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Ms Susan Mullard
Executive Director, Commissioning and Planning
NSW Department of Communities and Justice
6 Parramatta Square
10 Darcy Street
Parramatta NSW 2150

By email: Thomas.Pacey@dcj.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ms Mullard,

This is a submission regarding the recent Commissioning and Planning restructure and the impact on staff across the state. Members have concerns about the reduction of local team resources, loss of staff and unclear workload expectations.

Lack of consultation with final altered structure
Members are concerned that consultation didn't adequately occur around the final altered structure and would like a response to the:

· Additional ongoing positions that were added to teams
· Temporary positions that were added to bolster district teams after staff were removed from these teams.

Members said they were told at the start of the restructure process that there would be minimal disruption. Yet, this has not been the experience for many members as the points that follow demonstrate.

Significant cuts to teams and increased workloads
Members would like to highlight the significant cuts to teams. The PSA acknowledges management's response that more funds will come with new programs. However, that doesn't address the issue that staff face now, with members concerned they do not have the capacity to effectively manage workloads. Additionally, if temporary roles are not made permanent, members are concerned workloads will further increase.

In one example shared, a team lost three permanent staff members that were replaced with temps. Members say the example highlights increased risks for teams and providers given the crucial time of the year when annual reports are due; new teams won't be able to deliver the same time and attention to providers.

There have been reports that grade 5/6 officers will now be allocated contracts to assist with the workloads. Members would like to know whether there is any basis to these reports.

Another issue in relation to workload concerns the allocation of 'secondary' staff to attend meetings to take minutes. Members report an inconsistent process that ties up the expertise of staff in higher grade roles. Members understand the idea is for secondary staff to be across other contracts so they can provide relief when staff are on leave; however, they would like to see it consistently rolled out with further clarity about its purpose and intended outcomes.

Inconsistent allocation of work across teams and roles

The Metro team has been highlighted as an example of the inconsistent allocation of work; issues have been raised around the contract allocations to each of the four teams. It's been suggested that while some Senior Commissioning and Planning Officers (SCPOs) have been given no contracts, others have 23 with one SCPO given 37. To members, it's a clear demonstration of the inconsistent approach to the allocation of work. It's also put excessive pressure on some teams who haven't had a chance to catch up with providers.

Issues have also been raised with the Commissioning Performance branch. On page 7 of the 'C&P Change Management Plan' it's stated that the branch is 'to provide strategic insights and evidence-based support across C&P'. Members have heard that the branch in question is to focus most of its resources on Out of Home Care (OOHC) and Permanency Support Program (PSP). Senior management has reported that 80 per cent is to be focused on OOHC / PSP and members are concerned there will be limited support available for contract managers.

Members have also asked for further information about the difference between the 7/8 and 9/10 roles. Staff were told the 9/10 roles were to take on the complex providers / contracts but instead they've fallen to the 7/8s.

Temporary positions

The PSA appreciates that there was a response from management about temporary roles funded through programs but members are concerned about the lack of transparency around the sudden allocation of temps to the final organisational structure. There are concerns temporary roles were funded from resources meant to support contract managers.

Members say that at no point was anyone told they'd been added. It was never discussed despite questions from staff right at the start of the process that queried how the teams were to be managed. Members fail to understand why roles were removed from teams in the first place if they now have to be propped up by temps.

One example is from the South/West team in Commissioning where two temporary roles were created on the Illawarra / Shoalhaven team. One of the roles is for 12 months with 20 contracts. The other has six contracts and is slated to finish at the end of October, where it's expected those contracts are to go back to the team.

Members would like to know why the temp on that team was given 20 contracts; why were they not allocated to other temp roles across the directorate? What happens to the temporary role in 12 months' time? Will it be extended or will the work go back to the Illawarra / Shoalhaven team?

Teams feel the added pressure of the replacement of long-term staff members with temps. For example, one member was placed in a central office team rather than be appointed to the 9/10 vacancy on the Illawarra / Shoalhaven team they were already in. Colleagues central to the team and the district have now been replaced with temps who have to learn the ropes.

Members would like to note that it's not the fault of staff who hold the temporary roles and they acknowledge and empathise with the ongoing psychological impacts on temporary staff in insecure jobs. Roles are extended ad hoc with varied end dates, which takes its toll. The ongoing impact affects everyone: temps don't have any job certainty and teams don't have any workload certainty.

Members would like to see a long-term plan for temporary roles with as many as possible converted to ongoing rather than simply extending temporary roles over many years. Members note that stability in the workplace starts with stability with employment.

Inconsistent decisions made around identified roles

Members have reported that identified staff were disadvantaged when provided inconsistent information about ongoing roles. They are concerned that Aboriginal identified staff positions were added after the final structure was presented. Ongoing identified staff were not provided with a transparent or fair opportunity to apply for these roles despite preferences for these positions.

For example, the centralised team had two identified roles, then when the final structure came out two extra identified roles had been added.

Staff in identified roles were told there would be an opportunity to choose preferences, then they were told they had to stay put because there weren't any available identified roles. In one example, a staff member was told there were minimal 9/10 roles available. Yet, after they'd secured a 9/10 position, another 9/10 role suddenly became available. The staff member should have been given the option to consider that role.

Opportunities to act up not transparent

Members have asked for a consistent and transparent process around backfilling and acting up opportunities. At the moment members are unaware of any process. For example, a recent opportunity to act up in a manager role for four weeks was given to someone in another district. Members have asked why a local staff member wasn't given the opportunity. There was no EOI and members aren't aware of a talent pool list.

Members have reported inconsistent processes with it unclear in some instances whether some staff in long-standing acting up opportunities are compliant with the Government

Sector Employment Rules. Members say this includes staff acting up in 11/12 roles. Furthermore, members are concerned that staff acting up in the 11/12 roles will be at an unfair advantage when applying for the ongoing 11/12 roles in phase 5 as they are privy to information in redesign meetings that staff in 9/10 roles aren't because they aren't invited to the meetings.

The PSA suggests management provide staff with a clear process around backfilling and acting up opportunities with regular communications with employees around staff movements.

Geographical spread of teams

Members are concerned about the massive spread of contracts across the state. For example, a manager in Dubbo area has been placed in charge of a local team in Newcastle. There are reports that staff are managing contracts 600km away.

Point 1.1.2.2 of the 'C&P Change Management Plan' makes it clear that local engagement is one of the five guiding principles. Members would like to know how managers are expected to cover huge geographical areas but still provide a local response?

The situation was discussed in relation to providers, with it being noted that one contract manager per provider helps to deliver consistency of advice and improved oversight. However, members would like an opportunity to review the process because concerns are that it comes at the cost of place-based planning and the loss of local intel in some areas of the state, which members say has already been highlighted in the Fams Submission to the Inquiry on Government Service Delivery Standards in Regional NSW (February 2026).

Members would also like clarity around travel expectations and entitlements. Does the department's Travel Policy reflect the long distances some staff would be expected to travel?

Furthermore, members are concerned that managers who live interstate can't provide adequate supervision and direction to teams.

I can be contacted further in relation to these matters on gcorrigan@psa.asn.au

Yours sincerely



Greg Corrigan
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***For* Troy Wright**
Assistant General Secretary