

Non-Ballot Annual General Meeting National Parks Vocational Branch Executive

Tuesday 14 November 2023 @ 10:00

At PSA House, 160 Clarence St, Sydney
and by Microsoft Teams

1) Attendance / Apologies

- **Present:**

NPVB executive: Alex Deura, Andy Leach, Angela Lewis, Ben Owers, Janet Cavanaugh, Martin Smith, Naomi Goosen, Steve Carter

Members (online via Teams): Alana Hansell, Annie Thompson, Aoife Kean, Barbara Webster, Campbell Young, Helen Jessup, Michael Sharp, Rhonda King, Richard Phelps, Rochelle Poidevin, Toni Clark

PSA staff: Kim de Govrik

- **Apologies:**

Aimee Poole, Danny Corcoran, Peter Mylan, Phuong Le

2) Minutes from the previous AGM (held November 2022)

- The Minutes from the previous AGM were confirmed (moved Angela, seconded Alex)
- Business arising -
 - Reminders regarding the option of NPVB contributions have been sent to members and was a pinned post in the NPVB Community on Viva Engage
 - There has been promotion of some vacancies via email and posts on Viva Engage
 - Aimee Poole has filled one of the vacancies on the NPVB executive committee (representing admin roles). The Aboriginal representative role was also filled but that staff member has now left NPWS and so is vacant again.

3) Casual vacancies on the executive committee

- Annie Thompson (Joint Management Officer, South Coast Branch) was nominated to fill the casual vacancy of Aboriginal representative (moved Ben, seconded Andy).

4) Annual reports

- Chair's report
 - See attached.

The Chair's report prompted some discussion on ranger numbers, with Campbell Young identifying there had been a loss of experienced rangers in his area, and that project officers were being recruited in preference to rangers (there being no specific mention of project management in the focus capabilities for rangers, even though that is acknowledged as a key function carried out by rangers). There is widespread concern regarding major additions to the NPWS estate but no new staff to manage them. This matter was discussed further in the General Meeting.

- Treasurer's report

○ Statement Account	
Current Balance November 2023	\$6121.29
Previous Balance November 2022	7065.98
Expense - Transfer to Bolster Main Account	1000.00
Income (Interest)	55.31
○ NPVB Main Account	
Current Balance November 2023	\$1974.94

Previous Balance November 2022	1901.24
Income	
- Transfer in from Statement Account	\$1000.00
- Contributions from members	4665.00
Expenses	
- stipends to Chair/Secretary per quarter	\$5000.00
- AGM lunch and farewell lunch for George Malolaikis	591.30

Contributions from members currently \$176 per fortnight (continuing to trend downwards \$189 to \$176 over last 12 months likely due to continuing retirement of members).

Income from members contributions per quarter amount to \$1144 while stipends allocated are \$1250 per quarter. This equates to a shortfall of \$106 per quarter which means we will need to continue to transfer money from statement to main account from time to time to cover this shortfall and the AGM and special events lunch.

Action 4.1 Reduce stipends for Chair and Secretary - \$500 for chair and \$400 for secretary. (Moved Ben, seconded Janet, all in favour)

Action 4.2 Open a term deposit of \$5000 to generate better interest income (Moved Janet, seconded Ben, all in favour)

5) Dates of NPVB committee meetings for the next 12 months

To be held on the second Tuesday of February, May, August and November, with half by teams.

6) Closing words by Kim de Govrik on behalf of PSA

Getting new staff to join the PSA remains a priority - existing staff should also join, given that the PSA's efforts were instrumental in obtaining the payrise. Encourage members to check if your workplace has a PSA Noticeboard and refresh or set up as needed. Feel free to contact Kim to arrange a workplace meeting.

END OF AGM. 10:50

Attachment - NPVB Chairs Report- November 2023

I would like to welcome everyone today and thank PSA staff, Delegates, Members for their hard work and ongoing support for the PSA and the NPVB. Its important to say that Unions only work through everyone's participation.

Achievements/ issues

- This committee and the PSA have been involved in issues that affect members on a broader scale including campaigning around the state election to ensure that the new Government provided the best outcome for members, abolition of the wages cap and the review of the IR system.
- Having a well organised and engaged membership and committee has benefited all members in NPWS, compared with other parts of DPE.
 - The PSA is currently in the IRC fighting job cuts in BCD, covered in a recent Guardian article www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/oct/16/nsw-government-axes-dozens-of-environmental-roles-in-backward-step.
 - Restructures have been announced in both the Planning group and Heritage directorate with no consultation with the PSA. PSA staff have been extremely busy working to get the best outcomes for members affected by these restructures.
- At the same time, NPWS is getting new positions and having temporary staff converted to ongoing. This is a good reminder that we can't take for granted that having a new Government will mean things are better. **We still need to remain active.**
- I would also like to acknowledge PSA staff for getting out to speak to members at many locations around the state.

NPWS specific achievements

- The new uniform has been rolled out. While not without ongoing problems, this has taken a lot of work and dedication from PSA Delegates.
- After 5 years of persistence, an error in interpretation in the award around Ranger progression has been fixed, and a number of members have received substantial backpay.
- After a similar length of time persisting, the Department has finally sorted out payment of laundry allowance for members in the Clerk classification who wear a uniform.
- We have got the Department to do a survey of Admin staff workloads and also Ranger workloads.
- We got the Department to release the findings of the Risk-E Business report into staff safety when doing law enforcement and compliance.
- We have convinced the Department to revisit having a fire-rated fire shirt.
- The PSA has supported member safety, in particular around the ongoing threat to members around the issue of shooting of horses, and other pest programs such as 1080 baiting.
- Of the 250 ongoing roles created by the previous government, around 50 were PSA positions.
- Staff who manage the Koala parks and transferred State Forest have been converted from temporary to ongoing and new positions are being created in Reserve Establishment Unit to assist with the creation of the Great Koala Park.

Challenges over next 12 months

- We currently have a government with a budget deficit. So far we have been lucky, but we need to remain vigilant about any proposed cuts to jobs or programs.
- At this stage, it is unclear about the impact of the split of DPE into two separate Departments will bring to NPWS and our membership, but we need to ensure that adequate consultation occurs and our members get the best outcome.

- Everyone, whether a PSA staff member, Delegate or member, needs to work to encourage new staff to join the PSA.
- The PSA also received results of staffing numbers in the last 5 years. The results show that between 2018 and 2023, Rangers have gone from 203 to 243 (this number includes TLR, Ranger numbers have actually dropped), Admin staff from 93 to 123, Project Officers in Ops Branches from 16 to 169, Project Officers in other Branches from 86 to 166 and Kosci Field Staff from 53 to 70.
- These results show that, although NPWS staff are growing (and are the highest number in many years), some staff classifications - in particular Rangers and Admin staff - are being left behind. We need to work through the impact of this on the workloads of Rangers and Admin Staff and resolve these issues.