PSA Enterprise Bargaining – What you have told us

Preamble

The South Australian Public Sector Wages Parity Enterprise Agreement: Salaried 2014 has a nominal expiry date of 4 December 2016.

During the first half of 2016 the PSA conducted extensive consultation with members including statewide site visits and the development of an all-member survey. This document is derived from those processes and will assist us to continue the development of a draft claim to serve on Government in the future. Unless specifically mentioned in this document, the PSA will be seeking the retention of all other current Award/Agreement provisions and employment conditions.

The fundamental principles outlined in this document will also guide negotiations on any agency specific issues which will be discussed directly with members in those agencies.

Once fully developed our EB claim will aim to consolidate existing gains to enable protections into the future.
In early 2016, the PSA conducted a survey of members covered by the Agreement, in conjunction with over 230 site visits. From the survey results and member feedback the PSA has identified five key themes that will form the wages and conditions package to be pursued during the upcoming Enterprise Bargaining negotiations.

1. Job Protection
2. Wages and Conditions
3. Workload
4. Classification
5. Standardisation

1. Job Protection

PSA members have consistently identified job protection and security as their number one concern and an objective they expect the PSA to make a priority during Enterprise Bargaining negotiations.

In an environment where attacks on the size of the public sector have become commonplace and increasing budgetary pressures, the PSA will seek to secure provisions that protect the important role of the entire public sector in serving all South Australians.

- The PSA will pursue a new clause in the EA which outlines a commitment to secure ongoing employment as the preferred type of employment over fixed term contract and casual employment.

- The current Commissioner's Determination 7: Retraining, Redeployment and Redundancy provides significant protections for members and applies through an appendix to the current Agreement. Further changes are required to engage, protect and place employees earlier in the process, especially where employees are unattached, and to provide access to assistance and case management prior to being formally declared excess.

- The PSA will seek equitable arrangements with other public sector workers for those employees who are offered a TVSP after being declared excess.

- Adherence to redeployment provisions must be centrally managed in conjunction with stronger provisions for placing redeployees, with regular central monitoring. This should include more transparent written reports to the PSA and government and greater agency accountability.
2. Wages and Conditions

The PSA will be bargaining with the intention of negotiating the best possible wages and conditions package for members.

The past two years have seen continual department and agency reforms under the guise of achieving a more efficient and effective public sector. It is the PSA's view that any efficiencies that have been gained by such reforms must be recognised in the overall salary outcomes of this bargaining round.

If the public sector is to remain South Australia's employer of choice, improvements must be made to existing conditions.

- Reinstatement of Return to Work provisions which were lost through legislation changes will be pursued in this claim, in particular for groups in high risk worksites/occupations.

- Specific Domestic Violence leave and support will be pursued as an addition to Clause 9.9 to reflect the national commitment against Domestic Violence.

- The PSA will pursue amendments to Maternity/Paternity leave to ensure such provisions reflect the current needs all families.

- Costs of counsel for members to attend employment related legal proceedings on matters which arise from the performance of members' duties, for example Royal Commissions, Coronial Enquiries, ICAC hearings, to be met by the employer.

- With more and more agencies utilising 24 hour staffing models, issues relating to shift work including mandatory rest periods, penalties and changes in rosters/shift notifications need to be examined and as a minimum aligned with other professions carrying out shift work.
3. Workload

Extensive member feedback has clearly demonstrated that continual restructures within various agencies across the Public Sector over the last two years have contributed to increased workloads and complexity of work.

During this round of Enterprise Bargaining, the PSA will seek to secure provisions that ensure no employee is expected to work hours in excess of the ordinary hours of work prescribed by the Agreement. The PSA will also seek to secure provisions that will be unambiguous in their interpretation and application, irrespective of the Department or Agency in which the employee works. These include:

- Proactive clauses for managing unreasonable workloads.
- In order to assist measuring unreasonable workloads, ordinary hours should be defined in the agreement
- The PSA will pursue amendments to the Work Health and Safety Clause to ensure workload risk assessments form part of all organisational change. Sixty five percent of respondents identified an increased workload after organisational change.
- Workload management tool/committees, monitoring/reporting WHS incidents related to workload.

4. Classification

PSA members have consistently reported that responsibilities, skills and complexities within roles are not appropriately reflected in current classification structures.

The PSA believes that all public sector workers must be appropriately classified on the duties expected to be performed. All employees should have an agreed position description that matches the job they do, and position descriptions must be reviewed regularly to ensure they are accurate and relevant.

The PSA will investigate if the roles and duties specified in the current Agreement reflect the work required of staff within a range of work settings and environments.

- ASO1(or equivalent) should be a training wage with automatic progression to ASO2 (or equivalent) following successful completion of training after 12 months.
- Simplification of pathways for progression between classifications.
5. Standardisation

PSA members have consistently raised concerns about the inconsistencies between agencies in the interpretation of Public Sector policies and Determinations.

For example, the PSA has witnessed significant differences in the application of Determinations of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment between different departments and agencies. This is contrary to the principles of One Government/One Employer.

The PSA will be pursuing the standardisation of sector-wide provisions including those related to organisational change, redundancy, retraining, right of entry and WHS, and the rights of PSA Worksite Representatives. Important issues include:

- Centralised oversight managing Commissioner's Determination 7.
- Consideration of whether the content of some Commissioner's Determinations should be included in the Enterprise Agreement.
- The PSA will pursue Union Members' Rights provisions, including Right of Entry, to ensure members have access to their union officials and for the benefit and protection of rights and roles of Worksite Representatives.
- Clear and consistent interpretation of the provisions for applying for and granting of Annual Leave, Long Service Leave, Retention Leave, Flextime and flexible working arrangements.
- Parity for Health Act employees with other SA Government employees will be pursued as part of the Agreement.