



Sue Pennicuik MLC

Member for Southern Metropolitan Region

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Ms Karen Batt
Victorian Branch Secretary / Federal Secretary
CPSU, State Public Services Federation Group, Victorian Branch
PO Box 4355,
RICHMOND EAST, 3121

Dear Karen,

Thank you for writing to the Greens regarding employment and industrial relations within the Victorian Public Sector. Please see our responses to your questions below:

1. What is your parties' commitment to a career public service and how do you envisage enacting it in practice?

The Greens fully support an independent, professional career public service as this is generally the best and most efficient way of delivering the services that meet the needs of all Victorians. The Greens are opposed to the overuse of short term contracts, particularly through labour hire companies, and these should be limited to genuine short term needs or temporary positions.

2. Will you commit to referring powers to the Commonwealth that will ensure security of employment, for dealing with bullying and for establishing enforceable redeployment provisions in EBAs?

The Greens support the amendment of the relevant provisions of [s. 5 of] the Fair Work (Commonwealth Powers) Act 2009 (Vic), as far as constitutionally possible, to give the FWC the jurisdiction to ensure the security of employment for casual and other public sector employees, as well as to deal with redeployment and redundancy matters and workplace bullying.

3. Will you agree to amend the Public Administration Act to extend the Review of Actions Regulations to include all public sector bodies, not only public service bodies, to remove the anomalous treatment of public sector employees?

The Greens support this extension to ensure that there is a common standard that applies to all public sector employees.

4. Will you agree to have the current Fair and Reasonable Treatment Principles (s8 of the Public Administration Act) included in all EBAs to guarantee enforceability?

The Greens agree that the current Fair and Reasonable Treatment Principles (s8 of the Public Administration Act) should be included in all EBAs so they can be enforced at the FWC .

5. Will you commit to establishing a process to ensure that Government approvals of enterprise bargaining outcomes are subject to timeliness benchmarks?

The Greens are opposed to protracted EBA negotiations and would like to see timeliness benchmarks established and adhered to.

6. Will you commit that every agency involved in any aspect of for Public Sector enterprise bargaining will have Bargaining Representative status for the purposes of accountability before FWC on the conduct of bargaining?

The Greens agree that every agency involved in any aspect of for Public Sector enterprise bargaining should have Bargaining Representative status for the purposes of accountability before FWC.

7. Will you agree to jointly review current funding models for the determination of resource allocation for the delivery of services with a view to establishing a matrix model of funding and budget allocation?

The Greens agree to consult with relevant unions regarding existing government resource allocation methods and possible alternatives.

8. Will you ensure that the principle of sovereign risk is applied in relation to EBA's so industrial agreements that are reached in good faith are adhered to by Public sector Body and Entity Heads?

The Greens agree that EBAs must be adhered to by all public sector agencies.

9. Will you agree to establish a joint CPSU/ Government task force to review the prevalence of bullying and work overload in the sector with a view to developing and implementing strategies to redress the cause of this?

Workplace bullying is a serious issue in the public sector and across the workforce. The Greens fully support the establishment of a joint taskforce comprising government, the CPSU and other relevant unions to review the prevalence of work related bullying and work overload across the VPS and to implement strategies to prevent bullying and to address it where it has occurred.

The Greens support strengthening OHS law in Victoria to place an onus on all employers to act to prevent bullying and have raised questions in parliament regarding the role of WorkSafe in relation to tackling work related bullying within WorkSafe itself and in work places generally.

10. What is your parties view on the Shergold Report into Service Sector Reform?

The Greens note that while there appears to have been consultation with the community sector and peak bodies such as VCOSS, there is no mention of unions in the Shergold Report, nor do they appear to have been consulted about the 'review of service sector reform' or included on the 'partnership advisory committee'.

While principles such as 'maximising public value', 'improving quality of life', and 'common purpose' can be supported in principle, the Greens are concerned about the recommendations that government should effectively step back from a service delivery role to a 'facilitative' role and the recommended default position (R6) 'that an increasing range of government services be delivered by non-government organisations'.

The Greens would be opposed to the government stepping back from delivering services in key areas that are relied on by the Victorian community, particularly the more disadvantaged members of the community. Contracting out key services to the private sector could put at risk the current model of delivering services in a fair and equitable manner, by impartial and committed public sector workers. It would also risk losing the relevant expertise and ability of the public sector to deliver these services, resulting in private sector monopolies holding unreasonable power over the delivery of key services that should be kept in public hands.

11. Will you agree to rectify current discriminatory treatment for staff involved in emergency management who are blocked from contributing to ESSuper (including staff in fire management in DEPI and Parks and the State Emergency Service permanent employees) given they all work alongside and are subject to similar risk exposure as MFB/ CFA/ Police and Ambulance officers who are eligible to contribute to the fund.

The Greens commit to working with the relevant unions with a view to ensuring that employees in comparable emergency service agencies are not discriminated against in terms of superannuation arrangements.

12. Will you agree to review the funding matrix of your policies to avoid the concept of “picking winners” which occurs at the expense of many occupational groups within the policy matrix e.g. focus on police officer numbers in a law and order policy matrix leaves the impression that there’s only one occupation contributing and funded when a forensic scientist, finger printer, crime analyst, court reporter, prosecutor, public defender, corrections officer, youth justice officer, or parole officer are also part of that matrix but not adequately funded to address the impacts flowing from funding more police officers.

The Greens fully recognise that the provision of public services requires a wide range of occupations and expertise. The government has talked about not reducing ‘front line’ services, which ignores the crucial role being fulfilled by those people who are deemed not to be ‘front line’. We know that the loss of staff across the public sector is having a huge impact on the provision of services.

Thank you again for contacting us about these important issues.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require further information.

Yours faithfully,



Sue Pennicuik MLC
Spokesperson on Employment and Industrial Relations