

Progressive PSA says:

NEGOTIATE A BETTER PAY DEAL

The NSW Government (our employer) has made a pay offer to the PSA through NSW Labor Council. The PSA does not have to accept this offer. We can, and should, negotiate a better deal.

WHAT IS THE OFFER?

The Government (our employer) is offering just 2% per year for the first two years. The total amount is 16% spread over four and a half years.

The offer isn't just about money. The employer wants to extract a lot of concessions. These include 'award simplification' (stripping conditions from our award), more job cuts, extending performance monitoring, and weakening the union through a shift towards agency based (enterprise) bargaining.

The employer's offer is for: 2% on 1 January 2000, 2% on 1 January 2001, 3% on 1 January 2002, 4% on 1 January 2003 & 5% on 1 July 2003

Treasury only funds part of the increases, the remainder will be paid for by each agency through cuts to jobs and conditions (otherwise known as 'efficiency savings'). The small increases in the early years make it cheaper for the employer to pay out redundancies. It is clear that this pay offer is structured for further job cuts. A renegotiated pay deal must be fully funded by Treasury.

The largest increase doesn't occur until after the March 2003 election when we might face an even more hostile government. It is very unusual to have a pay deal that runs longer than the maximum 3 years for an industrial award. It is also very risky because if inflation rises we won't be able to adjust the deal.

BALLOT OF MEMBERS

The Progressive PSA has campaigned hard to get the pay deal put to members. We are pleased to report that a postal ballot of affected members will be held in the next few weeks. Sky Channel broadcasts will also take place at 9.30 am Wednesday 2 February 2000.

The union leadership who call themselves the 'Rank & File' Team and the right wing faction only want to present a 'YES' case. They will not allow a 'NO' case to be presented. This is unfortunate because we would like you to have the whole picture.

The pay offer

- Too little
- Too long a period
- Too many cuts
- Bad for Women

**Vote to 'REJECT'
the offer for a better deal**

Vote 'REJECT the offer' for a better deal

If a majority vote 'ACCEPT' then a *consent award* will be formed. We will have to negotiate the items in the MOU with our employer. These negotiations will take place in both agencies and across the public service. An 'ACCEPT' vote will be a signal to the employer that we are unwilling to resist their attempts to erode our conditions.

If a majority vote 'REJECT' then one of the following will happen:

1. The employer will realise that their agenda is unenforceable and will make a better offer. Even though it is being touted as their 'final offer' they will make changes if they see there is strong opposition to it. A decision by PSA Central Council to set extra conditions on acceptance of any deal proves that we do not have to accept the MOU in its current form in order to get a consent award.
2. The employer will hold out and the matter will go to the Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) for arbitration. Historically commissions base their decisions on their perception of the balance of power between the union and the employer. A 'REJECT' vote would inform the commission that it is unwise to award anything less than the employer's current offer.

In other words, we strengthen our position by voting 'REJECT' and put ourselves in a better position for negotiations in the future.

[PTO]

WHAT THE MOU MEANS FOR YOU

The memorandum of understanding (MOU) sets out the proposed pay increases and what the employer expects before they are delivered. The pay rises would then be put in place by an award. However the current legislation only allows an award to be a maximum of 3 years. This raises concerns over how the two large increases will be guaranteed, and whether they are only contingent on the program laid out in the MOU being implemented.

This MOU lays out reforms of the public service on a grand scale, it sets a far reaching agenda that will lead to changes to public sector employment as we now know it. Yet it contains a clause that *"there will be no new salaries or conditions claims arising from productivity and efficiency improvements covered by this agreement"*.

The MOU is about the removal of employment protection in awards and legislation making your job less secure. It's also about limiting the capacity of the union to help you when things go wrong.

NO RIGHT TO STRIKE - The memorandum of understanding prohibits industrial action on any matter contained in the MOU. The MOU captures almost every aspect of public sector employment because it commits the parties to review the entire legislative and employment framework. This removes the only real power the union has.

CEO RIGHT TO HIRE & FIRE - The Government wants to review the role of the Public Employment Office as your employer and the role of the Governor in public sector appointments. It appears they want to give your Chief Executive Officer the right to hire and fire. This is consistent with other moves towards agency based bargaining and would be an important step in reducing the protection of your award and introduction of enterprise bargaining. This will also undermine equity. Two people could be doing the same work in different agencies and be paid different amounts.

ANNUALISED ALLOWANCES - The employer wants to consolidate or annualise allowances. As jobs are cut you will be expected to take on extra responsibilities but won't be compensated for extra travel and more frequent overtime.

MORE JOB CUTS & CUTS TO REGIONAL AREAS - The employer wants to continue implementing *'corporate services reform*

efficiencies'. These were the main cause of the last round of job cuts. Jobs will be cut by forcing agencies to share more resources and devolve functions. Areas being targeted include information technology, travelling arrangements and purchasing functions. The MOU calls for a *"Simplified public sector management framework that...removes impediments to public sector agencies flexibility"* - this means a reduction in employment security and a move towards a more temporary, less secure job structure.

The employer's agenda with digital technology is to reduce the costs of service delivery not improve service delivery. The MOU says, *"This could mean a reduction in face to face services. In certain circumstances, location is no longer a critical factor."* The employer also wants the ability to redesign and 'broadband' jobs to facilitate these cuts.

PERFORMANCE REWARD THREAT TO EQUITY

The employer wants to extend the performance management systems introduced in the last pay round. This may include the introduction of 'performance reward and recognition systems'. These systems are prone to bias and discrimination. Will women and men be treated equitably? Will people who don't stay back and work unpaid overtime get 'performance rewards'? Will staff on lower grades really get access to performance rewards? With all the job and budget cuts in this and other agencies, can we really believe there will be additional rewards? This is a move away from the relative security of collective awards and a step towards individual work contracts.

WHAT MIGHT A BETTER DEAL LOOK LIKE?

- Larger increases in the early years of the deal.
- A shorter duration to prevent us being locked in if inflation increases.
- All increases to be fully funded by Treasury. No loss of jobs. End the job advertising freeze.
- Investment of the NSW' GST windfall in socially useful infrastructure and services.
- Genuine pay equity for ALL undervalued work.
- An end to reduction of services especially to rural and regional NSW. An end to contracting out and casualisation of the public sector.
- No agency level bargaining except for genuine agency specific matters.
- No restriction on our right to take industrial action when necessary.