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Re: PSA feedback - SafeWork NSW Restructure Management Plan

Thank you for your emails dated 25 and 29 July 2024 providing feedback on SafeWork NSW's proposed Restructure Management Plan (RMP) on behalf of the Public Service Association (PSA) and its members.

This is a significant period for SafeWork NSW as we prepare for a future move to become a modern, standalone work health and safety regulator for NSW. I share your sentiment that the restructure process provides a unique opportunity to improve the effectiveness of the agency, to remove silos, and foster greater cohesion. I assure you that we are committed to delivering a structure that establishes SafeWork NSW as the strong and fit-for purpose regulator that we all want, and that workers and the NSW community deserve.

The feedback provided by the PSA has been reviewed and considered along with other extensive feedback received from staff. The feedback and insights provided through the consultation has been invaluable and I am confident that upon finalisation of the new structure you will see changes that reflect our genuine commitment to consultation throughout this process. This includes the following consideration of PSA and member feedback:

1. **Regulatory Services Officers (RSOs)** - I appreciate the important role RSOs play to support the Inspectorate in undertaking their duties. Feedback tells us this role is not operating as it should and we need to revise the role description. That said, we recognise the impact it has on people and while we have maintained a slight reduction it has reduced from that previously proposed. We have achieved this by removing vacant roles and will provide increased flexibility for RSO roles to support impacted employees.
2. **Specialist and Operational Areas** - We have increased the number of dedicated resources to ensure a considered and holistic approach to prioritising our regulatory approaches in the Inspectorate. This extends to specialist areas including Work Environment, Health, and Return to Work. We have also increased resources in Training and Development to ensure that an ongoing focus is placed on Inspector capability across new and existing harms, and broader training and development can occur across SafeWork. We have enhanced our assurance function which will also support increased consistency of practise across the Inspectorate.
3. **Structure** - Changes are being made to the final structure in response to feedback including:
  - a. removing Dust Disease from Asbestos and Demolition and making Silica its own temporary functional team. Silica is currently funded as a priority for 12 months. Part of this program

of work will include further planning to determine the necessary ongoing support for silica and dust diseases moving forward

- b. Specialist resources for Program Design and Evaluation
  - c. Aligning the Hygiene and Toxicology Team with Health, Work Environment and Ergonomics and retaining specialists in these fields, renaming this team to Occupational Health and Environment
  - d. Retaining data scientists, research officers and behavioural insights specialists, while combining the insights and research function to better support our regulatory practise across the Inspectorate
  - e. Additional reduction in middle-management as proposed by members in the PSA whiteboard session, and
  - f. Increased resourcing within the Training and Development function, supporting a broader organisational training remit without reducing capacity for existing Inspectorate training programs.
4. **Team Coordinator (TCs)** -We acknowledge the importance of a consistent approach across SafeWork NSW. To ensure we have more consistently applied spans of control, we will be implementing the TC role. PSA's concerns about TCs have been noted, including appropriate numbers of direct reports, the gap between middle management and Directorate management, and the need for additional training and support.
  5. **Further Review period** - We have built in a formal review to be conducted by June 2025, ensuring the structure realises the intended benefits. This will include a review of the Investigations and Enforcement Directorate, and other resourcing across SafeWork NSW.
  6. **Salary, Award Reform and Introduction of the Team Manager role** - While SafeWork NSW welcomes future discussions on changes to the Award, this sits outside of the current RMP process. Reintroduction of the Team Manager position is not supported at this stage with the reintroduction of Team Coordinators assisting to relieve capacity of existing managers to better support the Inspectorate, undertake planning activities, and increase stakeholder engagement.

I acknowledge that change can be a difficult time for people and reaffirm our commitment to supporting all staff throughout this time. At every opportunity we seek to create meaningful ways in which staff can provide feedback, including during our broader reform program, while prioritising the health, safety and wellbeing of our staff.

#### What happens next?

Once finalised, the new structure will be shared with all staff and the PSA. This is intended to occur in mid-August 2024. We will then turn our focus to operationalising the new structure, including better ways of working together, role design, and implementation and transition planning. With over 639 pieces of formal feedback received throughout this process, I have confidence that our staff are broadly ready and eager for this change.

I look forward to continuing to collaborate with you to embed a revised SafeWork NSW structure that benefits our staff and importantly, secures safer and healthier workplaces across NSW.

Yours sincerely,



**Trent Curtin**

A/Deputy Secretary SafeWork NSW