

# Unions NSW appointments to be removed and banned from NSW Government boards

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**UNION bosses will be removed from state government boards - with laws to be changed to cut the requirement for an employee representative on such bodies in a bid to end a gravy train of Labor appointments.**

A major O'Farrell government reform this year is expected to be the axing of the positions worth millions of dollars a year.

Finance Minister [Greg Pearce](#) also plans to cut the number of government boards - of which there are presently more than 50.

The government will take new laws to parliament to end the requirement for Unions NSW nominees on government boards.

Several appointments were made at the 11th-hour of the 16-year Labor government including the First State Super board reappointment of Health Services Union secretary Michael Williamson, who is now under police investigation and has stood down from the board.

A letter from then treasurer Eric Roozendaal to Ron Davis, a PSA former official appointed to the board of First State Super dated February 2, 2010 states he is reappointed until December 31, 2013 at a \$154,780 annual salary.

"There seem to be boards all over the place and we need to look at slimming down government boards," Mr Pearce said.

"Our priority is to have people who can run these complex businesses, put downward pressure on prices and bring costs down and not (have) any conflicts of interest. We need directors who are experienced with qualifications to run these strategically really important businesses.

"Obviously some employee appointments are clearly conflicted and in some cases we know they don't sit in on some board meetings because they can't participate (because of a conflict of interest).

"There obviously is a place for employee communications and there should be formal channels but advisory structures are the way to go.

"One of the things we're concerned about is the duplication of boards at the moment."

Among other contentious appointments to state government boards are the Public Service Association chief John Cahill who has been a director of Macquarie Generation, PSA official

Steve Turner who earns \$60,600 a year as a director of Delta Electricity and Labor Party President Michael Lee, on \$60,600 as a board member of Essential Energy.

The government has already decided not to renew the appointment of federal Immigration Minister Chris Bowen's wife Rebecca Mifsud, an electrical union official appointed to the board of Ausgrid.

Mr Davis said yesterday he had been appointed to the First State Super board "on merit".

He said he had been a Unions NSW nominee but said he had studied superannuation and worked a 40-hour week in the role, unlike other board members.

"This is my third term (on the board)," Mr Davis said.

"All of the employee nominations for the state super board are nominated by Unions NSW.

"To be honest I was appointed on merit."