

## Tasmanian Public Sector Policy



A well resourced and properly managed Public Sector is key to ensuring the Tasmanian community is provided with the services it deserves.

We call on all three political parties to fully implement the following policies if they form government after the next election. We also call on them to make these policies a condition precedent to any support they may provide a minority government.

### FAIRNESS

1. Commit to providing the Public Sector with sufficient resources to deliver high quality services to all Tasmanians regardless of where they live.
  2. Agree to increase Agency funding when revenue improves to make up for the current cuts.
  3. Agree to have Treasury fully fund Agencies for all agreed salary increases and to increase on-costs in line with CPI as a minimum.
  4. Ensure the overall salary package paid to Tasmanian Public Sector workers maintains parity with other Australian states to assist recruitment and retention.
  5. Ensure workloads are regularly monitored to maintain high quality services and eliminate worker burn out. Workers must only be allocated tasks they can complete in the hours they are paid to work.
  6. Assist Public Sector workers to deliver efficient and professional services by providing adequate support staff.
4. Agree to consult with Public Sector workers prior to making any decisions that have a significant impact on those workers or their workplaces and to listen to alternate options and give them genuine consideration.
  5. Commit to not altering the current Departmental structure without first releasing a full cost benefit analysis and allowing a community debate before any decision to proceed.

### INNOVATION

1. Explore jointly with Public Sector unions opportunities for work to be performed in different ways and at different times to provide the public with greater options in engaging with the Public Sector and improve work/life balance.
2. Actively pursue opportunities to utilise the broadband rollout to improve service delivery and invest in technology and training to make our Public Sector a world leader in this area.

### GOVERNANCE

1. Retain a state industrial relations system that covers all Public Sector workers.
2. Continue to have an independent and adequately resourced process for Public Sector workers to seek review of decisions affecting them or their work.
3. Improve arrangements for Public Sector workers to transfer within the sector to maximise career paths and better utilise skills.
4. Introduce more inclusive and open planning to ensure the Tasmanian community has access to the skilled workers it will need to ensure service delivery in the future in response to an aging Public Sector work force and wider population.
5. Develop systems that ensure the Public Sector workforce reflects the community it serves.

### SECURITY

1. Commit to no forced redundancies for the next term of Government and no limit to the time it takes for redeployment.
2. End vacancy control because it causes inefficiencies and bottlenecks while destroying morale by removing most opportunities for promotion or transfer.
3. Agree that permanent employment remains the principal form of employment in the Tasmanian Public Sector and that fixed term employment is only used in circumstances consistent with Commissioner's Direction No. 1.

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### Explanatory Notes

These notes do not form part of the policy but provide further information on the intention of each clause in the policy.

#### FAIRNESS

1. Any future government must ensure its funding decisions consider the impact on services. Community service performance indicators that assess the quality, timeliness and availability of services should be developed and reviewed annually with a report presented to Parliament.
2. In the 2009/10 State Budget Public Sector funding was significantly cut in response to falls in revenue forecasts caused by the Global Financial Crisis. This policy calls for a future government to return Public Sector funding at least to pre 09/10 budget levels as state revenues improve.
3. As all salary outcomes are approved by a cabinet sub-committee, agency budgets should be increased to pay for all agreed salary increases. The 2009/10 State budget removed indexation of non-salary costs. This is unsustainable and on-costs should be indexed annually in line with CPI.
4. We have a national employment market so to be competitive we must pay salaries that are in parity with other States. Parity means Tasmanian Public Sector workers should be paid a salary commensurate with the average for their occupational grouping across all Australian jurisdictions.
5. Work overload results in mistakes and inefficiencies and is a significant cause of workplace stress. Overloaded workers cannot deliver services at the high standard the community expects and deserves. Governments must consider the capacity of existing workers to deliver on the commitments they make or allocate extra resources.
6. There is no point committing to maintain 'frontline' workers if they are forced to spend much of their time doing administrative and support tasks.

#### SECURITY

1. There shouldn't be any forced redundancies and workers who become surplus to requirements should be given realistic redeployment options and not forced to accept a 'voluntary' redundancy.
2. If a future government considers it needs to reduce the size of the Public Sector it must clearly identify the services it intends to cut, consult with the community before making the decision and then reassign any surplus employees into other areas.
3. Commissioner's Direction No. 1 states that permanent employment is the normal form of employment in the Tasmanian Public Sector and that fixed term employment should only be used to meet operational needs for a specified term or the duration of a specified task. Permanent employees can provide frank and fearless advice without threat of it affecting their employment future.
4. Better decisions are made when the people affected by the decisions are consulted at an early stage and their input is given genuine consideration.

5. Departmental restructuring is time consuming and costly. Most organisational objectives can be achieved without the disruption that results from splitting or merging Agencies. If a business case does support change then it should be implemented in a way which is least disruptive to minimise cost and maximise outcomes.

#### INNOVATION

1. Having the whole work force start and finish work at the same time puts significant pressure on infrastructure resources and many people in the community are too busy to access services during this common work period. The State Government is the only employer large enough to implement new working patterns that can then be supported by dedicated transport options and create new opportunities for the private sector. Working jointly will reveal other innovative opportunities.
2. There will be a relatively small window where Tasmania has the jump on the rest of the country in using broadband resources to create jobs and attract investment. If the State Government invests in this technology and the training of workers in its use we could specialise in the delivery of government services using broadband and in doing so lead the country in this field.

#### GOVERNANCE

1. In January 2010 all Tasmanian workers except those in the Public Sector will transfer to the Federal industrial relations system. Public Sector workers will require the retention of a State industrial relations system including a State Industrial Commission to hear and resolve disputes in a Tasmanian context.
2. To ensure the Public Sector is managed efficiently and effectively, without bias or undue influence, Public Sector workers must retain the right to seek review of decisions that affect them or their workplaces. This includes reviews of administrative and employment decisions.
3. The skills Public Sector workers acquire over their career should be utilised to achieve the best outcomes for the Tasmania community. This means implementing arrangements that maximise opportunities for workers to transfer within the sector as needs change or on secondment into the private sector.
4. Skill shortages in recent years have highlighted the need for better succession planning. A significant proportion of the Public Sector is approaching retirement age and without enough skilled workers to replace them we risk a loss of service and a lowering of service quality.
5. Service delivery is enhanced when the Public Sector truly represents the diversity of the community it serves.