

KEYNOTES

POVB Newsletter

October 2004



RECENT INDUSTRIAL ACTION

The State Executive thanks you for your support of the MSPC which recently took strike action. The statewide ban on high capacity requested by the State Executive was extremely effective and has brought the Department to the negotiating table.

At this point we are waiting for the Department to show the POVB the final "Way Forward" project team proposal for each centre.

It must be stated that it has taken the Department a considerable amount of time and resources to get to a point where they are ready to have their proposals for each centre available for scrutiny.

The Department must accept that the POVB will not be rushed or pressured into accepting their proposals until the State Executive can meet and discuss with each centre its reaction to the Department's proposal and its response.

Any move to implement changes without local agreement will result in industrial action.

We will be meeting with the delegates at the up-coming delegates to management meeting at PSA House on 22 & 23 November 2004 to discuss the Department's proposals.

It must be stated that the State Executive does not agree or accept that to fund our

recent pay rise we have to lose any positions around the State.

We are not office workers where restructures can be done through technological advances reducing staff numbers. Applying the same mindset in our work environment can result in serious assault, loss of control, disturbance and even death.

When the Police or Ambulance Officers receive a pay rise they don't remove the coalface policing or medical response. If crime drops they don't use that as an argument to close the police stations. Such drops in crime are more likely in response to effective police numbers.

The same applies to Correctional Officers and we will not accept the rhetoric of our so-called enlightened ones. It seems obvious to the members of the State Executive that the only people who think these restructures in the existing centres are a good idea are those who won't be working there.

STAFF SHORTAGE STATEWIDE

There is currently a huge problem with lack of staff at most centres across the State because the Department has not recruited or run a training school except for Kempsey in the last 12 months. If and when they do decide to put officers through a training school, people that have been waiting for over 18 months, since doing

entry and medical procedure, may quite possibly have chosen other career paths.

At this stage most gaols are locking down at least once a week, others 3-4 times per week, inner city courts have become almost impossible to operate. These shortages are leading to serious safety concerns and our officers are working under conditions, which are not in the interests of officers and inmates alike; the risk of serious assaults is growing daily.

The POVB State Executive have been approaching the Department over this matter for a considerable time with no suc-

cess. The Department must act now to remedy this problem as it will take a considerable time to recruit, train and place new officers. During this time our gaols will be locked down more often and for longer periods. This situation is intolerable and must be remedied immediately.

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(*Note – Principal Industrial Officer, John Scullion, has been given the task of heading up the Major Award Team which is preparing for next Public Sector Award. The Claim is for 25% over two years. He will return to the POVB when the case is finalised.)