6 November 2018

# SES Christmas closedown

The PSA was contacted by members regarding a memorandum issued by SES on 25 October 2018 titled 'Christmas Closedown and Leave Arrangements December 2018 – January 2019'.

The primary concern raised related to:

> *Managers are requested to ensure that all employees have no more than 15 days (105 hours) of recreation leave by the end of the Christmas holiday period (February 2019) to ensure leave balances are controlled going into the end of the financial year in May/June 2019.*

The PSA wrote to NSW SES on 1 November 2018 stating it had no authority to impose a reduction which is both outside of the Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2009 and the NSW Premiers & Cabinet Memorandum M2012-07 Reduction of accrued recreation leave balances.

We received a reply to our letter from Deputy Commissioner Abbas, which advises of the following:

> *NSW SES is aware of the mandated limits in the Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2009 (Award) and is not seeking to provide conditions less favourable than the Award provides.*

***The reference to "15 days by February 2019" in the Memo is a non-mandatory target figure designed** at avoiding the activation of other measures which direct employees to take leave.*

*Prior to publishing the memo, all managers were provided with separate internal coaching materials that state:*

- *Managers should have leave discussions with employees and gauge requested leave levels in October and November*
- ***The target of 15 days is an ideal level and not mandatory***
- *Staff must not be directed to take leave if they hold less than 30 days*
- *Managers should try all things reasonable to prevent employees being directed to take leave in the future*
- *Managers will be supported by Member Relations and HR in any discussions*
- *Further information for managers will follow at Managers' meetings in November and December.*

*Employees are welcome to apply for leave, or conserve their leave in accordance with the Award.*

If any member is directed to take leave outside of above referenced conditions, please contact Ms Julie Bond jbond@psa.asn.au and Mr Martin Robinson mrobinson@psa.asn.au.

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