*. This is a huge win, and a major step forward in the union’s fight for secure and ongoing employment at TAFE.

“The union will keep all members updated regarding the dispute, including whether or not TAFE appeals the decision.

“In the meantime, if you are a casual and have any questions concerning the dispute, please contact the CPSU NSW on 1800 772 679.”



STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT REPORT HIGHLIGHTS NEED FOR ACTION

Sussan Ley may have ignored a report into Australia's perilous environment, but the State Government can no longer look the other way.

A report into the perilous state of the environment hit the desk of then Federal Environment Minister Sussan Ley in late 2021. Possibly realising her government was facing an election in May, the Minister decided not to release it to the public.

In 2022, the incoming Labor Government released the report, which is grim reading for anyone concerned about the environment.

The report found that "overall, the state and trend of the environment of Australia are poor and deteriorating".

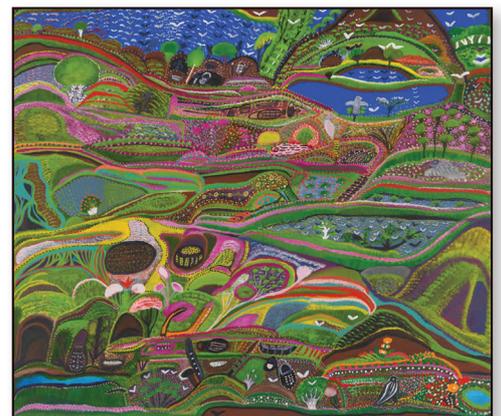
Along with climate change, the report cites habitat loss and invasive species as issues facing the country's fauna.

PSA Industrial Officer Michael Sinclair said the report highlights the important roles played by union members in agencies such as the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) and the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE). Further, he said, more needs to be done to support these members.

"We have been in talks with the NSW Government about extending the NSW National Parks system," said Mr Sinclair. "This will be vital for biodiversity."

Mr Sinclair said the additional land set aside for species is a good move, but more staff such as Rangers and Scientists will ensure animals are protected.

"We need to maintain fences to keep feral animals out, run breeding programs and control weeds," he said. "These all require boots on the ground."



Overview

Australia 
State of the Environment 2021

FISHERIES MEMBERS FLY THE FLAG

Marine members get a new Delegate.

PSA members at the Sydney Institute of Marine Science Fisheries in Mosman have elected a new Delegate, Nick Meadows (second from left).

“Staff in Fisheries are about to commence negotiating their new award, so it is vital as many people as possible in this important part of the NSW Public Sector are PSA members,” said Industrial Officer Shane Howes.

“Marine Science Fisheries runs breeding programs to ensure the state’s aquatic populations are maintained. The centre also carries out research as varied as jellyfish populations and the effect fear of shark attacks has on tourism.”



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BRODERICK REPORT SLAMS PARLIAMENT

The state's house of governance should be a shining light to workplaces throughout NSW. It's not.

Parliamentary chambers throughout Australia came under increased scrutiny when Liberal Party staffer Brittany Higgins alleged she was raped in a ministerial office in Canberra.

In NSW, Parliament House has been rocked by allegations of bullying from Coalition, Labor and Greens MPs in both chambers, as well as a report damning the workplace's culture.

A review of workplace culture in State Parliament and electoral offices, conducted by former Sex Discrimination Commissioner Elizabeth Broderick found that five staff members had experienced actual or attempted sexual assaults at work.

In addition, more than a third of respondents said they had been bullied or sexually harassed in the preceding five years. About 450 people replied to the survey.

In an article published in the online newspaper *The Guardian*, Labor staffer and PSA Delegate Peta Waller-Bryant wrote: "No-one should have to feel 'lucky' that they avoid being regularly abused, bullied or assaulted as part of their work. But such is the daily reality for too many employees in Parliament."

"In any normal workplace, a misconduct complaint would see all parties afforded a sensitive and procedurally fair investigation process without bias. That has never existed for us. The legislative scheme covering our employment, introduced in 2013, specifically excludes us from the protections within the *Industrial Relations Act*. We can be fired without reason or notice at any time, with no available unfair dismissal processes. We also have no rights to be consulted on any changes to our employment."

General Secretary of the PSA/CPSU NSW, Stewart Little, said Ms Broderick's findings were "serious and urgent".

"Since the current Government passed the *Member of Parliament Staff Act*, MPs' staff have been insecure workers, prevented from accessing the most basic



workplace protections that are available to other employees in NSW," said Mr Little. "These vulnerable workers operate in workplaces with substantial power imbalances and limited access to effective reporting mechanisms when misconduct is perpetrated against them.

"These workers do not have a seat at the table to negotiate or consult on their workplace conditions and protections. They can be sacked without warning or reason at any time."

Assistant General Secretary, Troy Wright, said the Broderick Report "demonstrates these elements have combined to create a dangerous environment for bullying, sexual harassment and assault.

"This must change. Every leader in NSW Parliament has a solemn duty to treat the findings and recommendations in this report with the respect, urgency and seriousness they deserve."

The PSA has drawn up a bill it believes will improve working conditions for staff in Parliament, giving them the right to take their case to the Industrial Relations Commission and making sure they do not answer solely to the MP they work for.

ON YOUR SIDE, WHATEVER COLOUR YOUR POLITICS

The Broderick Review and subsequent revelations from Parliamentary and electoral office staff have led to allegations about politicians from all sides of the political spectrum.

"Ideological perceptions about unions have seen staff from the conservative side of politics reluctant to join the PSA," said Acting Industrial Manager Simon van Vegchel. "But support for people who need help at work is not dependent on politics. If a member needs help at work, we will give them help at work."

Potential members will find a membership form on page 57.

SOUTHERN CROSS GETS NEW EA

Enterprise Agreements are being reached throughout NSW.

Professional Staff at Southern Cross University (SCU) have a new Enterprise Agreement (EA). Despite opposition from the National Tertiary Education Union, staff voted to accept the agreement, which will see pay rises of 9-10.5 per cent over three years.

The EA also includes the removal of arbitrary categories of employment and improved conversion rights from fixed term to ongoing employment.

Superannuation will be paid on unpaid parental leave and there is an increase in leave provisions for employees who experience late pregnancy miscarriage, still birth and perinatal death.

Employees can access compassionate leave for early pregnancy miscarriage, or where their partner experiences early pregnancy miscarriage.

A new clause mandates formal consultation processes in any change that is likely to result in two or more employees being retrenched. Another clause requires the university to genuinely consider redeployment before deciding to make a position redundant

At Western Sydney University, a proposed EA includes a 2.6 per cent pay increase and a \$1000 uplift for levels 1-5. Levels 6-7 get a \$500 uplift.

Next October will see a 3.35 per cent increase. In 2024, the increase will be 2.9 per cent and 2.6 per cent in March 2025.

An Agreement is also near completion at the Australian Catholic University (ACU). If passed, it will include a 2.8 per cent pay increase next January. Again, there is a \$1000 uplift for levels 1-5, and levels 6-7 get a \$500 uplift.

A 3.5 per cent pay increase will be awarded in January 2024, three per cent a year later, and 2.8 per cent in July 2025.

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MEMBERS FIGHT FOR A FAIR GO FROM SERCO

Officers took action to get a fair wage for working with some of the state's most dangerous inmates.

CPSU NSW members at Grafton's Clarence Correctional Centre forced Serco to up its pay offer by walking off the job three times. Members had been forced to take action over their employer's refusal to pay them at least \$30 an hour for working in the private-run prison.

In November 2022, Serco finally upped its offer to meet the CPSU NSW's demands, including a \$1000 sign-on bonus.

"This offer is the result of years of negotiations followed by several months of industrial action," said CPSU NSW Assistant Secretary Troy Wright. "Without members participating in protected action, Serco never would have tabled the

initial offer, let alone another offer with a sign-on bonus included.

"Everybody who participated in the action and was an active union member during this period should be incredibly proud of what you've managed to achieve."

In late September 2022, members gathered at the Truck Drivers Memorial Park for their first action, a 12-hour stoppage.

"For too long, Serco has mistreated and undervalued Officers at Clarence," said Mr Wright at the time. "Serco made it very clear that they believe the Officers are not worth anything more than \$28 per hour, making them the lowest paid Officers in the country."

"This is despite the dangers they face on the job on a daily basis. This comes from a multinational company with an estimated market value in the billions, who are happy to line the pockets of their Corporate Managers and Executives, but think offering an additional 45 cents an hour for Officers is adequate.

"News flash: it isn't."

After the action, Serco returned to the negotiating table.

At the meeting, the CPSU NSW once again reiterated union members were not going to accept anything less than \$30 per hour. Serco advised that it couldn't move to \$30 and gave varied reasons as to why, including contractual arrangements and affordability.

"Serco was pushed on this point, and finally acknowledged that it wasn't the case that it can't afford the pay rise that members asked for but were choosing not to pay it," said Mr Wright. "Despite this, Serco informed the union that it would talk to people on their end (presumably those in head office) and let the union know whether it can offer more than the pittance that is already on the table."

After CPSU NSW members rejected a further offer, Officers again walked off in October 2022.

"A huge correctional facility running





on the outskirts of town should be a massive bonus for the Grafton business community,” said CPSU NSW Assistant General Secretary Troy Wright. “However, the fact is our members are the country’s lowest paid Correctional Officers.

“We are sure many people in the Grafton business community are unaware that they are missing out on valuable custom while Serco repatriates so much of its profits. Serco is valued at approximately UK£2 billion, or about AU\$3.4 billion.

“It made an after-tax profit of more than \$40 million in 2021.”

The CPSU NSW has enlisted the local business community to support the Officers. Businesses have been visited and contacted by mail by the union and a local advertising campaign has been run.

“Our members and the local business community both have a stake in this,” said Mr Wright. “We want a Fair Go from Serco.”

The union also ran a campaign with advertising in the local press, in cinemas and roadside billboards.

The Clarence Correctional Centre is the largest prison in Australia. It was built in rural land outside Grafton after the government-run gaol in town was closed. The old prison had operated since the 19th century.

Since its opening, the Clarence Correctional Centre has been operated by global outsourcing behemoth Serco. Serco also operates immigration detention centres, driver licensing, hospitals, government call centres and even the Ghan train service between Adelaide and Darwin.

Prisons Serco operates in Britain have locked inmates down 24 hours a day to cut back on staffing levels.

In addition, it has been associated with overbilling. In 2013, Serco and rival firm G4S were caught systematically overbilling the British government tens of millions of pounds on contracts to tag and monitor criminal offenders.



THREE GENERATIONS OF WOMEN PROTECT THE STATE

When Emily Harris began her first shift at Bathurst Gaol, she was following in the footsteps of her mother and grandmother.

Emily Harris is the youngest of three generations of Prison Officers working at the same time at Bathurst Gaol, employed alongside her mum, Stacey, and grandmother Maree.

“I look up to Nan and want to model the way she works,” said Emily. “She has a lot of respect from others; I want to mirror her career, and Mum’s too.”

“The training was intense but fantastic – it put me out of my comfort zone, I challenged myself and pushed through, and learned a lot of things I never thought I’d be able to do.”

She will be in good hands at work, as her mother prides herself as a mentor

for women working in the prison.

“A big thing for me is helping younger, female staff who are coming through; to be a role model, or a mentor, is a special part of this job,” said Stacey. “It’s not a man’s world anymore.”

Stacey said her mother, Maree, “always worked in areas dominated by males”.

Maree said she enjoyed working with young offenders.

“One of the first things I did was camping with the Young Offenders Program – I was ankle deep in snow thinking, ‘what have I done?’,” she said. “Then their parents saw a change, they saw the light had come on, their kids now spoke to them, and they thanked me for guiding them ... that was my lightbulb moment.”



PSA WINS PERMANENCY COMMITMENT

Shadow Education Minister listens to union concerns on insecure work.

Opposition Education Spokesperson, Prue Car, has responded to the PSA's campaigning on insecure work in schools, committing a Minns Labor Government to creating more permanent roles for members.

"The school system at the moment, is under pressure," she told the PSA's Schools Departmental Committee.

Ms Car, the party's Deputy Leader,

said she agreed with the PSA that School Administrative and Support (SAS) staff, particularly School Learning Support Officers, required urgent action alongside similar improvements to teachers' workloads.

"The percentage of casual SAS staff is unacceptable to me," she said. "More students with complex needs require assistance from support staff."

Ms Car said Labor would beat the State Government's promise to make 10,000 teachers and support staff permanent.

Reducing insecure work, she said, would involve looking at changing how funding, which is usually allocated to students, is allocated. Ms Car floated the

idea of permanency in a region rather than tying employees to a student or a particular school. This would also allow staff to follow children through the school system, giving them continuity of care.

"We would be open to working with the union and staff reps to make sure you have permanency going forward," she said. "Education will be a massive part of the election campaign."

"Permanency will be a priority of the Labor Government if elected."

PSA General Secretary Stewart Little said Ms Car's commitments showed that the union's campaigning on permanency had paid off for members.

SCHOOLS MEMBERS GET PAY RISE

Industrial Relations Commission rejects Government bid not to backdate increase.

Schools members will receive their pay increase backdated to 15 July after the Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) ruled out a plan from the State Government to deny members any back pay.

The one-year agreement will give a three per cent increase (2.53 per cent applied to salaries and 0.5 per cent superannuation guarantee). This is the maximum allowable

under the current wages cap, which will become an election issue in 2023.

The PSA welcomed the IRC's decision on back pay, but it requested the Government give the pay rise from 1 July, as has been done with much of the NSW Public Sector.

"The Secretary of Education's salary is more than a half a million dollars a year and yet the decision was made not to ensure that some of the lowest-paid workers in the public sector, SAS Staff, had their 2022 pay increase locked in," said General Secretary, Stewart Little.

LMBR 2.0: EDUCATION DEPARTMENT FAILS TO LEARN FROM THE PAST

Previous mistakes have taught management nothing.

Five years ago, the Department of Education implemented significant systems changes across a number of IT platforms. This meant retraining admin staff and resulted in mass resignations due to the poor manner in which this was conducted. Under the banner of Learning Management and Business Reform (LMBR), schools made do with programs that weren't fit for purpose, creating increased workload, with poor support.

One of these LMBR platforms (Synergy, for managing student welfare) has already been decommissioned, due to its labour-intensive processes and difficulty of use. Processes undertaken in Synergy were transferred back into ERN, with which staff were already familiar.

The Department now plans to decommission one of the remaining two platforms, EBS (used for student administration and finance). But instead of providing schools with a fit-for-purpose resource in its place, the Department has decided to outsource to third-party software providers, making schools research and select from a department-approved panel and pay from school funds.

"The Department of Education will create a divide between those schools that can afford the best software and those that can't," said Chair of the Schools Departmental Committee, Juliette Sizer (pictured). "Then there's the issue of staff knowledge. As well as the inevitable increase in workload, there will be additional training needs, both on implementation and ongoing. Different schools will be using different software, making it even harder to find experienced casual staff and harder for casual staff to find work at different schools.

"It will also make it more difficult for existing staff to transfer between schools that use different systems."

The first component to be rolled out via the 'Administration Marketplace Panel for Schools' (AMPS) will be the student finance

function. In another nod to what even the department now refers to as "the LMBR debacle", at least one of the chosen suppliers is unable to demonstrate how this will operate, as it is still under development.

"Is this how the Department of Education exercises due diligence in the vetting of companies and products?" said Ms Sizer. "How can schools be assured that a product that does not yet exist will be capable of fulfilling their needs?"

LET'S HOPE THEY WAKE UP TO THE LUNACY OF THIS SCHEME

"The loudest echo of LMBR has been in the department's failure to consult with the PSA. This has been exacerbated by a trickle-feed of information to our members, most of whom are only becoming aware of the impact of this change through bulletins.

"With LMBR, it was only after the PSA's

intervention that regular stakeholder meetings were established, many issues were identified and millions of dollars were allocated to training."

The PSA has once again had to force the department's hand, this time by imposing a work ban, endorsed by the Schools Departmental Committee, on all engagement with the new systems.

"Members should be mindful that student finance is just the first of five areas to be outsourced, with 12 different companies identified as meeting the department's suitability criteria for inclusion on the marketplace panel," said Ms Sizer. "The solution is simple. The Department needs to provide a fully funded, fit-for-purpose program to all schools, along with the requisite training, tech support and staffing to carry out the school's operations.

"If the Department chooses to engage an external provider to deliver this product, there should be one contract between that company and the Department not 2220 contracts, each negotiated by harried school staff already buckling under enormous workloads.

"Let's hope they wake up to the lunacy of this scheme."





INSECURE WORK BLIGHTS WORKERS' LIVES

Too many people are employed in conditions of uncertainty.

It is a holding pattern too many PSA/CPSU NSW members are trapped in and want to leave: insecure employment.

“Insecure work is one of the biggest issues our union faces,” said General Secretary Stewart Little. “Many of our members have been placed in so called ‘temporary’ roles for years – even decades – at a time.”

Adverse consequences of insecure employment include being shut out of financial services such as home loans or credit.

“If a lender sees someone is working in an insecure manner, such as casual work or employment through an agency, they will be less likely to give them a loan,” said Mr Little.

Speaking at the 2022 PSA/CPSU NSW Women’s Conference, State Library member Adria Castellucci (pictured above right) said temporary contracts were the biggest issue facing members in cultural institutions such as the State Library and the Australian Museum, where she had been employed previously.

“Most of these roles should be permanent,” she said. “They are operational roles that have ongoing work attached to them. The problem is chronic underfunding and under-resourcing.

“It results in people being strung along with back-to-back contracts. And eventually, when people leave, there is no succession planning because one person with a lot of institutional knowledge gets sick of it and leaves.”

Ms Castellucci said sometimes when a contract expires, institutional knowledge also walks out the door with the temporary employee.

She said insecure work is also bad for workers’ mental health, with the pressure to constantly prove you are worthy of a new contract taking its toll.

Certain agencies are problem areas for over-reliance on insecure work.

Industrial Officer with the PSA/CPSU NSW Jessica Epps said TAFE is very keen on turning on and off a supply of insecure employees, particularly women.

“We have people working for two-year contracts, never sure if they will be rehired once it expires, or if the position will even exist after what seems like an endless series of restructures,” she said.

Similar issues face members employed in universities.

PSA Senior Vice President, Juliette Sizer, said tying positions in schools to enrolments has created a large number of workers in insecure roles. School Learning Support Officers, for example, are often employed on a year-by-year basis depending on how many children with specific needs are enrolled.

The State Government has proven that it can turn its back on excessive reliance on insecure workers.

Speaking at the conference, Prison Officers Vocational Branch Secretary Natalie Howes (pictured above left) said casualisation was introduced in the Correctives system “as an incentive to privatise Parklea, Cessnock and Court Escorts”. Ms Howes said once the privatisation process, which saw Parklea move to a commercial operator, was over, the proportion of casual Officers has declined, with more staff being given full-time, permanent work.

“WHEN A CONTRACT EXPIRES, INSTITUTIONAL KNOWLEDGE WALKS OUT THE DOOR WITH THE EMPLOYEE”

Ms Castellucci said for “prestige” employers, such as cultural institutions use the allure of working for them to convince people to remain in temporary roles. In addition, some positions, such as Curators, don’t have a lot of other employers they can go work for, so they are more likely to grudgingly accept insecure roles.

PSA MOURNS LONG-TIME EMPLOYEE MEL GREEN

The PSA/CPSU NSW has lost one of its longest-serving staff members. Mel Green, who worked as an Executive Support Officer to the union's Secretariat, passed away in October.

New Zealand-born Ms Green began her employment with the PSA/CPSU NSW in 1988. In her latter years, she continued to come to work during her treatment for cancer as she had great friends and support at the union.

"When I started as President, Mel was a wealth of information and helped me transition into the role," said PSA/CPSU NSW President Nicole Jess. "Mel was always positive and helpful; no question I asked was wrong or bothered her. She helped me more than she will ever know.

"I will miss her and our offices at PSA House will not be the same without her." General Secretary Stewart Little praised

Ms Green's devotion to the union and to her job.

"Mel was always a helpful team member who made our jobs easier," he said. "She continued to work as she loved doing the right thing by the members.

Assistant General Secretary Troy Wright said Ms Green helped transition the new executive to the role.

"We will miss her professional support and friendly manner," he said.

Senior Communications Officer Jason Mountney said, "Mel took a huge interest in the production of *Red Tape* and, despite not being a member of the Communications team, always volunteered to help proof read the magazine."

Away from work, Ms Green loved the sea and enjoyed swimming near her home in Sydney's Northern Beaches, as well as in her favourite Queensland and Asian travel destinations. She was also a keen reader.

Ms Green is survived by her two daughters, Lara and Charly.



'GENTLEMAN' YOUTH JUSTICE WORKER LOST IN TRAGIC TRAFFIC ACCIDENT



PSA members at Frank Baxter Youth Justice Centre were shocked to learn of the death of colleague Dave Douglass in a traffic accident while travelling to work.

Mr Douglass joined Youth Justice in 2010. He worked in the Induction Unit at Baxter for his entire career, and had been doing nights for the past two or three years.

"Dave was well known for setting a strong professional example and providing a caring service to young people entering custody, or this centre for the first time," said Baxter Executive Director Paul O'Reilly in a statement to colleagues.

Away from work, Mr Douglass was

passionate supporter of football, following the Central Coast Mariners and English Premier League regulars Newcastle United. He is pictured left at Newcastle's home ground, St James' Park.

"He was a true gentleman even on the football pitch," said PSA/CPSU NSW Industrial Officer and fellow Mariners fan Gino DiCandilo.

Mr Douglass also had a passion for outdoor activities such as camping and hiking. He is survived by wife Narelle and his children Amara, Jaali, Cian and Caleb.

Staff at Baxter affected by the accident have been urged to contact the employer's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider Converge.

ANGELA LOOKS BACK ON DECADES WORKING WITH HOUSING

After nearly 40 years with the Public Sector, a PSA member is calling it a day.

As the rental crisis bites, the role PSA members in Housing play has been placed in the spotlight. Long-time member and Delegate Angela Denham looks back on her role in this vital service for the people of NSW.

After a two-year break after working for the Department of Lands from 1983 to 1991, Angela Denham moved to Housing in March 1993.

“I was given one week of temporary work originally and finished up staying for 29 years,” she said. “I enjoyed the variety of the work. No day is ever boring at Housing.

“I like being able to move to different roles or portfolios, which has kept things interesting. Working in a job I would do voluntarily and getting paid for it is great.”

In common with many women in the Public Sector, Ms Denham appreciated “the flexibility to have time out for family needs when required”.

“ UNION MEMBERSHIP IS ESSENTIAL TO ANY PAID WORKER, ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD ”

As with many PSA members in Housing, the work brings with it challenges.

“The biggest challenge is the ‘system,’” she said. “I find it very frustrating when barriers are in place and my client needs help now, not in six months.

Ms Denham said her employer plays a vital role in an increasingly ruthless housing market.

“We need to increase resourcing for the



Ms Denham receives a plaque for her work as a PSA Delegate from General Secretary Stewart Little.

Department of Housing to enable better and faster processing of applications,” she said. “In western Sydney there are so few properties available and people are waiting more than five years for priority housing

“We need to build more properties that meet community needs – with one or two bedrooms on the ground floor or in buildings with lifts, with bathrooms and kitchens that are easily modified when required.

“We need to force landlords to keep properties in good condition and stop no-fault Notices of Termination unless the property is to be sold. Tenants should get their full bond back if this occurs.”

Ms Denham comes from a proud union family – her father was a British coal miner – and she was a member of the PSA throughout her career. She is continuing her membership as a Retired Associate.

“Union membership is essential to any paid worker, anywhere in the world,” she said. “We need to provide a united front to prevent the erosion of rights and privileges that have been hard won by previous generations and to ensure individuals are treated fairly.

“People died to give us the right to congregate and negotiate with our employers and their sacrifice should not be wasted by people who take these rights for granted.”

CPSU NSW MEETS NDIS MINISTER

The incoming Federal Government has committed to preserving the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

CPSU NSW Assistant General Secretary Troy Wright and Industrial Manager Thane Pearce met with Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), Bill Shorten (pictured) to address issues faced by NSW Disability Support Workers.

Mr Wright and Mr Pearce met Mr Shorten in the former Opposition Leader's Canberra office. The group discussed with the Minister the new Federal Government's plans for reforming the NDIS, which had suffered poor oversight during the years of Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison rule.

"We talked about issues such as the sector-wide labour shortage and the pressure employers have to attract and retain skilled staff," said Mr Wright.

The CPSU NSW representatives also



brought up the impact the expiry of the copied-state awards (CSAs) will have on members working in NSW and the urgent need for federal government intervention to stop these workers' pay and conditions going backwards.

"Minister Shorten understood and appreciated our concerns and committed to review our proposal to extend the life of CSAs by way of regulation alongside Tony Burke, who is the Minister for Workplace Relations," said Mr Wright.



PODCAST

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ABORIGINAL CONFERENCE RETURNS TO PSA HOUSE

First Nations voices are back.

An Acknowledgment of Country from Aboriginal Council Chair Sean Bremer kicked off the first conference for First Nations members since 2019.

The Conference, postponed in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19, addressed issues vital to Aboriginal members, including getting more First Nations people jobs and more in senior positions.

PSA/CPSU NSW General Secretary Stewart Little talked about the close connection the union movement has had with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people throughout post-colonial history, mentioning the Wave Hill walk-off and the Pilbara pastoral workers strike that ran from 1946 to 1949 over a refusal to pay Aboriginal employees in money.

“The PSA/CPSU NSW is the only union with an Aboriginal Council in its rules – forever more,” said Mr Little.

Shane Hamilton, NSW Deputy Secretary Aboriginal Affairs and Outcomes talked about the importance of housing, describing it as an issue important for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

“If you look at Australia’s housing market, it is worth more than \$9 trillion, turning over each year about \$490 billion,” he said. “That has been generated at the expense of 500 First Nations groups throughout the county.

“That massive accumulation of wealth has been at our expense. We had businesses we had housing that was taken away from us.”

As head of Aboriginal Affairs NSW, Mr Hamilton, a former Prison Officer, said closing the income gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians is an important part of his remit, and talked about improving the organisation’s workplace culture and his plans for a functional review of its all over performance.

BJ Duncan, Chair of the Central Coast’s Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council, gave attendees an insight into the way his organisation operates, particularly its success converting the abandoned Wyong tip into a lucrative property development, which funds projects such as a college aligned with Sydney’s Barker College, social housing, education assistance and a funeral fund. Like all developers, the Land Council meets opposition for its projects, but Mr Duncan said he is determined to strike a balance between sustainable development and the needs of a community that has experienced high rates of incarceration and youth suicide.

Mr Duncan expressed frustration at people without links to community identifying as Aboriginal using statutory declarations.

“They’re claiming mob, but what’s important is mob is not claiming them,” he said. “People who haven’t got cultural connection are putting their hand up to get stuff that is not designed for them.”

“We have people coming to the Central Coast claiming Kuringgai heritage, but they have no ongoing connection to country.”

Indigenous Officer at the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), Lara Watson, gave an insight into the union

body’s advocacy on behalf of poorly paid Aboriginal trainees, citing this as an example of a “colonised system; policies set for us, not by us”.

“Government does not live in communities, when it does go out, it is a 20-minute drop in,” she said. “We have a right to self-determination: we have a right to be the architects of our lives.”

On the subject of the coming Voice referendum, Ms Watson, a supporter of the yes vote, said, “What we are voting on is a fair and equal society,” she said. “When you have communities in our society living in third-world conditions, doing nothing is no longer an option.”

However, she said she does not think opponents of a yes vote are necessarily wrong.

“Hopefully, at the end of the campaign we can celebrate together,” she said.

“PEOPLE WHO HAVEN'T GOT CULTURAL CONNECTION ARE PUTTING THEIR HAND UP TO GET STUFF NOT DESIGNED FOR THEM”

To sell the yes vote to white voters, many of whom have never met an Aboriginal person, “or have that one friend”, Ms Watson said Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people “need a place to be heard”. Karla Grant is one of those people



providing a place to be heard. The host of SBS's Living Black series, Ms Grant said the National Indigenous TV (NITV) network works to redress injustice towards Aboriginal people.

A story on a woman treated badly in a Wilcannia hospital, for example, resulted in a call to the women from Health Minister Hazzard with an apology and questions about way the hospital operated.

"The Government needs to liaise with community over the referendum," she said. "NITV and SBS are obliged to report on the referendum: if it is not passed there will be a lost opportunity.

"We need something that will make a real difference to our mob."

NSW Labor's Aboriginal Affairs Shadow Minister David Harris said he and his party had been working for four years for a treaty in NSW, citing the importance of truth-telling in the process.

He said a Labor Government would build pathways for high school students to get careers in public service jobs to deliver services directly to community.

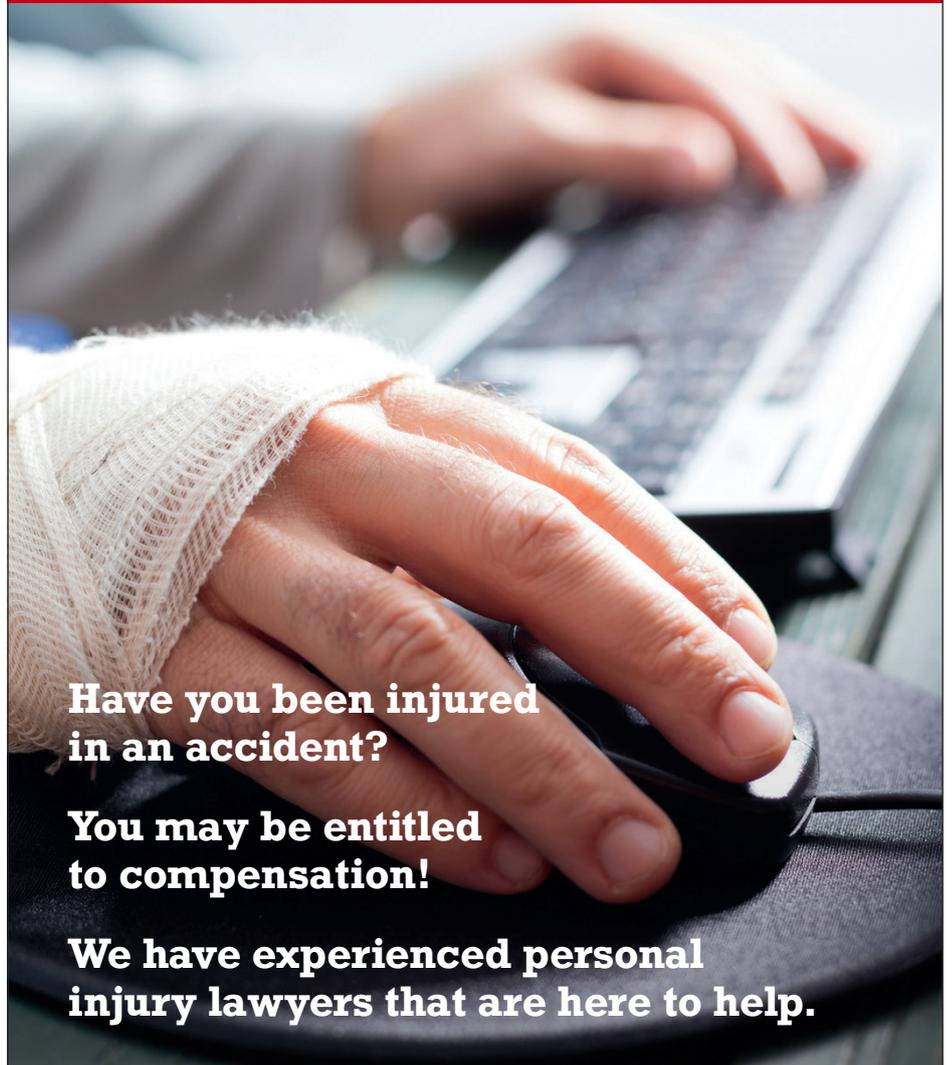
"You need a detailed plan for career building," he said. "Internships need to lead to careers and jobs."

Mr Harris said a Minns Government would place Aboriginal Policy units in every department, with power to ensure deputy secretaries are doing what they need to do.

"If we are going to close the gap, it is through economic empowerment," he said. "The public service should be leading the way. In my opinion, they are not."

Sherry-Ann Toomey is one person getting Aboriginal people into public service jobs. A Senior Advisor at the Public Service Commission, she discussed the pathways, and obstacles, First Nations workers have getting public sector jobs.

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Have you ever spent hours on the phone waiting to talk to Centrelink about Family Tax Benefit, Child Care Subsidy or a COVID-related payment? Are you confused about what Centrelink benefits you or your family might be entitled to? Has someone in your family been told they have a Centrelink debt that seems wrong or unfair? You may want to get in touch with Welfare Rights Centre.

The Welfare Rights Centre is the most experienced organisation in NSW for specialist, independent advice and assistance about social security and family assistance payments. It will provide free legal advice to PSA/CPSU NSW members and their families about any payment administered by Centrelink including where you or a family member:

- have left employment: how to meet the 'activity test', waiting periods, and the income and assets test
- can no longer work due to injury or disability: eligibility criteria, evidential requirements and waiting periods
- need help understanding family support payments
- are trying to sort out issues after separating: proving separation, sharing assets and care of children
- have a Centrelink debt: appealing debts and debt waiver
- are retiring or just planning retirement: maximising income, and access to pensions and concession cards

Their legal expertise regularly gets decisions changed and issues sorted.

If you contact the Welfare Rights Centre, make it know you are a member of the PSA/CPSU NSW so you can be fast-tracked for advice.

If your case has merit but isn't easily resolved, a Welfare Rights Centre solicitor can represent you for free in an appeal to Centrelink or to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.



Welfare Rights Centre staff: from left, Eric Chu (Office Administrator), Donna Flood (Solicitor), Daniel Turner (Senior Solicitor), Katherine Boyle (Executive Director).

HOW TO CONTACT THE WELFARE RIGHTS CENTRE

- By phone: 1800 226 028 (Mondays and Wednesdays, 9:30am to 1:30 pm) or 02 9211 5389 (Monday to Friday if the matter is urgent)
- Anytime via www.welfare-rightscentre.org.au
- Anytime by email: sydney@welfare-rightscentre.org.au

PHONE CALL AWAY

A LONG HISTORY OF ASSISTANCE

Here are a couple of recent successes from the Welfare Rights Centre.

Sarah exhausts her leave entitlements

Sarah had worked for a government agency for a number of years before developing an illness which resulted in her taking several months off work. After she had used all of her sick leave, she accessed her annual leave, which was soon exhausted, leaving her with no income. Her rent was due and she had mounting bills.

She contacted the Welfare Rights Centre (WRC) for help and was advised she would be eligible for Jobseeker, even though she had a job to return to as she had exhausted all of her leave entitlements. WRC advised Sarah to obtain evidence from her employer that she had exhausted all of her leave entitlements and to submit this with her claim for Jobseeker.

Centrelink granted her Jobseeker. Sarah was greatly relieved for this advice as she thought she may be homeless unless she received Social Security.

Raj's Carer Payment debt

Raj was a PSA member for more than 30 years, who resigned from work to care for his elderly mother. He applied for a Carer Payment, notifying Centrelink on his claim form about his income and assets, specifically his fortnightly superannuation pension. Centrelink made an error and did not correctly code the superannuation pension, and subsequently granted the Carer Payment at the incorrect rate. Raj assumed he was being paid the correct rate given that he had provided all relevant information to Centrelink at the time of claim. However he was being overpaid as Centrelink was not taking into account his superannuation pension. Raj's superannuation fund sent him letters stating it would inform Centrelink of any changes to his superannuation payment – however it did not. Raj focused on caring for his mother.

After four years went by, Raj received a debt notice for more than \$40,000 from Centrelink. He contacted the WRC for advice. The WRC liaised with the Superannuation Complaints Tribunal, the Freedom of Information legal team at the Department of Human Services, Centrelink and his superannuation fund through letters, and providing detailed advice to Raj on strategies and issues. The documents obtained under Freedom of Information indicated that his superannuation fund had not sent any information to Centrelink about Raj's investment.

WRC lodged an appeal to an Authorised Review Officer seeking waiver of the debt, which was partially successful, resulting in just over \$9000 of the debt being waived due to Centrelink's administrative error.

Raj had the right to further appeal the decision to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT). WRC advised that given there was no time limit for appealing debts to the first tier of the AAT, he should first lodge a complaint with the Superannuation Complaints Tribunal about his superannuation fund's possible negligence, as this would be a course of action that the AAT would most likely expect him to take.

Raj followed this advice and lodged a complaint with the Superannuation Complaints Tribunal after a long wait for the decision, his appeal was unsuccessful. The Centre then lodged an appeal to the first tier of the AAT, prepared written submissions and represented Raj at the hearing. WRC was successful in having a further \$10,000 waived, leading to an overall 50 per cent reduction in Raj's debt.



NEW MEMBER SAYS THANKS

A PSA member in Community Services who recently joined the PSA soon found they required their union's help. "The member contacted us looking for information regarding transfer back to a substantive position in Sydney," said Member Support Centre (MSC) Supervisor Tracey Petrevska. "One of our MSC Officers, Rubi Tabuteau [pictured above], gave her relevant advice about how to best get the outcome she wanted using the *Government Sector Employment Rules*."

I FELT INSTANT RELIEF AFTER OUR DISCUSSION AND HAVE A CLEAR PATH FORWARD

The member replied to the MSC, thanking staff for their "time, advice and support".

"I am new to the PSA and am beyond satisfied with the information and guidance I have received from you," she wrote. "I felt instant relief after our discussion and have a clear path forward."

"The Member Support Centre is many people's first port of call when they have a question about their workplace," said Ms Petrevska.

"We can be reached on weekdays from 9:00am-5:00pm on 1800 772 679."



HELP IS AT HAND FOR MEMBERS

Foundation House provides assistance to members and their families suffering addiction issues.

Addiction to drugs, alcohol or gambling, whether their own or those of their family members, blights the lives of many PSA/CPSU NSW members.

Recognising this, the PSA/CPSU NSW has an arrangement with union-run Foundation House to offer help.

“Foundation House is a safe space, which provides a range of services for people who have found alcohol, other drugs or gambling are having a negative impact on their lives,” said the facility’s Executive Officer David Atkin (pictured above right). “The services include outpatient counselling, residential rehabilitation, out-patient gambling groups and family support groups.”

Foundation House is located in a quiet setting within the grounds of Callan Park

in Sydney’s inner west and is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It was established as a trade union initiative supported by the construction industry 20 years ago and conducts 28-day residential programs. In addition, there is ongoing support for people accessing its services.

“We have a relapse prevention group every Wednesday evening, where men and women who have been through the program return for a barbecue and a group meeting,” said Mr Atkin. “It is at these groups the courageous ex residents return and share their experience after graduation, how they have navigated life without using alcohol, other drugs or gambling to cope with life’s fluctuations, and when doing so, life is better.”

Assistant General Secretary Troy Wright (above left) said Foundation House is “an example of union members looking out for each other”.

“We look after people’s working lives, and we help them if there are other issues confronting them, such as difficulties controlling alcohol or drug intake or the amount they gamble,” said Mr Wright. “Foundation House is just one of the

non-industrial support services our union provides for members.

“Whether it is help with addiction, access to ambulance services or simply cheaper groceries, the PSA/CPSU NSW is here to help.”

CHRISTMAS CLOSEDOWN

The PSA/CPSU NSW offices will close at midday Wednesday 21 December 2022.

However, help is still available. The union will have Member Support Centre skeleton staff available 9:00am-5:00pm on the following dates:

- Thursday 22 Dec 2022
- Friday 23 Dec 2022
- Tuesday 3 Jan 2023
- Wednesday 4 Jan 2023
- Thursday 5 Jan 2023
- Friday 6 Jan 2023

FOUNDATION HOUSE SAVES A LIFE

A union service is there for anyone in trouble.

When PSA member Tracey Rule's family faced trouble, she turned to her union to help.

"My daughter earlier this year finally acknowledged she had an issue with alcohol," said Ms Rule, who works in Correctives. "It was affecting her and her children. She hit rock bottom and ended up being assaulted."

After receiving a 3:00am call for help from her daughter, Ms Rule visited her at hospital, then asked fellow PSA members Nicole Jess and Trish O'Brien for help. They put her in touch with Foundation House.

After a seven-day period without drinking, Ms Rule's daughter was admitted to a 28-day program at Foundation House's facilities in Sydney's Callan Park.

"She found it quite challenging, but also felt very, very supported," said Ms Rule. "She came out 28 days later, still vulnerable, but they reach out to her every week and she does a Zoom meeting with them."

"The counsellors are available to talk to after the treatment program has ceased and she has been clean and sober for about six months."



"Foundation House saved her life: there is no other way to say it."

Her daughter is now in an Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) program.

Despite the offer of anonymity from *Red Tape*, Ms Rule was happy to have her name and photo used.

"It is a problem we all need to address. It is virulent throughout our society," said Ms Rule, who also lost a son in an accident caused by a drunk driver.

"I'm not ashamed my daughter went to rehab," she said. "I'm proud she went to rehab."

CONTACT YOUR UNION 1800 772 679

Press **1** for Membership

Press **2** for Member Support Centre (MSC)

Press **3** for Reception

If we need to call you back we will be calling from this number: **02 9220 0900**.

Put these numbers in your mobile for easy and quick reference.

REAL JOBS, REAL WAGES

After a dozen years of Liberal-National rule, our members are going backwards.

It was the announcement that PSA members in schools had long been waiting for; permanent positions for the thousands of members languishing for years as temporary employees.

Would this provide more financial security at a time when inflation is more than seven per cent? Would it give people real, lasting jobs and real, lasting wages?

“To hear offers like this dangled in front of our eyes after more than a decade of neglect is, to be blunt, insulting,” said PSA/CPSU NSW General Secretary Stewart Little. “Problem is, our members have been waiting nearly 12 years to hear this.

“They have been asking for real jobs and real wages for more than a decade.

“We have been ignored for years. We have been demonised for years. Now, once they see the writing on the wall in the polls, the NSW Government wants to be our best mate.”

The coming years are going to be tough. The Federal Treasurer, Jim Chalmers, has predicted Australia will endure lower wages and higher prices in coming years. This will mean less money in local economies as businesses sell fewer goods and services. It’s a grim outlook.

The State Government has, at its disposal, a handy countermeasure to the tough times ahead: the pay rolls of the largest workforce in the country. As Australia’s biggest employer, the NSW Government can have a major influence over the amount of money in the state’s economy. It can save regional towns and boost spending from Albury to Tweed Heads, Broken Hill to Broken Bay.

All it takes is a change of attitude.

HOW WE GOT HERE

In 2011, the Liberal National Party Government of Barry O’Farrell was gifted a huge majority in NSW. The Labor Party, in power since 1995, was engulfed in scandal, even losing seats in its Western Sydney and Hunter Valley heartlands.

Premier Kristina Keneally was sent to the Opposition benches leading a team of 20 MPs.

The Liberal Party and its junior National Party partner knew they had the levers of power for at least two terms and a golden opportunity for the Coalition to impose its will on the state, with the NSW Public Sector in its sights.

“You give the conservatives this much power, they will implement an extreme agenda,” said Mr Little.

“The Premier at the time, Barry O’Farrell, cloaked himself as a moderate, but his plans for our members were as extreme as the most vociferous members of his party’s right wing.”

In a time of high inflation, the neoliberal approach of the past dozen years, with vital government services treated in the same manner as the products that fill a supermarket trolley, is bound to hurt the people who work hard to make NSW one of the best places in Australia to live.

Jobs and wages were in the Government’s sights, and PSA members were in peril.

THE WAGE CUTS

The NSW Liberal Premiers have come and gone in often controversial circumstances, their policies changing as the coalition flips from its left wing to its right. But the Liberal National Government has been consistent in one area: the wages cap.

Legislated by Mr O’Farrell, its popularity never waned with the three





MPs who subsequently warmed the seat of the Premier's office. No matter what the inflation rate was, no matter what the Industrial Relations Commission recommended, no matter how productive workers were, Public Sector employees were limited to a 2.5 per cent annual pay increase. There have been exceptions: the most recent limit was raised a solitary percentage point to 3.5 per cent, including super, as inflation went rampant. Two years earlier, a plan to avoid paying an increase at all was upped to a paltry 0.3 per cent rise.

"After the past three years, when our members have been on the front foot in bushfires, a pandemic and now what seems like a flood every couple of months, we are still seen as an impediment to the budget bottom line," said Mr Little. "Our members are essential workers, not red ink on a balance sheet."

The wages cap is not just a burden for the Public Sector workers whose real wages drop with every increase in inflation. For a local business, particularly one in a regional centre with a high percentage of Public Sector workers, it is a series of slow cuts to the bottom line as local household budgets drop and people look at what savings they can make to keep within shrinking means.

Next year, voters will have a real choice about the wage cap. At the NSW Labor Conference in October 2022, Opposition Leader Chris Minns vowed to consign the wage cap to the dustbin of history.

No such promise has been made by the Premier or the Treasurer.

Independent politicians such as Joe McGirr, as well as the Greens and Shooters, are also opposed to the wage cap.

THE SELL-OFFS

Long popular with the Liberal Party, privatisation in NSW became a major issue with the 1988 election of Liberal Party grandee Nick Greiner, who served as both Premier and Treasurer, earmarking \$340 million worth of assets to sell off.

Mr Greiner may have been a fan, but the people of NSW were not so keen. The asset sales, along with an increase in government charges and cuts to services, proved unpopular and, within two terms, Labor was back in power. Sadly, the Carr Government continued the sell-offs, including the gaol at Parklea and parts of the electricity-generation-and-distribution network. While Labor sold assets at a slower pace than the frenzied selling under Greiner, continued privatisation led to a decline in the quality of some government services.

But it was under O'Farrell, Baird, Berejiklian and Perrottet, the four Coalition premiers to lead the state after the 2011 landslide win, that the sell-offs really took off. In the past 12 years, billions of dollars in government assets have been flogged off.

The electricity section is now in private

hands. A strange deal not only took the Port of Newcastle out of public control; it also included provisos that locked out any commodity other than coal being shipped from the facility. This has resulted in the bizarre scenario where trucks laden with agricultural products from northern NSW drive past Newcastle and spend another few hours on the road before unloading in Sydney or Wollongong.

Consumers pay with higher prices. As pointed out by State Opposition Treasury Spokesperson Danial Mookhey, power prices have increased 25.3 per cent in the most recent quarter. Land title searches are more expensive and water bills are up.

"Not only has the state lost some great, income-generating services such as the Land Titles Service, it has also lost control of critical infrastructure such as water desalination, electricity generation and the ports that facilitate our trade with the outside world," said Mr Little. "In the future, governments will rue the decision to leave such important assets to commercial interests.

"Can you imagine, in times of crisis, not being able to control power, water supplies or trade facilities?"

For Public Sector workers in the disability sector, the outsourcing of their services to privately run organisations means they are staring down a future of lower wages, while the people with disability they work with are subject to inferior care and less certainty in their lives.

“The National Disability Insurance Scheme [NDIS] was designed to make sure people with disability are cared for, not recategorised as an income stream,” said Mr Little.

The NSW Government has also facilitated the largest private prison in the country, Clarence Correctional Centre, where Prison Officers have been forced to take industrial action to ensure they are paid more than staff working the hardware aisles of Bunnings.

“No-one should profit from crime,” said PSA/CPSU NSW Assistant General Secretary Troy Wright, who has been at the forefront of the fight with operators of the gaol for a better deal for staff. “Serco is a company that rakes in billions of dollars worldwide a year, yet it wants people to work with hardened criminals for less than \$30 an hour. It is the outsourcing argument at its most grotesque.”

There is hope, though.

Opposition Leader Chris Minns has vowed that the privatisation experiment in NSW is over, and that outsourcing will not be continued. Treasurer Matt Kean, when pressed on the question of privatisation, refused to rule out selling more state assets. Mr Kean has recently used social media to attack Labor’s opposition to privatisation.

“If the government wins a fourth term next year, I fear what they will offer their mates in the private sector next,” said Mr Little. “The past 12 years have seen a massive transfer of assets and wealth to the Coalition’s patrons.

“It will be a terrible thing for the people of NSW if this goes on. It will be even worse for our members.”

INSECURE WORK

An astounding 73 per cent of School Learning Support Officers are in insecure positions, finishing every school year without a guarantee they have a job to go to after the summer holidays. Elsewhere in schools, more than a third of Aboriginal Education Officers are denied the security of a permanent position.

In TAFE and universities, insecure work is rampant, with employers hiding behind the cloak of student numbers to keep people in non-permanent positions.

“Insecurity is a blight on the working lives of many working people,” said Mr Little. “Without a permanent position, it is harder for people to get home loans or other financial services, it is harrowing finishing a school year or a contract and not knowing whether unemployment awaits.

“The State Government has finally made noises about getting more of our members in schools into full-time, permanent positions. However, they have had 12 years to do that and it took a statement from the Opposition Leader to force their hand.

“Real jobs mean real wages. Insecure work has to go.”

THE EFFICIENCY DIVIDEND

Fewer economic tools are as blunt and unsophisticated as the State Government’s “efficiency dividend”. However, the term sounds more benign than what it actually means: forced job cuts.

Every year, State Government departments are forced to do more with less, instructed by Treasury to cut costs by three per cent. The easiest way to do this is to shed staff or simply not replace those who leave voluntarily. The result is less efficient government services, stressed staff and the loss of institutional knowledge.

“The weird thing about the efficiency dividend is the fact it applies uniformly across the Public Sector,” said Mr Little. “Fires and floods mean agencies such as the State Emergency Service and the Department of Primary Industries have had plenty of additional work to do. Yet they are under the same obligation to cut costs by three per cent as the rest of the Public Sector.

“It just doesn’t make sense.”

As immigration rates are set to rise again and NSW boosts its population growth, cutting the size of the Public Sector means more people will require public services provided by an ever-diminishing number of workers.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

When it comes to maintaining real jobs and real wages, politics matters.

“There are few workers in the country who get to choose who their employer is,” said Mr Little. “However, our members will have just this opportunity in March 2023, when voters in NSW elect their 58th Parliament.

“We hope, when they enter the polling booth, members remember how they have been treated by the Government and vote accordingly.”



PSA CPSU NSW

WOMEN



WINNING
TOGETHER



AFTER A LONG BREAK, WOMEN'S CONFERENCE WAS BACK ON AT PSA HOUSE.

Opening the 2022 PSA CPSU NSW Women's Conference, new Women's Council Chair Leanne Smith summed up the excitement in the room: "It's been far too long since we have been able to come together."

Under the theme, *Safe, Respected, Equal*, the conference was the first held since 2019. Nathan Moran, Chief Executive Officer of the

Metropolitan Land Council, conducted the Welcome to Country, talking about how "90 per cent of Australian indigenous people are led by matriarchs" and praising the pioneering work done by former PSA Aboriginal Officer Ann Weldon.

Stewart Little, General Secretary of the PSA/CPSU NSW, said "unionised workplaces will always promote equality" and pointed out the correlation between the high union coverage among Prison Officers with the fact it has the lowest gender pay gap.

But he said while the union movement has done its utmost for pay equity, the "current government has done nothing – only capped our wages".

President of the PSA/CPSU NSW, Nicole Jess, welcomed the new Women's Council Executive and praised Leanne Smith and former PSA President Sue Walsh for their work getting still birth leave and the pay equity case through the Industrial Relations Commission, as well as pioneer State Librarian Jean Arnot and the recently deceased PSA Industrial Mananger Kris Cruden.

But she said more needed to be done.

"No more excuses: we need equal pay and equal superannuation," said Ms Jess. "We need workplaces that are safe."

Shadow Minister for Women, Shadow Minister for Seniors, and Shadow Minister for Prevention of Domestic Violence and

Sexual Assault, Jodie Harrison, joined Conference via a prerecorded video link, as Parliament was sitting that day.

"I will never stop working for making NSW safer for women suffering domestic violence," she said.

While she praised the State Government's plan for more money for domestic violence, Ms Harrison said she wants to make sure it is spent properly.

"We know domestic violence victims are among us: they can be our colleagues and family members," she said, adding there had been positive developments in laws dealing with coercive control.

Ms Harrison said increasing the focus on social housing would make it easier for women to escape violent situations.

Cassandra Platts and Jenny Summerton from Dementia Services Australia discussed how their organisation delivers services to people suffering the debilitating illness, including those in remote areas of the country. Dementia is a leading cause of death for women in Australia.

Kath Koschel from the Kindness Factory had Conference in silent awe with her story about her journey from aspiring cricketer to head of an organisation dedicated to encouraging kindness around the world.

LIKE BEES, WE ALL HAVE A ROLE. WE ARE CONTRIBUTING TO SOMETHING BIGGER THAN OURSELVES

Her incredible story included breaking her back in a freak accident while playing state-level cricket, then coming within a day of having her leg amputated as a side-effect of the accident.

During the subsequent rehabilitation, she found love, only to lose that person to suicide.



“I listed the names of everyone who has ever shown up for me in my life; these were the reasons I have to go on,” she said when describing the downward spiral she experienced then. “Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is a complete waste.”

Once rehabilitated, she began participating in triathlons, only to be hit by a drunk driver while training, again breaking her back and again going into rehabilitation to walk again.

She talked about offering the accused drink driver a lift home from court to “lead by example”.

Her organisation, the Kindness Factory now works with schools with its Kindness Curriculum, which includes 12 attributes to help build kindness and a better world.

Another worker for a better world, apiarist Frewoini Baume, outlined her campaign against climate change and talked about the frightening prospect of a world without bees.

Politically active since she was nine, Ms Baume opened up about her generation feeling “guilty about bringing children into a broken world” and “being raised in an era where political identity is more important than leadership”.

When her home town of Lismore flooded earlier this year, Ms Baume was horrified to see then Prime Minister Scott Morrison “almost sneak around our community”.

“Don’t visit my fractured community to announce funds people won’t be able to access,” she said, challenging him “to approve a coal mine in front of my community”.

She said her youthful naiveté was not a reason for disengagement.

“Like bees, we all have a role,” said Ms Baume. “We are contributing to something bigger than ourselves.”

At the subsequent Women in Male-Dominated Industries panel, PSA Industrial Manager Julie-Ann Bond discussed wage disparity and a lack of flexibility in workplaces. She called on women to hold the Government to account over these ongoing disparities.

Leanne Smith lamented the absence of support networks for women in male-dominated industries such as Ausgrid, her employer. Women’s issues such as stillbirth were still seen as taboo in some workplaces: she was urged not to talk about her own experiences.

Carol Rose from Regional NSW recounted the difficulties being the sole woman field worker. She cited official policies when she first started working, such as bans on employing married women, as well as enduring casual sexism such as being asked if she was there to make the tea.

Vanessa Spitznagel, from the Department of Primary Industries said she hoped more can be done to get men and women working together.

Jillian Butler of the Rural Fire Service (RFS) talked about the frustrations of not being engaged in conversation or taken seriously by men she encountered at work.

“As Training Officer, I’d be asked, ‘What are you going to teach us, girlie?’” she said. “There was more pressure to prove myself as a woman.”

Ms Butler said she created an RFS Women’s Support Facebook group, where she started to see reports of bullying and harassment in the districts. In a subsequent survey she commissioned, she said she found “horrendous results” and got management on board to “start the ball rolling on a new method of complaints”.

Prison Officer Tracey Rule from Corrective Services NSW discussed sexual harassment and being talked down to by superior officers.

She said there was a slow roll-out of uniforms suitable for pregnant Prison Officers, lamenting that women’s complaints would be dismissed as a result of menopause or menstruation.

Even after negotiating four inmates down from a rooftop protest, Ms Rule said she was passed over for a male colleague when applying for a negotiating course.

On day two of Conference, attendees discussed the other women they had met during the event.

One attendee, Belinda Webster from Northcott Disability said events such as Women’s Conference give employees isolated in group homes the chance to “break out of the little area you work in” and feel accepted by other women unionists.

The first major presentation on the second day was from Alicia Pearce of the University of Technology Sydney, where she studied gender equity in the workplace. Ms Pearce’s presentation floated the idea of adjusting the complaints process for sexual harassment to ensure it worked better for people making allegations.



“Why is working in a workplace without sexual harassment not treated like any other workplace entitlement?” she asked the audience, citing a case where a person’s complaints about extreme sexual harassment were found to be credible, but there were no consequences for the perpetrator until media were involved.

Ms Pearce said the complaints-based procedure was not enough and a harassment-free working environment needed to be defined as a collective right.

“There has never been a prosecution under Workplace Health and Safety laws for sexual harassment,” she said, adding unions such as the PSA/CPSU NSW have a role in bargaining and Award-setting to set standards for complainant justice.

She said more work was needed to bring parity between those complaining about sexual harassment and those accused of the issue.

She invited attendees to be involved in her research into harassment.

In a warm, engaging, funny speech, Rosemary Kariuki, from NSW Police, recounted her life in Australia since arriving from Kenya in 1999.

An advocate for migrant women, Ms Kariuki talked about being taken in by a stranger when she first arrived at Sydney Airport but suffered loneliness as she adapted to her new country. To combat this, she volunteered to visit other lonely people in aged care homes and meet people. This began her career as volunteer.

Now working with Police in Multicultural Liaison, she asked herself,

“Why aren’t South Sudanese, Liberians and Sierra Leoneans accessing services?”

Seeing women cut off from communities, she set up the African Women Dinner Dance with government funding and attracted 350 women to her first event, which included a story from a survivor of domestic violence. More than 20 women subsequently reported violence from their partners.

As a Multicultural Liaison Officer, Ms Kariuki said her role “is to build the trust between the police and the community”.

She said many migrants, due to the political situations that they left, do not see the police as helpful. “People are scared of uniforms,” she said.

Rounding out her speech, Ms Kariuki encouraged people to talk to neighbours and loved ones, citing her determination to turn her street in a new development in Sydney into a thriving social hub.

Arden Cassie discussed gender diversity and challenges of transitioning to a woman. Raised a boy in a religious household and attending a religious school, Ms Cassie talked about how broadband internet opened her to a world outside her tightknit community.

Ms Cassie described the trauma of gender dysphoria, which she suffered as puberty hit, leaving her with a feeling of worthlessness.

By the time “it clicked” and Ms Cassie realised she needed to transition, she was working at a Christian school

“How it would feel to be told for 23 years that you are a man?” she asked. “What is it that makes me a woman? We are women

because we know ourselves to be.

“I was never a woman trapped in a man’s body: I have always been a woman in a woman’s body. I might be different on the details, but it has to be deeper than that.”

Ms Cassie said after transitioning, she felt unsafe in public for the first time.

“Now I was a woman, and I was vulnerable,” she said. “Trans and cis women should be on the same team. When I win, you win, don’t leave us behind, I think we have a lot to offer.”

**I WAS NEVER A MAN
TRAPPED IN A WOMAN'S
BODY. I'VE ALWAYS BEEN
A WOMAN**

A panel on insecure work closed the conference, discussing an issue too close to many women’s working experiences.

After the conference, President Nicole Jess said it was wonderful to once again have a forum for ideas so important to the many PSA/CPSU NSW women.

“In the three years since we last met, there has been some progress for women, but, as always, there is so much more to do,” she said



AVOIDING BURNOUT IN CORRECTIVES

Who in their right mind would want to work in Corrections, asks Welfare Officer Trish O'Brien.

People choose a career in the state's prisons for a variety of reasons, says Corrective Services NSW/PSA Welfare Officer Trish O'Brien, herself a Prison Officer.

"Whether it's for the pay packet, the 'making a difference' or knowing we are keeping the public safe, we work in one of the hardest and least recognised jobs out there," she said. "We put on our uniform every day and walk into a centre where residents don't want to be."

Ms O'Brien said inmates employ overt means to resist authority, such as violence, manipulation and more, making each day a challenge.

Poor staffing levels take a further toll.

"We have had overcrowding, work short-staffed and most recently have had to deal with COVID-19," she said. "All this can wear down even the most resilient Officers."

"When an Officer frequently calls in sick, 'burnout' is one of the most common reasons. We need to know what causes burnout, how to recognise its negative effects and what can be done to counteract it as well as prevent it."

The underlying cause of burnout is unmanaged stress. Stress can be different for each person

"Some may say it is the inmates, others say being short staffed, others say management," said Ms O'Brien. "It could even be the shift work."

Stress is the event, person or circumstance that triggers a physical and mental reaction, or the nonspecific response of the body to any demand made upon it.

"We deal with about every type of criminal in existence, including their behavioral issues," said Ms O'Brien. "When a serious incident occurs, we recognise

STRATEGIES TO COMBAT BURNOUT

- Responding quickly to warning signs – speak to a professional
- Minimise stress in your life
- Taking quality time for yourself and your family
- Learning from negative situations or events – look at the good instead of the bad
- Having a sense of humour
- Cultivating friends outside of the job
- Doing what you can to feel better physically
- Recharging your mental self
- Focussing on the present moment – when at home, think of home
- Making your home your stress-free zone
- Reaching out to others
- Watching out for each other.

the threat, we face it and deal with it. Our body and mind go into survival mode, we assess and act appropriately.

“Our adrenaline goes up and then when the incident is over, we try to get our body and mind into the pre-incident state.

“If we cannot get ourselves to calm down and reset, the negative effects of the stress of the incident will accumulate over time. The more we do not manage stress, the more exhausted we become – and that is how burnout develops.

“When we first start in Corrections, we are enthusiastic, filled with energy. We have a full tank of petrol. After a while, the petrol starts to run out, we become fatigued and tired. We may develop negative coping skills such as drinking, smoking or ‘vegging out’ in front of the TV.

“After this; we can start having chronic symptoms, we may feel sick, we could have headaches and other ailments. We could be angry and irritable. This leads to the crisis stage and we physically become more unwell.

“Finally, we hit the wall, our anger is out of control and the simplest things can trigger outbursts.”

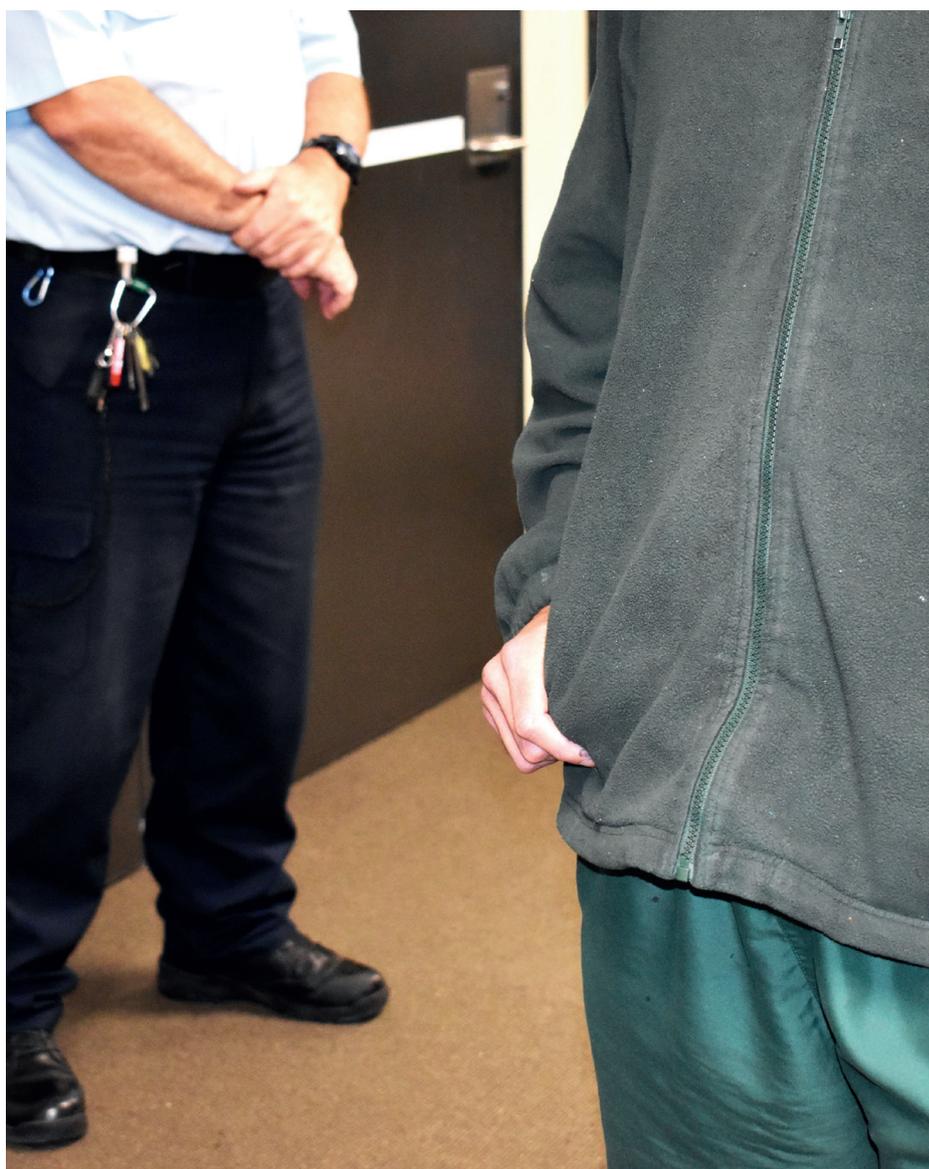
The mental negativity and physical ailments of burning out are intertwined. Burnout as a state of chronic stress leads to physical and emotional exhaustion, detachment, cynicism, and feelings of little or no accomplishment and ineffectiveness. Symptoms include chronic fatigue, insomnia, impaired concentration and forgetfulness, physical ailments and lack of appetite, anxiety and depression, anger, and lack of productivity at work.

The first step in combatting burnout is to recognise the scope of the problem – it exists and cannot be ignored. Accumulated, unmanaged stress over the years can result not only in burnout, but also in Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

“PTSD is a serious condition that reduces the quality of life,” said Ms O’Brien. “It can end a career and damage long-term relationships.

“Recognising burnout in ourselves is important. Burnout in Corrections is serious. Many of us have broken-down relationships, do not enjoy life, feel fatigued and worn out. Our minds are on the job all the time, we never seem to relax or unwind.

“A career in Corrections is inherently stressful. The stress, if not managed, can lead to burnout, which can in turn have long-term ramifications for your physical and mental health. It can also ruin relationships and do irreparable damage to your professional and personal life.”



REACH OUT AND GET HELP

Take steps to counteract the stressors in your life and take back control.

EAP – Converge	1300 687 327
Lifeline	13 11 14
Beyond Blue	1300 224 636
Mensline	1300 789 978
Relationships Australia	1300 364 277
DV Helpline	1800 737 732
Trish O’Brien	0412 120 391
CSNSW/PSA Welfare Officer	

PTSD symptoms include

- Repeated nightmares
- Avoiding places and people
- Feeling of emotional numbness
- Lack of care toward people around you
- Feeling depressed, anxious, irritated and have negative moods
- Feeling that something bad is going to happen, or a sense of panic
- Excessive worry, concerns
- Numbing feelings with alcohol and/or drugs

DEFINING BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

A major risk to the mental health and wellbeing of workers is bullying and harassment in the workplace. Regardless of whether bullying or harassment occurs via physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct, it can be a major risk factor for psychological injuries potentially resulting in anxiety, depression and suicide, and can adversely affect an individual's psychological and physical health.

Bullying

Bullying is repeated, offensive, abusive, intimidating, insulting or unreasonable behaviour directed towards an individual or a group, which makes the recipient feel threatened, humiliated or vulnerable. Bullying includes, but is not limited to:

- Abusive, insulting or offensive language or comments
- Physical or emotional threats
- Aggressive and intimidating conduct
- Victimisation
- Practical jokes or initiations
- Unjustified criticism or complaints
- Deliberately excluding someone from work-related activities
- Withholding information that is vital for effective work performance
- Setting unreasonable timelines or constantly changing deadlines
- Setting tasks that are unreasonably below or beyond a person's skill level
- Denying access to information, supervision, consultation or resources to the detriment of the worker
- Spreading misinformation or malicious rumours, and
- Changing work arrangements such as rosters and leave deliberately to inconvenience particular workers.

Harassment

Harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal contact based on grounds of age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. It can affect the dignity of anyone at work or create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It includes, but is not limited to:

- Insensitive jokes and pranks
 - Lewd or abusive comments about appearance
 - Deliberate exclusion from conversations
 - Displaying abusive or offensive writing or material
 - Unwelcome touching, and
 - Abusive, threatening or insulting words or behaviour
- Where any incidents of bullying or harassment are identified, they will be addressed via a disciplinary procedure in line with the employer's disciplinary policies and procedures.
- If the behaviour involves violence such as physical assault or the threat of physical assault, the matter should be reported to the police.



**FOUNDATION
HOUSE**

THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY
DRUG & ALCOHOL FOUNDATION

FOUNDU BLUE

MENTAL HEALTH & SUICIDE PREVENTION FOR THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY



#supportourown

SUPPORTING PSA MEMBERS

**IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE
CONTACT US ON 9555 8361**

foundationhouse.net.au (02) 9555 8361 or 1300 403 403



‘YOUR JOB IS NOT WHO YOU ARE’

Speaker encourages members to take better care of their mental health.

Delegates from the Prison Officers Vocational Branch (POVB) were given strategies to help cope with their stressful jobs at a recent talk held at PSA House.

In the lead up to the regular Delegates to Management meeting, the POVB members heard from retired rugby league Australian representative Mark Coyne, who now works on personal injury claims

management with company EML. He had entered the industry after extensive experience in injury recovery while a professional athlete.

Mr Coyne gave advice to Officers who may be forced to change career about the importance of not focusing your identity on your job. He gave the example of how he coped with the end of his career as a rugby league player.

“Even though I had a degree in business and had worked for nine out of 12 years, I still found it really, really hard to transition to the next stage of my life,” he said. “One of the lessons I learned while I was transitioning from my career was something my wife, a counsellor, told me:

rugby league is something you did, not who you are.

“Just because you are doing a job, it is not who you are. It is just what you are doing at the moment.”

Mr Coyne said instead of identifying solely as a retired sportsman, he took skills from his previous job into his new career.

“Overcoming adversity is important,” he said. “Things happen. To me, what happens next is the most important thing. How quickly can you cycle through that blame game and recognise that the only one who can help you come out of that is going to be yourself?”

“Overcoming adversity is an important thing.”

FALLEN COMRADES REMEMBERED ON RIDE

Prison Officers take to the road.

Prison Officers road the Brush Farm Academy training facility and Goulburn Gaol in remembrance of colleagues killed at work and those who have died in the past year. There was a wreath-laying ceremony before the ride.

“Every Correctional Officer should be able to go to work each day and know that they will return to their families and loved ones safely,” said PSA/CPSU NSW President Nicole Jess in a message to members. “However, in this line of work, that’s never a guarantee.

“Too often our members are required to deal with unpredictable and dangerous situations with inadequate staff-to-inmate ratios and workers’ compensation provisions that do not come close to matching the risks we face.”





UNIONS BRUSH UP ON MENTAL HEALTH

An ACTU conference hears about hazards at work.

On 7 and 8 September, a PSA/CPSU NSW delegation attended the Mental Health Workplace Safety Organising Conference run by the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU).

The event was held at the Victorian Trades Hall in Melbourne.

The delegation included Bernadette McMahon, a Delegate from the Department of Housing and Central Councillor; Patricia O'Brien, Welfare Officer PSA/CPSU NSW; and Daniel Ainsworth, a Rural Fire Service Delegate from Casino.

The Conference highlighted the work being done around psychosocial hazards in the workplace, including research from academics working in this sphere.

"It was an opportunity to hear from unions around the country on what they

were doing for their members in this area," said Ms O'Brien. "Speakers at the event included Sally McManus, Secretary of the ACTU, who highlighted the work being done by members and Delegates across the union movement and how much has been achieved by them during the pandemic."

Another speaker was Marie Boland, Workplace Relations and WHS Consultant Inaugural Thinker in Residence at University of South Australia. In November 2017, Ms Boland was appointed by Safe Work Australia to conduct the first independent review of the model Work Health and Safety laws.

Research from another speaker, Professor Sam Harvey from the Black Dog Institute, focused on workplace mental health, models of care for depression, and the overlap between physical and mental health.

"Professor Harvey's research is internationally recognised, with agencies such as the World Health Organisation looking to him for advice on how to create

more mentally healthy workplaces," said Ms O'Brien. "Most recently, he led the development, delivery and evaluation of mental health services for Emergency Service workers who responded to the 2019/2020 Black Summer Bush Fires.

Also presenting was Professor Carlo Caponecchia, who researches human factors and safety applied across several domains. He provided expert witness testimony, particularly regarding safe systems of work, and provides consultancy advice to several industries on safety-related projects.

The Conference ran workshops on New Model Laws on Psychological Health, the fundamentals of building power through health and safety, applying the hierarchy of control to mental health and workers who are exposed to vicarious trauma and what can be done to protect them.

"The PSA/CPSU NSW Delegation enjoyed the conference and got to meet and network with union members from all over the country and even got a guided tour of the Trades Hall," said Ms O'Brien.



CALL FOR NOMINATIONS 2023 TAFE DELEGATES COUNCIL

24 DELEGATES REQUIRED

Nominations are called for positions of delegate on the TAFE Delegates Council. Each nomination must be supported by two other PSA members from **the same electorate as the nominee**. Nominees, nominators and seconders must be financial members of the Association as at 19 December 2022.

The call for nominations is as follows:

Electorate Name		Delegates required
Electorate 1 – South region	Comprising Riverina Institute and Illawarra Institute	
1a. Riverina		2
1b. Illawarra		2
Electorate 2 – West region	Comprising Western Institute and New England Institute	
2a. Western		2
2b. New England		1
Electorate 3 – North region	Comprising Hunter Institute and North Coast Institute	
3a. Hunter		4
3b. North Coast		3
Electorate 4 – Sydney region	Comprising Sydney Institute and Northern Sydney Institute	
4a. Sydney		3
4b. Northern		2
Electorate 5 – Western Sydney region	Comprising Western Sydney and South-Western Sydney Institute	
5a. Western		2
5b. South Western		2
Electorate 6 – Digital	Statewide	1

NOMINATIONS AND CLOSING DATE:

Nominations will open at 9am on 5 January 2023 and must be submitted via Survey Monkey using the following link:

www.surveymonkey.com/r/TAFEDC2023

Nominations will close at COB on 18 January 2023.

In case of a ballot, candidates who wish to have a profile available for voters to read should provide a brief statement of 300 words or less stating how they will best represent members' interests.

Space is provided for this purpose on the form available through Survey Monkey.

Alethea Wilkinson

for **G R Bensley**

Deputy Returning Officer



CALL FOR NOMINATIONS 2023

Prison Officers (Vocational Branch) Advisory Group Election of State Executive 2023-2026

Nominations are hereby called for the following positions on the State Executive of the Prison Officers (Vocational Branch) Advisory Group.

Chair

Vice Chair

Country Vice Chair (2)

Overseer Vice Chair

Secretary

Assistant Secretary

Persons nominated must be members of the above branch and be financial members of the Association as at 10 February 2023.

NOMINATIONS AND CLOSING DATE:

Each nomination must be seconded by two other persons from the branch who are financial members of the Association as at 10 February 2023.

Nominations must be submitted via Survey Monkey

www.surveymonkey.com/r/POVBStateExec2023

The Survey Monkey link for nominations will be emailed to all eligible members on **Tuesday, 14 February 2023**.

Forms must be completed via Survey Monkey by **5pm on 28 February 2023**.

If there is a ballot, candidates who wish to have a profile available for voters to read should provide a brief statement of 300 words or less stating how they will best represent members' interests.

Space is provided for this purpose on the form available through Survey Monkey.

A Wilkinson

for **G R Bensley**

Deputy Returning Officer



Our members'

SCHOOLS RECOGNITION WEEK 2022

Recognition Week is back onsite.

The annual celebration for support staff in our state's schools is back. The PSA Recognition Week is once again calling attention to the vital work union members do in keeping schools up and running.

“Home learning last year showed the state's parents the enormous professionalism required in the education process,” said PSA Industrial Manager Julie-Ann Bond. “They realised it was not just the teachers, but the administrative and support

staff, the General Assistants and the Psychologists involved in educating tomorrow's workers and leaders.”

PSA General Secretary Stewart Little said Recognition Week is a great chance for our members in schools to get thanks from the community, their teaching colleagues and organisations such as Parents and Citizens groups.

PSA Senior Vice-President, Juliette Sizer, herself a School Admin Manager, said it “was wonderful to once again take time with colleagues who are Champions of the State and celebrate our vital roles in the school communities”.





LIBRARY RENAMED AFTER PIONEER OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS AT WORK

Activist Jean Arnot is immortalised at PSA House.

One of the PSA's pioneers for pay equity, Jean Arnot, was honoured at the 2022 Women's Conference. The refurbished PSA/CPSU NSW Library was renamed the Jean Arnot Library at the conference, with speeches from State Library Delegates.

At the State Library Ms Arnot first saw how women in NSW were paid less than male colleagues, so began agitating in 1937 for equal pay for equal work.



Gidget Foundation Australia
– here to help expectant
and new parents
How can we help you?

Start Talking – Telehealth

The **Start Talking** program provides individual psychological counselling services for parents delivered via a video call service, similar to Zoom.

Gidget House – Face to Face

Gidget Houses are located in NSW, QLD and VIC, are easily accessible and offer a safe haven for parents to access individual psychological counselling services in person. Partners are able to access our specialised services as well.

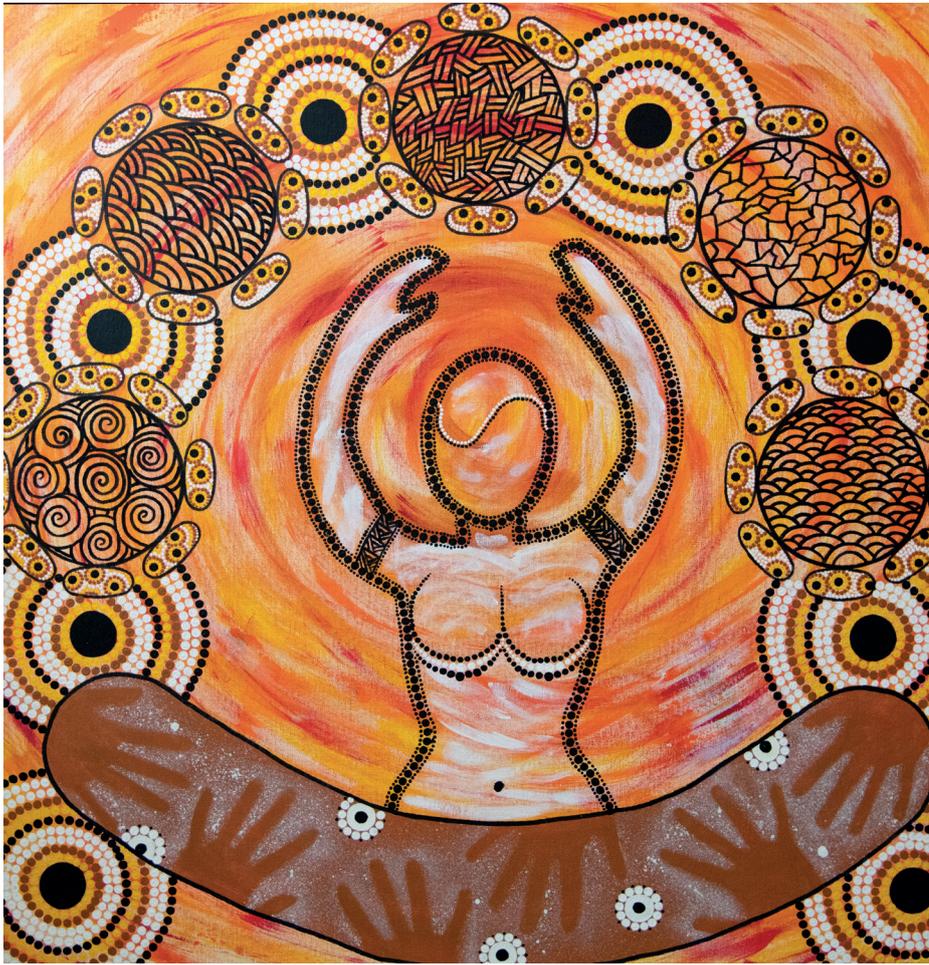
Gidget Virtual Village – Online

Gidget Foundation Australia coordinates and moderates three private, **Facebook peer support groups**, connecting expectant and new parents with the Foundation and each other, in a safe, judgement free space. **Gidget Virtual Village** for new parents, **Gidget Virtual Village Dads** and **Gidget Virtual Village for Expectant Mums**.

Gidget Foundation Australia is proud to offer FREE individual psychological counselling services for expectant and new parents nationwide.

We are honoured to partner with PSA to offer support to members and their families.





INDIGENOUS ART GOES UNDER THE HAMMER

Paintings by Aboriginal inmates were auctioned at PSA House, raising more than \$6500 for charity.

The paintings were commissioned by the union's International Women's Day Committee. About 70 inmates from Silverwater Women's, Dillwynia Emu Plains and Mid North

Coast correctional centres contributed works. The theme of Women's Day, and the competition, was Respect, Safe, Equal.

"As a Prison Officer, I can appreciate the importance of competitions such as these to give women inmates a sense of pride in their work," said PSA President Nicole Jess. "The Women's Day Committee was impressed with the quality of entries."

UNION LOOKS TO ENLIST MORE RETIRED WOMEN

Women who have left employment in the Public Sector have been urged to keep in touch with their union by becoming members of the PSA/CPSU NSW Retired Associates.

Secretary of the Retired Associates, Carmel McKeough, said the group is keen to increase female membership.

"With the challenges facing women in retirement, due to the gender pay and

superannuation gap, the input of more women members would be welcome," she said. "We meet every two months at PSA House in Sydney and members can also join the meetings via Zoom.

"We'd like to see more retired members campaigning at the state election. Our members all over the state can help convince voters to elect politicians who can best represent PSA/CPSU NSW members."

YOUR IDEAS, YOUR KUDOS

Too many women let other colleagues take credit for their work.

Many women workers will know the feeling: an idea they put forward in a meeting that was barely acknowledged is later floated as an initiative from a manager or colleague.

"It is bad enough too many of our women members are talked over in meetings and don't have their ideas taken seriously," said PSA/CPSU NSW Women's Council Chair Leanne Smith, who has experienced "idea theft" several times throughout her career.

"It is even worse when a colleague later puts forward the idea themselves.

"Too many women are conditioned to keep quiet, which leaves them vulnerable to being usurped by other members of staff."

Research by Cornell University in the United States estimates nearly 30 per cent of all workers "report having had an idea stolen by a colleague, at least once".

"The problem with this is that your future prospects for promotion may be at risk if your ideas are hijacked by another person you work with," said Ms Smith.

Solutions to 'idea theft' include speaking up as soon as possible to claim the idea as yours.

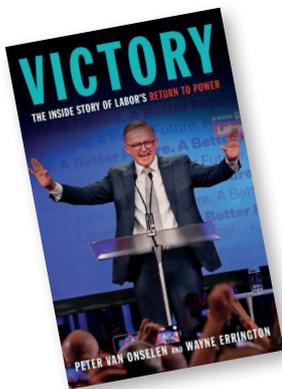
Writing in *Forbes* magazine, business consultant Caroline Turner recommended, "Women can practise speaking up more; they can learn to interrupt, hold the floor, and speak with greater confidence and power.

"Both men and women can notice when a women's idea doesn't get the reaction it deserves. They can endorse the idea and give credit where it is due if another person 'steals' the idea.

"We need to be grateful to those men and women who speak up, generate discussion on good ideas presented by women, and recognise the source of the idea.

"The result is more engaged women – and more good ideas."

VICTORY



The inside story of Labor's return to power

Peter van Onselen and Wayne Errington
\$34.99
Harper Collins

The Labor Party and its supporters were shocked by Scott Morrison's surprise 2019 Federal election win. This book covers how the party regrouped to elevate Anthony Albanese to the Prime Ministership three years later.

One of the authors, Peter van Onselen, has a long history of involvement with the Liberal Party, yet his contempt for Mr Morrison shines through in this positive description of the Labor leader who unseated him.

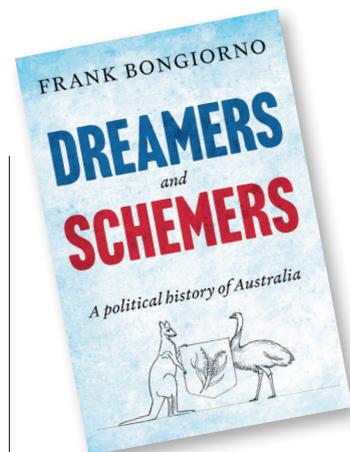
Victory follows Mr Albanese's rise to the job of Opposition Leader and the subsequent "small-

target" campaign to avoid the mistakes of 2019, when Bill Shorten's reform agenda allowed Mr Morrison to run a scare campaign.

On the way Mr Albanese dispatches some enemies (Kim Carr), learns to work alongside others (Mr Shorten and Tanya Plibersek) and keeps a potential opponent (Jim Chalmers) onside.

The book follows hiccups such as Mr Albanese's time out with COVID-19, which allowed his shadow ministry to shine, and the relentlessly negative Murdoch press eager to preserve the status quo.

Packed with behind-the-scenes insights, *Victory* is a fine work of Australian political history and well worth a read.



DREAMERS AND SCHEMERS

A political history of Australia

Frank Bongiorno
\$39.99
La Trobe University Press

Historian Frank Bongiorno presents a social and cultural history of how Australia has been governed, including a detailed look at the Aboriginal political systems in place before European settlement in the country.

Professor Bongiorno goes into great detail about the role the union movement had in Australia's nascent, post-European development. From the election of pro-worker MPs to colonial legislatures in the 19th century through to leftward swing in 2022, the labour movement has had an important role in Australian politics.

Four hundred pages of political history sounds a bit much for readers to digest, yet Professor Bongiorno has uncovered enough larger-than-life characters to produce an entertaining read.



SIXTY-SEVEN DAYS



True love is everlasting

Yvonne Weldon
\$32.99
Penguin

For too long, Koori voices have been sparsely represented on our nation's bookshelves. PSA

member, Sydney City Councillor and part of the Aboriginal Council Executive Yvonne Weldon (pictured below campaigning for Lord Mayor) has done her bit to redress that: writing a love story that captures inner-city Koori life in the latter years of the 20th century.

Sixty-Seven Days tells the story of Evie, a Wiradjuri woman living with her family in the inner west of Sydney and studying at the University of Sydney.

The book follows a 67-day romance with James, a Koori man whose understanding of his background is incomplete due to the forced removal of family members in the past.

The two embark on a passionate romance in Sydney and throughout NSW, tracing Evie's family ties in the country towns where she and her family grew up.

Lurking in the background, however, is a member of the community who has used his position to abuse young Koori women.

Sixty-Seven Days moves at a rapid pace, the multigenerational characters are engaging, and the reader will not want to put it down until the novel's dramatic end.



HUMANITY'S MOMENT

A climate scientist's case for hope

Joëlle Gergis
\$34.99
Black Inc

A job that involves monitoring humanity's self-inflicted path to extinction has to take its toll on your mental wellbeing.

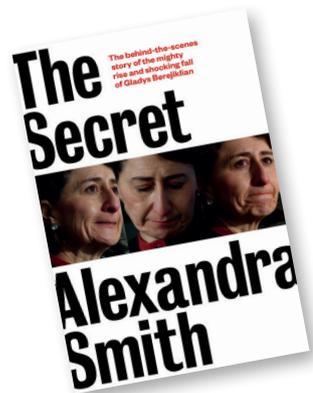
Australian Climate Scientist Joëlle Gergis charts her work on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, monitoring rising global temperatures and predicting the catastrophes that may result. All this against a backdrop of climate-change denialists and, until May 2022, a federal government in thrall to polluters.

Dr Gergis admits that, when faced with such a huge issue, her role as a dispassionate scientist is put aside and her mental health suffers. Helping her deal with this burden is an extensive community of climate experts around the world.

Humanity's Moment is not all doom and gloom, though. The author points out the enormous potential human ingenuity offers, so long as we overcome what author Tim Winton calls the gaslighting by resources companies.



THE SECRET



The behind-the-scenes story of the mighty rise and shocking fall of Gladys Berejiklian

Alexandra Smith
\$36.99
Pan Macmillan

She had it all. Despite presiding over rampant environmental destruction that put the state's koala population at risk; a massive sell-off of community assets; and the continual denigration of the Public Sector, Gladys Berejiklian (photographed below leaving an ICAC hearing) was enormously popular with voters.

Then came Daryl. Alexandra Smith, who covers state politics for *The Sydney Morning Herald*, charts the rise of the hard-working daughter of Armenian migrants who climbed through the Liberal Party structure to the top job in Macquarie Street. Ever faithful to her party, Ms Berejiklian even waited her turn, ignoring the urging to

take the job of Premier to give colleague Mike Baird a go.

However, her relationship with a largely unknown MP, Wagga Wagga's Daryl Maguire, was her undoing. The 45th Premier of NSW eventually resigned her position as ICAC began asking questions about how public money seemed to reach the Riverina city far easier than other regions.

As other MPs question her judgement, Ms Berejiklian's loyalty to the party fades away, with long friendships abandoned.

Of course, no recent NSW political drama is complete without John Barilaro, lurking in the background.

The Secret shows the truth of Otto von Bismarck's observations that politics is like making sausages, your natural reaction is to look away from the whole sordid process.

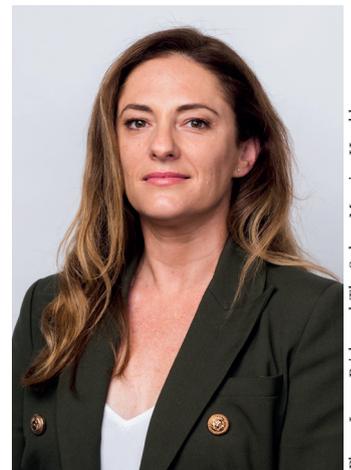


Photo: James Brickwood, The Sydney Morning Herald

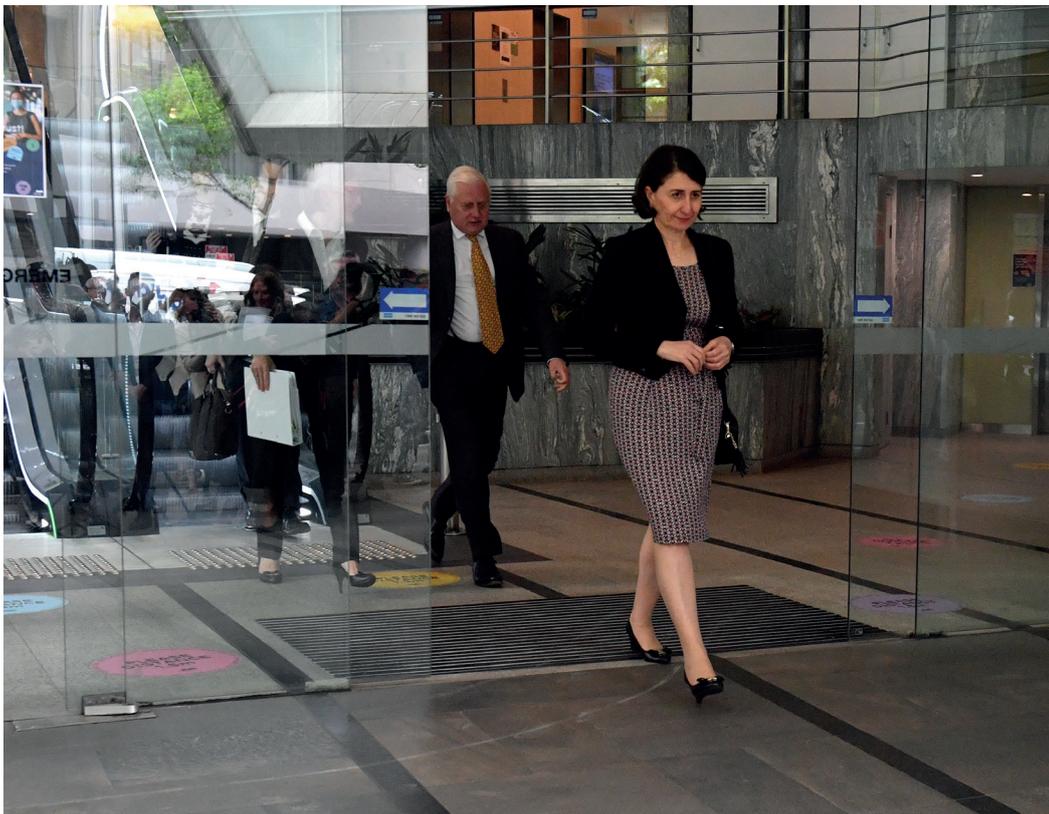
HOW TO OPEN A CLOSED BOOK

An interview with author and journalist Alexandra Smith.

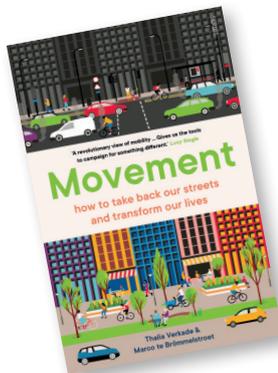
State Political Editor of *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Alexandra Smith overcame the former Premier's secretive personality to research her book into the rise and sordid fall of the state leader.

"There are a lot of bits about Gladys Berejiklian that were not widely known," said Ms Smith in an interview with the *Minnimal* podcast. "A lot of the things I discovered about Gladys surprised me, even though I had been writing about her for many years and have known her for many years."

Ms Smith said even Ms Berejiklian's most strongly held views, such as her early opposition to the Liberal Party's tolerance of racism under John Howard, were hidden from the general public.



MOVEMENT



How to take back our streets and transform our lives

Thalia Verkade and Marco te Brömmelstroet
\$29.99
Scribe

On her return from Russia to her Dutch homeland, journalist Thalia Verkade took a look at the way the car had taken over the city of Rotterdam.

Conveniently getting from place to place, she finds, is actually destroying the places we travel to.

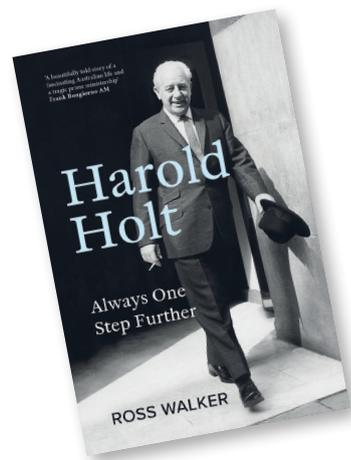
Ms Verkade looks at the way the automobile, often with insidious help from car makers and ancillary manufacturers, has isolated neighbourhoods, made walking a danger, and resulted in the deaths of millions of people. On the way she realises the onus of

responsibility for road deaths has moved from speeding drivers to those who have been hit through their own "carelessness".

Even in the so-called cyclists' paradise of the Netherlands, children are now less likely to walk or ride to school, shopping centres are now the sole preserve of drivers and neighbourhoods have lost their spark.

Even traffic-calming measures, she discovers, are soon worked around by drivers too impatient to slow down.

Her investigations are aided by Marco te Brömmelstroet, a bike-riding expert on urban design who is fighting the grip cars have on the world's cities and towns and the ecological disaster they are creating.



HAROLD HOLT

Always one step further

Ross Walker
\$34.99

La Trobe University Press

Political junkies will relish this biography of the Liberal Party Prime Minister who failed to return one day from a swim off Mornington Peninsula.

Readers will enjoy the insight into a different era, when an urbane Liberal Party leader was passionate about the arts, was determined to work with union leaders, and was open to winding back restrictive immigration laws. A far cry to today's rabble of climate-change denialists, evangelical zealots and Trump-lite nutters.

The book opens with a description of the future Prime Minister's passion for the sea; a passion that would eventually take his life. Throughout the story, Harold Holt returns to the solace of ocean swimming, ending with his final, fatal dip.

The author does not shy away from less savoury parts of Mr Holt's life, including his frequent infidelity and his decision to commit more Australian troops to the disaster unfolding in Vietnam.



POLICY FORUM

Delve into a treasure trove of information.

Policy wonks will simply love this series of podcasts that go into the nuts and bolts of governing.

Produced by the Asia and the Pacific Policy Society, the *Policy Forum* series of podcasts covers, in depth, issues such as foreign

relations, the environment and tackling inequality.

Episodes last about an hour and take advantage of academics and specialists from throughout Australia and further afield.

If you want to know a little about a wide variety of policy issues, this podcast is for you.

THE DRIVEN

Australia is far, far behind on the takeup of electric vehicles but one podcast is informing potential users about making the change.

Glen Xers may remember Robert Llewellyn as Kryten from the TV series *Red Dwarf*, but he is also a passionate electric vehicle aficionado and just one of the guests on this podcast.

Presented by Giles Parkinson, *The Driven* covers the technology behind getting polluting vehicles powered by petrol and diesel off the roads and their emissions out of our atmosphere.

With electric vehicle usage in Australia still very low, the podcast addresses questions users may have, such as range anxiety, technology updates and whether they can hire an electric car.

The podcast is a good way for potential buyers to hear about what models are available and, in an era of groaning supply chains, how easy they are to obtain.



NEW POLITICS

Go deeper into the news stories of the day.

In an era of quick news bites and a 24-hour news cycle that will bounce wildly between a succession of stories, the *New Politics* podcast gives journalists Eddy Jokovich and David Lewis the chance to go deeper into issues affecting Australia's political scene.

Updated weekly, it focuses on federal and NSW stories alike going into the story behind the headlines. Revelations of the power grab by former

Prime Minister Scott Morrison included a deeper discussion into the role of the Governor-General, David Hurley.

The duo's analysis of the May federal election is a valuable snapshot of the remarkable result, including a discussion of the role of the teal independents, an analysis of the leaders' speeches and bewilderment at the Labor Party's attempt to move Kristina Kenneally from her safe Senate role into what had been a safe, multicultural seat.

Public-interest political podcasts such as these rely on donations, and listeners can sign on as supporters.





DEAR JOHN

A job offer in New York became topical subject matter.

Scandal-prone former Deputy Premier John Barilaro's (pictured above) appointment to an overseas trade job, and subsequent revelations about the salary paid to the person filling the same role in London, were a hot topic for the PSA/CPSU NSW podcasts and TikTok platforms.

"John Barilaro's career was marked with controversy," said PSA/CPSU NSW Manager Communications and Campaigns Marianne Ledic. "He may have driven his colleagues mad with the never-ending media diversions, but he also kept us busy highlighting the fallout from his appointment to

the role of New York Trade Commissioner and the treatment of a senior public servant who had already been appointed to the job.

"Later revelations about Stephen Cartwright [pictured right campaigning for the Liberal Party], who represented NSW in London while paid \$600,000 a year, added fuel to the fire.

"Members can be assured we will go into the issues that affect them."

Recent podcasts also cover the recent flood enquiries and subsequent finger-pointing at underfunded agencies.

New PSA/CPSU NSW podcasts are released weekly. They can be downloaded on popular broadcasting hosts via the PSA and CPSU NSW websites.

"In the lead-up to next year's state election, we urge members to tune into our podcasts and hear how the parties compare," said Ms Ledic.



FUTURE PROOFED

A preview of the unionists of tomorrow.

Two young unionists joined the PSA/CPSU NSW staff for three weeks for a Union Winter internship to see how the organisation is run.

Lachlan Good and Izzy Maish, both 25, each spent time in all sections of PSA House and visited PSA/CPSU NSW worksites, including a prison.

Ms Maish said unions are “an essential face for workers, especially at a time when wages are in free fall”.

Mr Good added, “Our generation is good at identifying problems in our society, but sometimes we aren’t as prepared to action solutions.

“Most of us have a generous view of unions, but what some young people haven’t been taught is how effective they are at improving our working lives and our world.



“Everything good about public life in Australia can be traced back to the gains of unions, but that history isn’t as well known as it needs to be.”

Since their internships, both have

secured work with the PSA/CPSU NSW and have commenced their careers in the industrial relations world. The duo have started working in our Member Support Centre.

WORKING WOMEN SAVE A NATION

A project helps those struggling in an emerging economy.

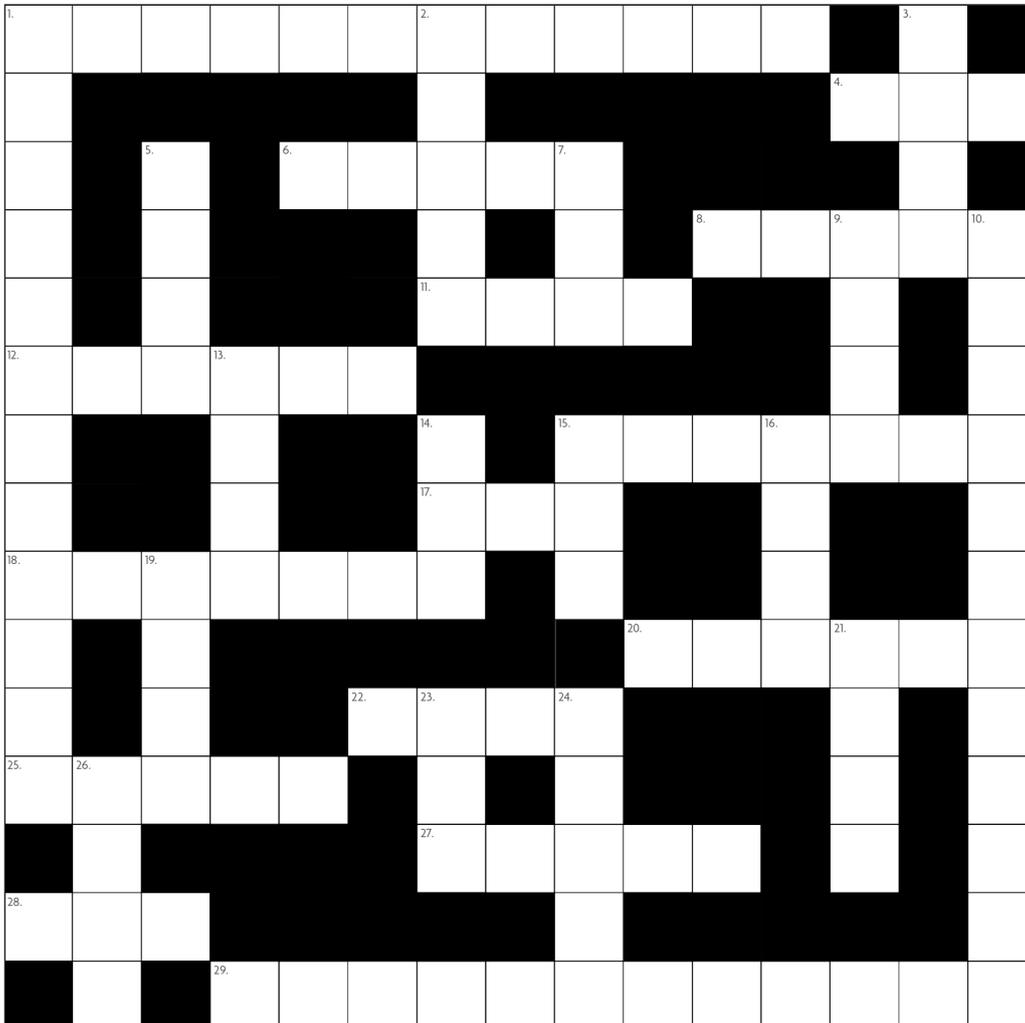
Union Aid Abroad’s Women Worker’s Rights Through Stronger Trade Unions project in Cambodia is increasing women workers’ access to labour rights.

The group works with the government and three unions that represent urban women workers.

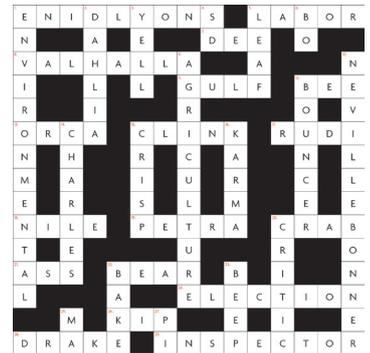
These unions are the Cambodian Food and Service Workers Federation; representing hotel and restaurant staff and the large number of women involved in food processing; the Building and Woodworkers Trade Unions of Cambodia; representing women employed in construction; and the Independent Democracy of Informal Economy Association, representing workers such as street vendors, waste collectors, domestic workers and tuk-tuk drivers.



CROSSWORD



Last issue's solution



ACROSS

1. Eddie Mabo's region (6,6)
4. Ride for hire you hail (3)
6. Blood vessels that carry blood to the heart (5)
8. Sudden sensation of fear (5)
11. Not difficult (4)
12. Senior Ms Hines (6)
15. Family bonds (7)
17. Maori social structure (3)
18. Matilda and Chelsea goal scorer (3,4)
20. Disasters that befell Lismore this year (6)
22. Bulging tree native to northern WA (4)

25. Australian wartime resistance hero Ms Wake (5)
27. Stringed instrument synonymous with *Deliverance* (5)
28. Exploitative economic model with 'self-employed' staff working for a pittance (3)
29. A country's political rule book (12)

DOWN

1. How radio signals or electricity is moved (12)
2. Backbone (5)
3. Another term for four across (4)
5. Light-coloured (4)

7. Short term for a female sibling (3)
9. Yiddish word used as slang to snack (4)
10. If injured at work, you are liable for this (12)
13. Prepare food (4)
14. Cocktail made with blackcurrant liqueur and white wine (3)
15. Take a nap with Lao currency (3)
16. Alone (4)
19. Major (4)
21. You may need this to do 13 down (4)
23. Sphere (3)
24. Sydney beach (5)
26. Musical piece for a single voice (4)



COMMITTEE PREPARES FOR POLLING DAY

Staff and members are readying for a vital election.

The PSA/CPSU NSW Campaign Committee has been working with staff and members to help prepare for the coming state election.

Staff and members will be campaigning in the coming months to press parties to go to the polls with better policies for workplaces covered by the PSA and CPSU NSW.

“We know issues such as the wage cap and industrial relations laws are important to our members,” said Manager Industrial Specialist Dylan Smith. “We want members to take this into account when they go to the polling booth.”

Committee members have been updating committee meetings in PSA House to get the word out about the campaign to the wider membership.



The PSA/CPSU NSW is still conducting its usual courses for members, including one-hour webinars in covering mental health and bullying in the workplace.

“The one-hour webinars are a great way to upskill without taking leave and travelling to a training site,” said Mr Smith.

The PSA/CPSU NSW will release its 2023 training schedule early in the new year, with a mix of in-house and external courses.

“Members should keep an eye out for what’s on offer,” said Mr Smith. “Make next year one of self-improvement.”

DID YOU KNOW?

- Nearly all PSA/CPSU NSW members can access Union Training Leave, so no need to dip into your holiday time
- Courses are delivered online, at PSA House in Sydney or in regional centres.



JOINING FORM

Public Service Association of NSW
Community and Public Sector Union

JOINED BY:

ABOUT ME:

Title: M F X

First name:

Surname:

Preferred name:

D.O.B: / /

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander: Yes No

Address (home):

STREET STATE

SUBURB POSTCODE

Address (postal):

POSTCODE

Phone:

MOBILE

HOME

WORK

Email:

PERSONAL

WORK

Receive quarterly union magazine (Red Tape) via: Post Email

ABOUT MY WORK:

Employer name:

Job title:

Pay ID serial no:

Commencement date: / /

Agency/Work unit:

Worksite address:

STREET STATE

SUBURB POSTCODE

Employment status: FULL-TIME PART-TIME

Employment type: PERMANENT/
ONGOING TEMP/
CONTRACT CASUAL LABOUR HIRE

Are you a current Health & Safety Rep (HSR)? YES NO

ABOUT MY MEMBERSHIP:

Weekly membership fees are based on your gross annual income. Please tick which applies to you:

Gross annual salary Weekly fees from 1 July 2022

Less than \$11,247 \$3.75

\$11,247-\$44,986 \$7.28

\$44,987-\$63,902 \$11.73

More than \$63,902 \$15.25



Fees can also be paid quarterly or yearly by cheque/credit card/cash. Payment must accompany this form. An invoice will be sent when your next payment is due.

I would like more information about:

Training Becoming a delegate/workplace contact

Membership fees subject to change.

ABOUT MY PAYMENT: (SELECT ONE)

OPTION 1: Direct Debit Fortnightly 4 weekly

NAME ON ACCOUNT

FINANCIAL INSTITUTION

BSB ACCOUNT NUMBER

SIGNATURE

I hereby request the deduction from my account of my subscription to the PSA (User ID 040172). I authorise the following: 1. The PSA may verify the details of the above mentioned account with my financial institution if required. 2. My financial institution may release information allowing the PSA to verify the above mentioned account details. 3. My employer may release my bank account details to the PSA for the purpose of enabling me to establish a direct debit facility for the payment of my subscription. 4. I have read the Automatic Payment Service Agreement overleaf and agree with its terms and conditions.

OPTION 2: Credit Card (monthly only) Visa Mastercard

CARD NUMBER

NAME ON CARD

SIGNATURE

EXPIRY DATE

I hereby authorise the PSA to debit my card account with the amount and at the intervals specified in the Salary and Fees Table detailed on this form, and in the event of any change in the charges for these subscriptions, to alter the amount from the appropriate date in accordance with such change. This authority will stand, in respect of the above specified card and in respect of any card issued to me in renewal or replacement thereof, until I notify the PSA in writing of its cancellation. Union dues processed on 7th of each month.

DECLARATION: (T&C)

SIGNATURE

DATE



AFTER COMPLETING YOUR FORM, YOU CAN:
Hand it to your organiser

SCAN AND EMAIL TO:
membership@psa.asn.au

YOU CAN POST IT TO:
Membership Section, PSA of NSW
GPO Box 3365 SYDNEY NSW 2001

I, the undersigned, hereby apply to be enrolled as a member of the Public Service Association and Professional Officers' Association Amalgamated Union of New South Wales (PSA) and the Community & Public Sector Union (CPSU NSW) in accordance with the Rules of both bodies, by which I agree to be bound, and I appoint the PSA and CPSU NSW as my bargaining agent. I agree that a copy of this form (whether as a scanned image, photocopy, facsimile or otherwise) may be used or dealt with as if it were the original. I have read and understood the information detailed overleaf relating to financial obligations and the circumstances and manner in which I may resign my membership.

Revised 11/2022

NEED HELP? CALL THE UNION

 **1800 772 679**



TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

Automatic Payment Service Agreement

We, the PSA, make the following commitment to you:

- » The PSA will debit/charge your membership fees as they fall due. However, if this day falls on a non-business day, they will be debited/charged on the next business day.
- » The PSA will only use this authority to debit/charge regular fees. If you miss a payment, it will be picked up in the following period i.e. two instalments will be taken out.
- » Resignation from the PSA must be notified according to the section "How to resign from the PSA and CPSU NSW". Should you resign your membership, the PSA undertakes to cease debiting your account upon the termination of the written notice period.
- » The PSA will notify any changes to your union fees in its magazine, *Red Tape*.
- » The PSA will act in accordance with our Privacy Statement, while noting that your financial institution may require such information to be provided in connection with a claim made on it relating to an alleged incorrect or wrongful debit.
- » The PSA will investigate and deal promptly with any queries, claims or complaints regarding debits/charges and provide a response within 21 days of receipt.

Your commitment to the PSA:

- » You will ensure that the account details provided to the PSA are identical to the account details held by your bank or financial institution.
- » You will ensure that you have sufficient funds or credit available in the nominated account on the due date for payment of your fees. You will let us know in writing within 14 days if the nominated account is altered, transferred or closed.
- » You will be responsible to ensure that the amounts debited/charged to your nominated account for your PSA fees are correct.
- » If the charging arrangements are stopped by you or your nominated bank or financial institution, you will arrange a suitable alternative payment method with the PSA.

- » Resignation from the PSA/CPSU NSW will be notified by you as per the conditions in the section "How to resign from the PSA and CPSU NSW". Repayments will not be made for late notifications.

How to resign from the PSA and CPSU NSW

You may resign from membership when either you cease to work in an area covered by the Association or by giving 14 days' notice in writing of your intention to resign to the PSA General Secretary.

Resignation from the PSA will also be taken as resignation from the CPSU NSW, subject to confirmation.

Resignation from the CPSU NSW can be by notice in writing of two weeks or more, such notice being delivered to the Secretary of the CPSU (SPSF Group) NSW Branch.

Please note that you are obliged to pay any dues owing to the PSA/CPSU NSW up to the date of effect of the resignation and that fees are not refundable on resignation from the PSA/CPSU NSW.

Privacy Statement

Information collected in these applications is used for the purposes of the PSA and the CPSU NSW only.

Any information collected is handled and used in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles, the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth).

When we use third parties to carry out union functions (e.g. mail-houses, electoral offices, candidates to union office, union delegates, etc) only necessary information is released, and subject to the condition that it not be used for any other purpose.

Information requested for payment of membership fees is provided only to the relevant financial institution or employer.

Any member may at any time arrange to see and correct their membership record by contacting membership@psa.asn.au



160 Clarence Street Sydney NSW 2000 GPO Box 3365 Sydney NSW 2001

 1800 772 679

 psa@psa.asn.au

 www.psa.asn.au

 [psansw](https://www.facebook.com/psansw)

 cpsu.nsw@psa.asn.au

 www.cpsunsw.org.au

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LIKELIHOOD TO RECOMMEND

*Terms and conditions apply



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SECTOR
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PAY RISE**



1800 772 679

www.psa.asn.au www.cpsunsw.org.au



Authorised by Stewart Little, General Secretary, Public Service Association of NSW
and Community and Public Sector Union (SPSF Group) NSW Branch, 160 Clarence Street Sydney NSW 2000