



Newsfront

June 02

McKell Workplace Meeting

8 August, 1 - 2pm

Level 4 Main Conf Room

McKell union meetings are every two months. Come along and let your concerns be known. Also hear what the Department has planned for you. All members & those interested in joining are encouraged to attend.

Rebuilding our Union

As mentioned in previous issues of *NewsFront*, we are currently in the process of rebuilding the union in McKell. And this rebuilding appears to be working, with over 15 people joining last month and over 60 people coming to our June union meeting. Congratulations and welcome to all our new members!

It is interesting to note the comments by the DG on this matter. In the April *Horizons*, Dick Persson outlined his discussion with Maurie O'Sullivan, the General Secretary of the PSA: *"I expressed my strong support for an industrial relations system based around employers and unions negotiating. I agreed to Maurie's proposal for the union to carry out a membership drive within DPWS in the coming months."*

One purpose of the membership drive is to bring DPWS management to the bargaining table to draft a new **Crown Employees (DPWS) Award** to improve our conditions such as flex leave. Despite the rhetoric of the DG, the Department has been unwilling to negotiate with us regarding the new award, the restructure of the corporate finance area (see *Industrial Update*) and participation in the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) (see below).

After repeated verbal requests for the DG and members of his Executive Team to personally attend the JCC, the PSA has formally written to the DG:

"The discrepancy between your public statements and the actions of your line management might be remedied were you to personally participate in the consultative process at JCC level as is the practice in a number of other agencies. The Association would like to take this opportunity to formally request your participation in the Department's Consultative Committee."

So the rhetoric remains just that - rhetoric. It is clear that to get any action out of management the union needs to grow and be taken more seriously. DPWS employees can help by joining. An increase in numbers in itself will be a message to management. It is in all our interests to have a strong union. If you are not a member, join now.
THE UNION NEEDS YOU!

Industrial Update

SBS Finance Unit Restructure

SBS Finance PSA members voted unanimously to take industrial action from Monday 24 June to fight the restructure after the DG refused their demands of halting the restructure until systems enablers are implemented (supposedly making efficiencies), that long term s.38s become permanent, that long term contractors become s.38 and that VRs are offered. They have now banned all overtime, will work to rule, "go slow", and will take other action.

In solidarity and in recognition that they could be next, Members at the June McKell PSA meeting also voted to put on work bans - no overtime, no participation in job selection and evaluation panels and to sign a petition to management. Other workplaces should consider similar solidarity action. Regular updates will be via email.

The proposed restructure will result in significant job losses, reductions in pay & increased work loads, and the Finance staff are applauded for their strength! Disgustingly, management in DPWS *never* follows govt policy when restructuring. It's action like this that will force management to be fairer to staff during restructures.

Other Restructures

Just when you thought it was safe to turn up to work, DPWS has decided to restructure *your* Branch. Management is pursuing the current restructures and the PSA is actively involved:

- 💰 SBS Branch (Finance)
- 💰 HR Services Branch
- 💰 Technology & Information Management Services Branch
- 💰 AES: Water Technologies, Wastewater, Infrastructure & Environmental Technologies, SASIS, Manly Hydraulics Laboratory, Building Design Services - Architectural Services, Electromed, Hydraulics & Water Savings
- 💰 CMS/GPS/QStores

Are you next? Join the PSA and protect your job security. Contact your local delegate for further info on these restructures.

IS DPWS Using Contractors Fairly?

We have been collecting some *very* interesting anecdotal evidence about the use of contractors in DPWS, suggesting widespread and, in many cases, long term use. This is a serious issue as it creates by stealth a workforce who can be sacked easily and has no access to conditions such as sick or rec leave. The PSA is committed to creating a fairer workplace by limiting DPWS' use of contractors & will be writing to the DG suggesting a collateral agreement between PSA members and DPWS. Suggestions for this agreement are welcome and will be discussed at the August meeting. Below are some suggestions so far:

It is suggested that contractors are appointed:

- by competitive process (letter, advertisement)
- according to their level of qualification, skill and experience

- with a standard written agreement, published on the Intranet
- on salaries comparable to the DPWS scale, plus an allowance for entitlements such as holidays, sick leave, etc.

Joint Consultative Committee

Given the length of these monthly meetings, there is much more to report than we have space here. So briefly, the issues discussed in June were:

- ✓ completion of the DPWS job evaluation policy, the culmination of 5 years of discussion and negotiation!
- ✓ the restructures, as outlined above
- ✓ progress on the Health and Wellbeing strategy

Minutes and agendas are available from your local delegate.

As mentioned above, the PSA has requested that the DG attend these meetings so staff issues can be taken seriously.

MIMS Maths

The PSA recently sent a letter to the DG regarding the underpayment of pay increases to DPWS staff. It appears that the implementation of MIMS required a change to the department's pay period, with the result that our pay period has fallen a week behind the rest of the public service.

As our salary increases are paid from the first *full* pay period, we haven't received the pay increases at the same time as other public service employees. In effect, DPWS staff have had their pay increases delayed for one week and the department has made an unintentional cost saving at our expense!

The PSA has requested to meet with the DG about this issue.....watch this space.

I am Woman

Maternity Protection - Its for all of us

The PSA intends to lodge a claim for improvements to the Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award, including:

- maternity leave to at least the ILO standard of 14 weeks
- paid parental leave of at least 3 weeks for fathers/partners
- equal conditions for adoptive and birth parents
- paid lactation breaks of 30 minutes for each 4 hours worked
- short prenatal leave of up to 35 hours for parents to attend necessary prenatal medical appointments
- pro-rata paid leave
- no discrimination against same sex parents
- a childcare allowance payable to nominated parent to assist with the costs of work related child care
- leave for foster parents
- additional leave for multiple births
- maternity leave entitlements in the event of premature birth, miscarriage, stillbirth or death of a child shortly after birth.

Womens Conference

PSA's Annual Women's Conference will be held this year on 19 - 20 September. Paid leave is available to members to attend both days and country members can recover accommodation and travelling expenses. Look out for more info in the next issue of *NewsFront*.

For further info on these and other topics affecting women contact the PSA McKell Women's Officer: Stephanie Bourke 9372 8609 or email her.

CCSU News

The Central Corporate Services Unit (CCSU) was established in 1996 to provide shared services to gov agencies located in governor macquarie tower. CCSU now serves over 30 agencies and has just over 200 staff. It will play an integral role in the shared corporate services strategy to achieve the 6% savings of unfunded salary increases over 02/03. It is anticipated that many of the 64 smaller gov agencies will get CCSU to supply some or all of their corporate services. The fate of affected staff in these agencies is unknown at this stage, but is of concern to some at CCSU.

A restructure of divisions and branches within CCSU is expected later this year as part of the Shared Services Excellence Program (SSEP). CCSU delegates Glenn Gray and Rodney Gerrard have had a preliminary meeting with management to discuss the implications. It was agreed that regular meetings between SSEP and CCSU PSA branch delegates would be part of the process.

PSA Conference

The PSA annual conference was held on 30-31 May. A full report has been prepared by John Allan and is available from your bcal delegate. Key issues discussed were:

- ✓ the pressure on agencies to achieve 6% savings from "efficiency reforms" and the centralisation of corporate support into the CCSU model to fund salary increases in 02/03
- ✓ the refusal of agencies to provide information to the PSA on casualisation and the widespread use of agency staff, contractors and consultants.
- ✓ the general agenda of agencies to cut entitlements where possible.

McKell Delegates

Your local McKell delegates are listed below. These are the first point of contact for union members in McKell. If you would like to be a delegate or simply help out contact Susanne Johnson.

Delegate, position Workplace Ctte	Level	Ext.
Chris Dunkerley	3	28927
John Kennett	5	27067
Warren Baker	7	27236
Susanne Johnson, Chair	8	29281
John Stepanoff, Asst Secretary	9	27430
Phil Dixon	9	27340
Paul McClure	11	27540
Andy Andrijeunas	11	27695
Robert Morrison, Asst Chair	20	28501
Stephanie Bourke, Women's Officer	21	28609
Con Hagsis	21	27286
John Allan	23	28823

Joining the PSA is easy

To join the PSA costs only \$15.80 per fortnight and could be less depending on your salary. Its also tax deductible! Membership forms can be found at the PSA website www.psa.labor.net.au, or see your local delegate.

Contributions

NewsFront is produced every 2 months by McKell delegates, however all DPWS members (including regional!) are encouraged to make contributions about issues in your work area. Email your contributions to Susanne Johnson.