2 March 2021

Community Corrections Joint Consultative Committee report back

Every quarter, your elected Community Corrections Departmental Committee (CCDC) delegates, along with PSA Industrial staff, meet with Community Corrections Executive and HR representatives to raise and progress issues on behalf of members in the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC).

The most recent JCC took place in February and included discussion of the following matters:

Assignment to Role Guidelines review

A Working Group, including two PSA delegate representatives, was established late last year to review and update this policy. A draft revision with outcomes from the Working Group is now being submitted to the Community Corrections Executive for endorsement, ahead of final PSA consultation and rollout.

Managers shifting responsibility of liaising with community agencies, CSO and workload allocations without a proper workload model

A review is currently underway regarding management structures, including Manager roles, responsibilities and work practices, Unit Leader roles, responsibilities and work practices, and workload models for these functions. The PSA was assured that any proposed changes would be put forward for consultation as part of the proper process.

Workload for Parole Units and First Year Officer challenges in Parole Units

A review of Parole Unit workloads is being undertaken and should be completed by next JCC.

The Director Strategy is liaising with a number of CCDC delegates as part of this review.

The PSA has continued to table the unique challenges faced by First Year Officers (FYOs) in Parole Units, which is often raised with the union in workplace visits and other forums. The PSA has made a number of proposals to Community Corrections to address challenges for FYOs in Parole Units, namely: increasing the focus on Parole-specific training at Brush Farm Academy and/or developing specialist Parole specific training modules that can be completed after Brush Farm; reducing the workload allocations of FYOs in Parole Units down to 100 hours; and ensuring that FYOs in Parole Units are only assessed by assessors with Parole Unit experience. These proposals are being considered with an update to be provided at the next JCC.

Use of untrained temporary Case Management Officers

The PSA had previously raised concerns about inconsistency and lack of clarity around allocation of work to Case Managers. Community Corrections has now clarified its position into Guidelines that have been distributed to all Directors and should be available on the intranet.

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Working from home

Since the drastic work from home (WFH) changes that took place during COVID-19 in 2020, members have overwhelmingly indicated strong support for having WFH options included into Community Corrections business-as-usual flexible working arrangements post-COVID. The Continuous Improvement and Innovations working group is developing a draft policy on this for Community Corrections. This will need to be broadly aligned with policy across the broader DCJ and public service. Updates on progress will be provided at JCCs and once there is an endorsed draft policy it should be provided to the PSA for consultation.

Workload Management Guide

The PSA sought clarification about what happens in offices that are consistently seeing hours well above the workload model despite following the Workload Management Guide. There have been a number of offices where workload allocations have been extremely high for many weeks or even months with little or inadequate intervention from local management. Community Corrections advised that the continued expansion of the Remote Service Delivery Team should assist in providing more and more support on this into the future. However, the PSA will raise any office with consistent workload concerns directly with the Community Corrections Executive.

If workload levels in your office are consistently above where they should be according to the workload model, please contact your union!

Contestability

Following the opening of the Serco-run Clarence Correctional Centre, the PSA has sought to be provided with any updates on any service delivery function being considered for market testing or privatisation/outsourcing in Community Corrections. This will remain a standing agenda item on every JCC. There was nothing to report for this meeting.

Any member who sees developments about market testing or privatisation/outsourcing should immediately contact the PSA.

Admin Working Party

Delegates representing AAs had been seeking an outcome document from the Admin Working Party for some time and a summary document was finally provided at this JCC. This included advice that some online training modules were being developed through Brush Farm for remote delivery. This item will be kept open for further discussion at the next JCC after delegates have had an opportunity to review the Admin Working Party document.

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Administrative Assistant Handbook not up to date

Delegates had also identified that much of the Administrative Assistant Handbook was out of date. Community Corrections acknowledged this and advised that reviewing and updating this Handbook is a work in progress. A status update will be provided at the next JCC.

Hot-desking

Members had raised questions/concerns through COVID-19 about hot-desking in Community Corrections offices, particularly given the plans involved in the Henry Deane Building relocation. There are no specific plans to introduce across-the-board hot-desking in Community Corrections offices, however it could not be categorically ruled out that there would never be any hot-desking in any part of Community Corrections. If members have specific concerns, they should contact their delegates or the PSA to discuss.

No allocated hours for FYO assessments

This was identified as an issue by the PSA and Community Corrections will review these concerns ahead of the next JCC.

Field Officer safety issues

The PSA had tabled a number of Field Officer concerns that were discussed in an out of session meeting with the Director Strategic Operational Management. These issues were noted at the JCC and this item will remain on the agenda as discussions continue out of session. Full information on these matters was distributed in a bulletin available HERE.

Make sure your Field Officer colleagues are in the union!

The next JCC meeting will take place in May. Members are encouraged to raise important collective matters they would like discussed through their CCDC delegates. If you are unsure who this is, please contact your PSA Industrial Staff below.

For any individual matter, please contact the Member Support Centre on 1300 772 679.

And if you would like to find out about becoming more involved as a delegate or organising a PSA visit in your workplace, we would love to hear from you!

A union workplace is a stronger workplace! Know a colleague who's not a union member? Get them to JOIN THE PSA TODAY!

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