

# THE **campus backbone**

CPSU - University Of Newcastle



MEMBERS' EB FOCUS GROUPS UPDATE

9 June 2009

## Being Treated With Respect & Balancing Work and Life

Report from **OUR** focus groups held in the week ending Friday 29 May 2009, Callaghan Campus

Throughout May the CPSU, *The General Staff Union*, has been running members' Focus Groups to develop our log of claims. Focus Groups have been well-attended, and the discussion is proving that CPSU members are enthusiastic about having a forum for member driven bargaining. This process will ensure the your negotiators know exactly what University of Newcastle General Staff want from this round of bargaining.

### Issues discussed under: *Being Treated With Respect and Balancing Work and Life* included:

- A processes for fair and transparent classification and evaluation of positions
- Training and development options and processes that support them
- The problem of workplace bullying
- Job security
- Maintenance of professional skills and career development
- Workload and overwork
- Carer responsibilities, now and for the future
- Barriers to taking time for family or personal responsibilities
- Working to live or living to work?

### General issues/ideas raised included:

- Classification to be seen as a crucial part of the M4P interview, managers to receive training for this
- Processes to be fully documented, timely and transparent with continual feedback, "budget" no excuse
- General Staff need enhanced ability to request reclassification, workshops to be held to assist applicants
- Classification Review panels to be constituted by mutual agreement
- University parity in pay and performance – adherence to the HEW descriptors – class action, not deals
- Higher Duties Allowance to commence after one week of working at higher level
- Automatic move to substantive higher HEW level after a certain period of HDA - with all benefits
- University to use CPSU trainers for regular "anti-bullying" awareness sessions for General Staff
- Code of Conduct to be observed at all levels of the institution
- Controls on outsourcing, with requirement to consult and consider in-house alternatives
- Job security enhanced by controls on casual and fixed term employment
- More centrally-funded budget for training to remove local objection on "relevance to job"
- More in-house professional training to avoid need to travel interstate for this (risking rejection on costs)
- Update and improve HECS reimbursement scheme and encourage staff to enroll in courses
- Training and/or retraining to be normal part of working life, professionalism to be rewarded
- Workload survey, achievable targets, full study of load, flow and organization of work of General Staff
- Review of staffing profile where high load is experienced - staffing levels to be increased
- Appropriate funded backfill from pool of trained staff for approved leave of any type over a certain length
- No forced Long Service Leave - maintain or strengthen current arrangement "taken at time of choosing"
- Restore flexibility to the Flextime system – provide for unanticipated carer responsibilities
- Flexibility has been eroded into a predicted roster system – restore the balance
- Greater consultation with affected staff during the Workplace Change process
- Wider definition of "stakeholder" to allow University wide scrutiny and input to Change processes

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- ✓ **Finalisation of our Log of Claims**
- ✓ **General Meeting of members to discuss and endorse the Log of Claims**
- ✓ **Serving the Log of Claims on the University**

The input from the Focus Groups is being collated and will form the basis of the Log of Claims. By **Friday 12 June** this will have been circulated to members for further discussion in your workplaces with feedback by **Friday 19 June** to the **Bargaining Coordinator, Richard Dear**, to allow for amendments to be made to the Log.

A General Meeting will be held on **Wednesday 24 June**, in Lecture Theatre HBI5 at Callaghan (with a hook-up for Ourimbah in AV3) to discuss and formally endorse the Log of Claims. In celebration of the Newcastle University launch of the **CPSU The General Staff Union** website we will provide food and drink from 12 noon with the General Meeting starting at 12.30 pm.

To demonstrate to the University the strength of support this Log has with the General Staff it is of the utmost importance that as many members as possible attend this meeting. If you attend no other union meeting this year, attend this one! **PLEASE PUT IT IN YOUR DIARY NOW.**

Your Bargaining and Campaign Team delegates will then leave the meeting to formally serve your finalised Log of Claims on the University. Let the good faith bargaining begin!

*This process ensures that the claim actually reflects the needs and wishes of the General Staff, not some list of ideological objectives constructed elsewhere by Union administrators. You should ensure that your voice is heard by taking part in the discussions occurring now.*

**Please contact your CPSU Bargaining Coordinator  
Richard Dear at [Richard.Dear@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:Richard.Dear@newcastle.edu.au)  
to give feedback on any issues in the draft Log of Claims  
or if you require another copy of the  
**CPSU EB DISCUSSION PAPER****



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