

21 December 2022

Stewart Little
General Secretary
Public Service Association of NSW

Sent via: vvarghese@psa.asn.au

Dear Mr Little

Public Service Association of NSW 2023 State Election Policy Platform

I refer to the 2023 NSW State Election priorities for the Public Service Association of NSW (PSA).

All public service workers are essential workers; whether they work on the frontline or in administrative roles, they are crucial to delivering essential community services from housing, healthcare, education, to consumer support. Thank you for the association's work to represent their needs and I share your view that they should have access to secure employment and appropriate remuneration.

While I am not opposed to privatisation in principle, I do not support the privatisation of essential services that are natural monopolies or do not benefit from competition. I oppose privatisation deals that put short term profits ahead of community outcomes such as the privatisation of port infrastructure which prevented the Port of Newcastle providing container services or the privatisation of the airport railway line which led to station access fees. As we have seen with the NDIS, aged care and childcare, privatisation of services by outsourcing them can lead to increased costs, poorer service standards and exclusion of service users with higher level or complex needs. I will consider any privatisation proposal based on merit and will seek to protect workers' rights under any changes.

The 2.5 percent wage cap imposed by the NSW Government has meant public sector workers' wages have gone backwards in the face of escalating inflation and this has impacted on quality of life and ability to attract new staff. I have consistently opposed this cap and support the PSA request for a 5.2 percent pay increase in the next financial year.

The Industrial Relations Commission should have the power to consider all circumstances in wage disputes before making an independent determination, but instead it must impose government wage caps. The approach breaches the separation of powers and I would support restoring its judicial function, empowering it to run 'work value cases' and removing the government's powers to limit its determinations through wage caps.

I opposed the *Government Sector Employment Act 2013* when it was introduced to Parliament based on a range of concerns including the change that meant Members of Parliament staff were no longer employed by the presiding officers but rather contracted to members. The Broderick report identified the serious power imbalance between members of Parliament and their staff and I would support reinstating the presiding officers' role as employer. I would also consider any advice of the PSA on other needed reforms.



Secure employment is a basic right that all workers should have, and I am concerned at the high rates of temporary employment among both teachers and school support staff. The Department of Education should urgently work to offer all these staff members permanent work.

If re-elected, I hope to continue my good working relationship with the PSA to improve the security, safety and remuneration of the state's public sector workers.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'AG', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Alex Greenwich
Member for Sydney