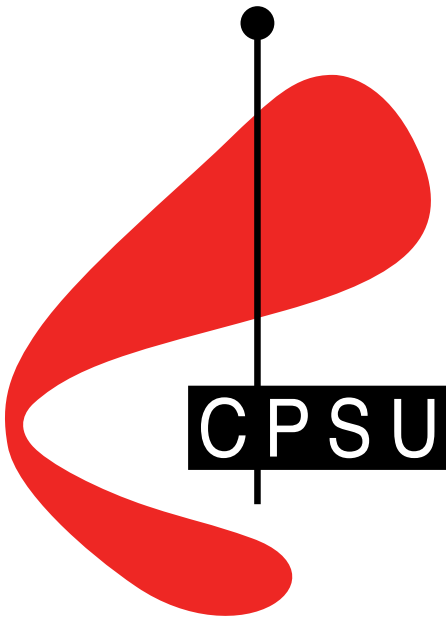


issue 2 | volume 31 | winter 2019 edition



PUBLIC PERSPECTIVE

A PUBLICATION OF THE COMMUNITY & PUBLIC SECTOR UNION
SPSF GROUP - VICTORIAN BRANCH - WWW.CPSUVIC.ORG

**VPS 2020 UPDATE
TALKS UNDERWAY**



PAGE 15

A photograph of two people in a professional setting. A man with a beard, wearing a light blue button-down shirt, is leaning over a desk and shaking hands with a woman. The woman, with dark hair, is wearing a white top and is smiling. On the desk, there is a laptop, a small potted plant, and a white mug. The background shows a window with a view of a city.

JOBS AND SKILLS EXCHANGE

PAGE 11

VISIT CPSUVIC.ORG



PUBLIC PERSPECTIVE IS A PUBLICATION OF
THE COMMUNITY & PUBLIC SECTOR UNION
SPSF GROUP - VICTORIAN BRANCH -
WWW.CPSUVIC.ORG

CONTENTS

BARGAINING BILL RESTORES BALANCE..... 3

Recently passed legislation grants the ability to bargain on a broader range of matters, including job security.

PROVISIONAL PAYMENT PILOT..... 4 - 5

The Victorian Government's new Provisional Payment Pilot has now commenced.

PENALTY RATES CUT AGAIN 6

Penalty rates for workers in fast food, hospitality, retail and pharmacy were cut again last month.

HARSHER ANTI-UNION LAWS ON HORIZON7

Re-introduced legislation which makes it easier to de-register unions and disqualify union officials.

TRADING AWAY OUR PUBLIC SERVICES..... 8 - 9

Don't let our public services be traded away putting people before profit!

HISTORIC GLOBAL CONVENTION PASSED.....10

Historic Convention places obligations on governments and employers to prevent violence and harassment.

JOBS AND SKILLS EXCHANGE LAUNCHED11

The new VPS Jobs and Skills Exchange, will bring an expansion of employment and skills development.

VICARIOUS TRAUMA CHALLENGE12-13

Promoting mental health and wellbeing by changing workplace cultures and practices.

MPS GIVEN GENEROUS PAY RISES14

From July 1, all state parliamentarians received a 2.92% boost in their pay packets.

LEAVE ACCRUES WHILST ON WORKCOVER..... 14

Find out if you are entitled to accrued leave.

VPS TWENTY20 TALKS UNDERWAY15

Priority issues to address in negotiations for the next VPS Agreement.



BARGAINING BILL RESTORES BALANCE

THE ABILITY TO BARGAIN ON A BROADER RANGE OF MATTERS, INCLUDING JOB SECURITY, IS NOW POSSIBLE FOR PUBLIC SECTOR STAFF WITH RECENTLY PASSED LEGISLATION RESOLVING A LONG-STANDING LEGAL IMPEDIMENT.

All workers, public and private, are now equal again after the legislation overturned a restriction on what some enterprise bargaining agreements could cover.

Now, more than 130,000 VPS employees, including departmental staff will be able to negotiate about things like staffing levels, how staff are engaged and the promotion of secure employment.

Many public sector employees already enjoyed this right, which applied to what are known as constitutional corporations, including some public sector organisations.

This legal disparity resulted from a Federal Court decision, but the issue has been 25 years in the making, ever since then-premier Jeff Kennett referred some of Victoria's industrial relations powers to the Commonwealth in 1996.

The amendments will not change enterprise agreements that have already been concluded within the public sector.

The change does not mean these clauses can be imposed on public sector employers but if job security clauses are included in a future agreement, workers will be able to argue regular casual employees should be converted to more secure work.

They extend the right to include them and will only be included where the parties agree.

Sworn police are excluded from the changes.



PROVISIONAL PAYMENT PILOT

**THE VICTORIAN
GOVERNMENT'S NEW
PROVISIONAL PAYMENT
PILOT TO MAKE PAYMENT
FOR MEDICAL AND
LIKE SERVICES TO
EMERGENCY SERVICE
WORKERS SUFFERING
MENTAL INJURY HAS NOW
COMMENCED IN THE
FOLLOWING AREAS:**

- Employees and volunteers of Victoria Police, Ambulance Victoria, Country Fire Authority, Victoria State Emergency Services
- Employees of Metropolitan Fire Brigade and Emergency Service Telecommunications Authority
- Public sector nurses and midwives
- Child protection practitioners employed by the Department of Health and Human Services
- Corrections Victoria employees – Correctional and Detention Services
- Youth Justice employees – Correctional and Detention Services
- Forest Fire Fighters employed by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and partner agencies



The Pilot will run for 12 months from its commencement on 16 June for employees of Victoria Police, sworn and unsworn, while the pilot will commence from 1st July for all other workers listed on Pg. 4.

The agency will then commence paying the reasonable medical treatment and services while the members claim is being determined. If the claim is rejected, payment of medical expenses will continue for up to 13 weeks from date claim lodged upon the employer.

CPSU members can choose their own medical provider under the pilot. The employer however will only pay the prescribed fee to the doctor, so there may be an out of pocket payment the CPSU member will need to pay. Medical expenses payable will include GP, Psychiatrist, psychologist and other like services for mental injury.

CPSU members can still utilise a Medicare mental health treatment plan without affecting medical treatment under the Pilot.

CPSU members will receive provisional payments for medical and like services at the prescribed WorkCover fee rate while their compensation claim is being determined.

Once the CPSU members compensation claim is approved the medical treatment and services will be covered through the WorkCover compensation scheme as normal in accordance with law.

If the compensation claim is rejected, the CPSU member will still continue to have the cost of reasonable medical treatment and services covered by the pilot for up to 13 continuous weeks from the date the claim is submitted to the employer. For example, if a CPSU member is advised the compensation claim

is rejected 4 weeks after the CPSU member submitted the claim to the employer, the CPSU member will be able to access funding for medical treatment and services through the pilot for an additional 9 weeks, 13 weeks all up.

**For further information contact
CPSU WorkCover Services
Geoff Lewin on PH: 9639 1822.**

PENALTY RATES CUT AGAIN!

PENALTY RATES FOR WORKERS IN FAST FOOD, HOSPITALITY, RETAIL AND PHARMACY WERE CUT AGAIN LAST MONTH, MEANING MORE HARDSHIP FOR THESE WORKERS.

Last year the Council of Small Business admitted that the penalty rate cuts – which it promised would create jobs – have failed to create a single job anywhere in Australia.

On the very day that federal politicians received a two percent pay increase, they are taking even more money out of the pockets of low-paid workers.

OVER THE LAST DECADE POLITICIANS' PAY HAS INCREASED 5 PER CENT PER YEAR ON AVERAGE, ALMOST DOUBLE THE WAGE PRICE INDEX OVER THAT TIME WHICH STANDS AT 2.8 PER CENT.





HARSHER ANTI-UNION LAWS ON HORIZON

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS RE-INTRODUCED LEGISLATION THAT PROVIDES A PUBLIC INTEREST TEST FOR UNION MERGERS AND MAKES IT EASIER TO DE-REGISTER UNIONS AND DISQUALIFY UNION OFFICIALS.

The Federal Government has amended both bills the Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Amendment (Ensuring Integrity) Bill 2019 and the Fair Work Laws Amendment (Proper Use of Worker Benefits) Bill 2019, to make them harsher.

These laws would give the Federal Government, big business and their lobbyists, power to interfere with how unions are run, to disqualify union officers, to shut down unions, and stop unions from merging.

These bills are a serious attack on working people and the trade union movement.

These draft laws do nothing to stop big business stealing wages.

Does nothing to keep people safe at work.

Does nothing about record low wage growth that is causing the economy to stall.

It will do nothing to fix insecure work. In fact, this law will undermine workplace safety, increase wage and superannuation theft, and make it harder for workers to get pay increases and be represented when they need help.

The draft laws will make it harder for unions to do our job.

Due to an intensive effort with cross bench Senators, both the Bills have been sent to Senate Inquiries which will report on 25th October.

The Government was intending to push both these Bills through during the sitting weeks of July.



TRADING AWAY OUR PUBLIC SERVICES

The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) is a mega-free trade agreement being negotiated between 16 Asia-Pacific countries including Australia, New Zealand, China, Japan, India, South Korea and the 10 ASEAN countries.

Over 50% of the world's population lives in the countries that are parties to the RCEP but despite negotiations proceeding slowly since 2012, there is renewed pressure now for the deal to be concluded by the end of this year.



Like the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement and other big trade agreements negotiated in our name, RCEP is bad news for workers and our communities.



The RCEP negotiations are secret, but we know from leaks that it could include special rights for foreign investors to sue governments, lock in the privatisation of public services, restrict the ability of governments to regulate, entrench stronger monopolies on medicines, and undermine human rights and the environment across the region.

The latest round of RCEP talks were held in Melbourne last month. RCEP is going to impact our public services by promoting and locking in the privatisation of public services.

The trade in service provisions in the agreement will open more public services to privatisation and prevent governments from reversing privatisations – even when they fail.

RCEP contains a standstill clause, which freezes regulation at current levels, and a ratchet clause, which means that governments can't re-regulate or reverse privatisations, they can only deregulate further.

We know that our community is overwhelmingly against privatisation – we've seen big union and community campaigns in Australia against the privatisation of electricity, hospitals, and disability services.

In many cases, state governments are reversing privatisations based on community sentiment or failures of the private provider to deliver a quality service.

The Federal government is signing away our sovereignty, and the ability of governments to take back control of public services.

The red carpet is being rolled out for corporations to maximise profits at the expense of our community.

Don't let our public services be traded away putting people before profit!

To find out how you can get involved in the campaign, contact campaign@aftinet.org.au

NEW
ZEALAND



HISTORIC GLOBAL CONVENTION PASSED

ON THE ORGANISATION'S 100TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY A GROUND-BREAKING CONVENTION AND RECOMMENDATION TO ELIMINATE VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT AT WORK HAS BEEN ADOPTED OVERWHELMINGLY AT THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION IN GENEVA.

The two-year negotiations included unions, ILO member governments, and employer organisations.

ACTU representatives worked alongside union representatives from around the world on the Convention that for the first time sets an international standard to prevent and eliminate violence and harassment at work.

The Convention places obligations on governments to develop national laws prohibiting workplace violence and on employers to take proactive steps to prevent violence and harassment.

The Convention also makes it clear that violence and harassment involving third parties – whether they are clients, customers, patients, or members of the public – must be considered and addressed.

For workers whose jobs involve dealing with the public and in public space, this recognition is extremely important.

The Australian Government voted for the Convention and Recommendation to eliminate violence and harassment at work and the ACTU has called on the Morrison Government to ratify and fully implement the Convention.

We urgently need stronger powers for the Fair Work Commission, as well as work health and safety regulators and human rights commissions to proactively address violence, inequality and discrimination at work.

This must include establishing a gender equality panel that would have the power to hear and determine sexual harassment and sex discrimination claims.



JOBS AND SKILLS EXCHANGE LAUNCHED

THE NEW VICTORIAN PUBLIC SERVICE (VPS) JOBS AND SKILLS EXCHANGE (JSE), WILL BRING AN EXPANSION OF EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES TO ALL WORKERS ACROSS THE VPS.

Delivered by the VPS and supported by the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU), the JSE will be a first.

Through it, VPS employees will enjoy unprecedented visibility of, and priority access to, all job opportunities across the VPS before they are advertised externally.

The JSE will feature an online platform exclusively for VPS staff, HR directors and hiring managers. Over time, the platform will support skills development and other initiatives to upskill and mobilise VPS staff.

By mid-July 2019, the platform will go live and only be accessible by VPS staff. Employees will be able to browse all existing job opportunities within the VPS and narrow their search by work type, location, organisation or salary range. Other opportunities, including secondments, will be added to the platform over time.

From late 2019, further initiatives of the JSE will come online through a phased approach over the next year. This includes opportunities for staff to update and refresh their skills, so their skills are transferrable to new roles and opportunities.

The establishment of the JSE will support the changing priorities of the Victorian Government as it delivers significant new projects and services to Victorians.

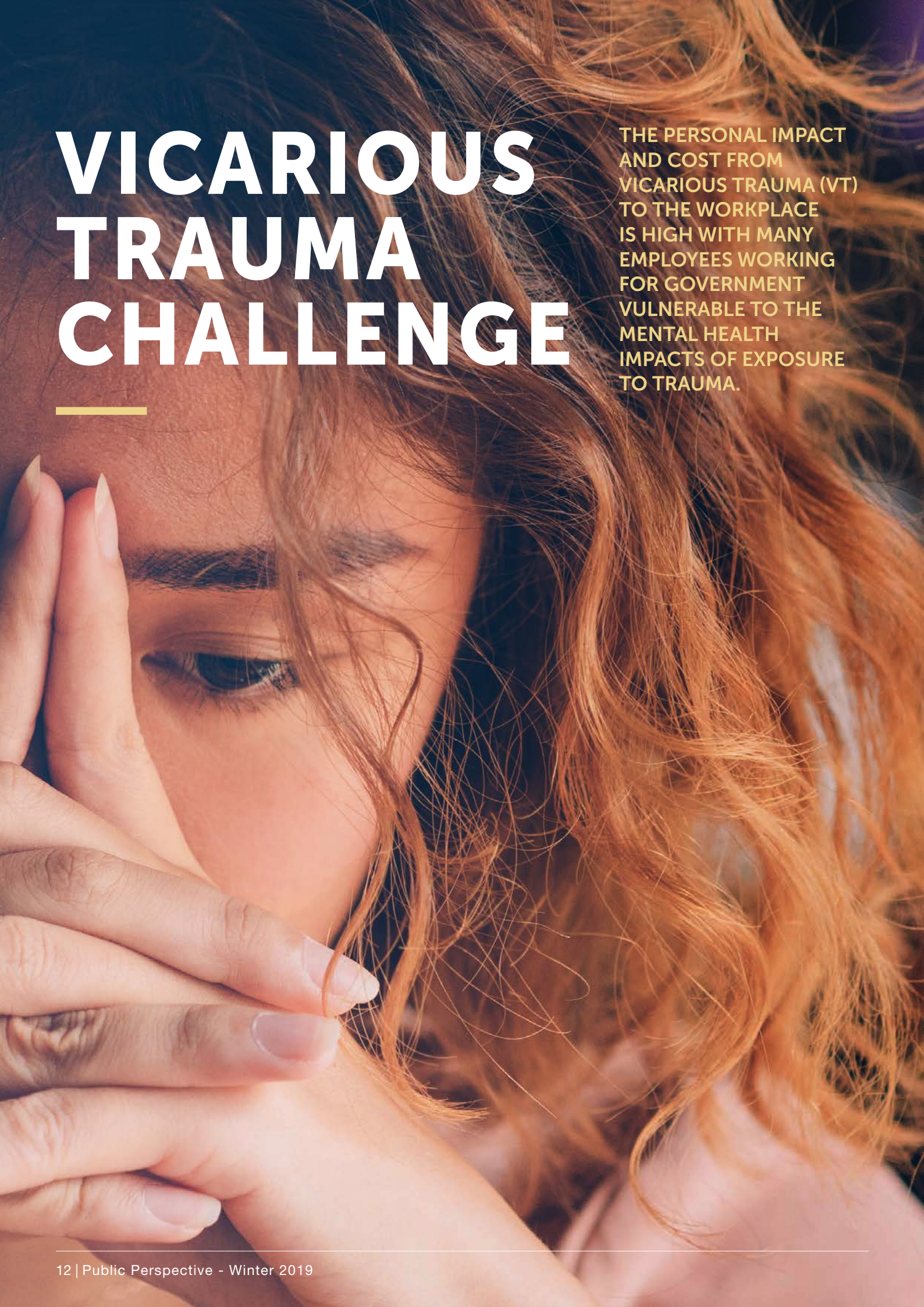
It supports a more modern, flexible, high-performing and agile public service and will enhance career development opportunities for all VPS staff.

This will include the engagement of existing staff, while reducing the use of labour hire and contractors.

The JSE supports a coordinated whole of Victorian Government approach to strengthen common workplace policies and practices across the public service and build on a number of initiatives recently developed which support common workforce policies and approaches.

A dedicated Jobs and Skills Exchange business unit has been established within the Department of Premier and Cabinet, led by Deputy Secretary Elizabeth Langdon.

It will be advised by a committee, including representatives of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, the Department of Treasury and Finance, the Victorian Public Sector Commission, Industrial Relations Victoria and CPSU.



VICARIOUS TRAUMA CHALLENGE

THE PERSONAL IMPACT AND COST FROM VICARIOUS TRAUMA (VT) TO THE WORKPLACE IS HIGH WITH MANY EMPLOYEES WORKING FOR GOVERNMENT VULNERABLE TO THE MENTAL HEALTH IMPACTS OF EXPOSURE TO TRAUMA.

CPSU WAS AWARDED FUNDING FROM WORKSAFE VICTORIA VIA THE WORKWELL MENTAL HEALTH IMPROVEMENT FUND (MHIF).

MHIF aims to promote mental health and wellbeing and prevent mental injury and illness by changing workplace cultures and practices.

CPSU is working in partnership with the Departments of Justice and Community Safety and Health and Human Services, on a project to develop customised resources that provide knowledge and skills for government departments to address the trauma needs of staff and create supportive trauma informed workplaces.

This will be achieved through the development of an evidence-informed Vicarious Trauma Prevention and Awareness Toolkit (VTPAT).

The toolkit will include customised tools and resources for workplaces or departments and will help build capacity of departments to proactively address trauma impact through policies, procedures, practices, and programs. It will assist departments to prioritise organisational change and identify needs to mitigate risk and prevent trauma related mental health injury and illness.



As a preliminary to this project the union funded a small delegation to Boston to review the US Department of Justice's Vicarious Trauma Toolkit via a series of face to face meetings with the developers at Northeastern University and management from one of their pilot organisations.

The delegation also conducted a series of interviews in Toronto with wellness officers from the Ontario Provincial Police and the Toronto Police Force, the Director of the Ontario Provincial Police Association (their union), and the Lead Psychologist from the York Regional Police.

The Canadian interviews provided a valuable insight into how the various police departments are integrating mental health and wellbeing into everything they do and will inform and help shape the final product.

Above: Carl Marsich, Dr. Julie Devlin and Peter Lillywhite after meeting with staff from the Boston Area Rape Crisis Centre where we discussed their use of the US Department of Justice's Vicarious Trauma Toolkit

It must also be mentioned that the entire Canadian part of the investigation would not have been possible without the tireless assistance and support of Dr. Julie Devlin, Director of the Fredericton Operational Stress Injury Clinic in New Brunswick.

Dr Devlin sourced and arranged all of the Police interviews for us, made all of the introductions and also joined us for the Boston leg of the tour at her own expense.



STATE MPS GIVEN GENEROUS PAY RISES

FROM JULY 1, ALL STATE PARLIAMENTARIANS RECEIVED A 2.92% BOOST IN THEIR PAY PACKETS TAKING THE AVERAGE BACKBENCHER'S ANNUAL SALARY TO MORE THAN \$163,000.

The salary of state MPs was automatically increased in line with wage inflation calculated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Reforms to create an independent remuneration tribunal to set pay levels for all state MPs and executives will see this increase as the last under the system.

A new Victorian remuneration tribunal will be charged with the responsibility to carry out a work value test for MPs to decide if wages should be increased.

Under the laws, state MPs can't be worse off under the tribunal's recommendation than under current rules.

'It would be nice if the same increase was applied across the workforce as we start bargaining.

LEAVE ACCRUES WHILST ON WORKCOVER

IF YOU ARE EMPLOYED UNDER THE VICTORIAN PUBLIC ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT 2016 AND HAVE BEEN OFF WORK ON AN ACCEPTED WORKCOVER CLAIM RECEIVING WEEKLY PAYMENTS AFTER 13TH OCTOBER 2011 YOU ARE ENTITLED TO HAVE LEAVE ACCRUE.

If your employer ceased crediting your Annual leave and Sick leave, you should contact CPSU WorkCover Services as both Annual Leave and Sick leave must continue to accrue during an absence on WorkCover.

CPSU raised with departments back in October 2017 their obligation to accrue Annual and personal leave whilst an injured worker is off work with an accepted WorkCover claim.

Any CPSU member who has had an accepted WorkCover claim and has been off work since 13th October 2011 and has had no Annual leave and sick leave accrued during the period of absence should contact CPSU WorkCover Service on (03) 9639 1822.

To be eligible for the leave to accrue, a worker:

- Has had an accepted WorkCover claim since 13th October 2011
- Has been on weekly payments during the period of absence

VPS TWENTY 20

NEGOTIATIONS ARE UNDERWAY

CPSU'S CORE CLAIMS:

- A payrise of 3.5% per annum
- Additional week of annual leave
- Increase superannuation contribution to 12%
- Audit use of fixed term and casual employment and convert to ongoing
- Remove overtime calculation and eligibility caps
- New night shift rate
- Extend paid leave to casual employees
- New regional mobility mechanism with allowance for regional or rural location 'hard to fill' jobs
- Review qualifications related to salary minimums, progression outcomes in line with Gender Pay
- Equity principles
- New clause on Gendered Violence
- New Jobs and Skills Exchange

OUR MEMBERSHIP HIGHLIGHTED PAY, SALARY PROGRESSION, WORKLOAD, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, AND FIXED TERM CONTRACT USE AS THE PRIORITY ISSUES TO ADDRESS IN NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE NEXT VPS AGREEMENT.

Our agency claims set out specific hours and allowances in addition for many occupations.

CPSU is a recognised bargaining representative under the Fair Work Act for our members.

Tell your colleagues who may not have joined yet that the best way to have their voice heard and their views represented is to join CPSU.

The current Agreement will continue to operate in the meantime.



40,000 workers

400 specialist occupations

40 agencies

Environment, Water, Consumer and Child Protection, CCS, Custodial & Court Services, Forest Firefighters, Fisheries, Forensics, Treasury, Trade, Tourism, Transport, BDM, CenITex, Housing & Health, Dental, Digital, Drivers, Families, Planners, Sheriffs, Ag, Gaming & Liquor, Specialist Student Support, Women, AA & YJ.

CPSU's twenty20 team is working to win a fair Agreement for all Victorian Public Service employees.

To find the latest updates and documents on the bargaining process, please visit:

cpsuvic.org/vpsttwenty20