

# Department of Justice – Tasmania Prison Service

## Consultation & Communication Guidelines for ALL Staff Employees / Unions and Associations

In line with the *Tasmanian State Service Award, Employment Direction 19 – Consultation* and the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* the Department of Justice, Tasmania Prison Service is committed to Consultation with their staff and with Unions prior to the implementation of any decision made which is likely to have an impact on employees employment arrangements.

In order for clear consultation to occur it is important that everyone know what stage the consultation process is at and what obligations each party has at that stage.

### Four Stage Consultation and Communication Process

#### Stage 1 - Formulating Ideas

- Management is collecting ideas and information to assist in developing a change proposal
- Ideas may be generated solely by management or may be sought from workers either formally or informally
- In developing a change proposal management will incorporate information from staff working in the area under consideration.
- A working group including these staff is encouraged to be formed to facilitate this process.
- The outcome of this stage is a change proposal that is informed by relevant information from the decision makers and those experienced in direct service delivery.
- A communication and consultation plan should form part of the outcome that identifies who needs to be consulted, who is responsible for that consultation, the criteria for making a decision and who the final decision makers are

#### Stage 2 - Consulting on Proposal

- Management to seek the views of workers and unions on the proposed change/s
- Workers and unions are provided with details of the proposed change including the objectives of the change, the anticipated impact on workers and the measures taken to minimise adverse impacts on workers
- Workers and unions are provided with an opportunity to have any questions answered and once all the relevant information has been provided then workers must be given an agreed upon timeframe to provide feedback
- Opportunities for face-to face discussions will be provided to allow feedback to be clarified. These discussions should be facilitated and minuted by independent persons
- The person responsible for answering questions and receiving feedback must be clearly identified along with the timeframe for receiving feedback

### **Stage 3 - Considering responses and providing feedback**

- Feedback should be collated and presented to the decision makers
- The decision makers will consider all of the feedback, particularly suggestions aimed at minimizing adverse impacts on workers. There may be a need to seek further clarification on suggestions
- The decision maker will give proper consideration to alternate proposals by evaluating them against appropriate criteria as outlined in Stage 1, such as costs, benefits, impact and staffing, and where practical modify the outcome or adopt an alternative proposal.
- Where the proposed change is significant, a review of the proposal and alternatives may be undertaken by a working group with membership and terms of reference acceptable to unions and management.
- The decision maker must provide workers and unions with a response to any contribution and where an alternate proposal has not been adopted reasons why it was not adopted and the capacity for further conversations and negotiations to occur with relevant stakeholders.

### **Stage 4 - Implementation**

- An implementation plan must be developed to detail how the change is to be implemented and must be communicated to affected workers and unions involved
- Workers and unions will be consulted about how the organisation intends to implement the change
- To implement the decision effectively, and depending on the issue, a working group may be established consisting of representatives from the major areas affected by the decision, The working group will work to terms of references established by TFS in consultation with working group members.
- The implementation plan will include details of when the change will be implemented, who is responsible for the implementation and how the change will occur
- The person responsible for the change will be identified and workers/unions encouraged to contact them if they have queries or concerns
- Workers and unions will be kept informed in regard to the implementation process and advised if change to the plan is to occur.
- Once implementation has occurred and if these changes are adversely impacting on workers, a process of conciliation and further negotiation between relevant stakeholders should occur.

### **Who can I contact if I have further consultation and communication queries?**

For general enquiries you can contact your Manager / Supervisor or Director, Union Delegate or Union Organiser or for specific concerns you can contact Human Resources.

**If a disagreement arises then the *Tasmanian State Service Agreement – Part XI – Consultation and Change: Grievance and Dispute Resolution – 3. Grievance and Dispute Settling Procedure* shall be adhered to.**