

Managing Positions in the State Service

Parks and Wildlife Service Division – Change Proposal

The following change proposal details how the PWS Executive proposes to achieve reductions in staffing to meet Government budget targets within the PWS.

It is important to note that this change proposal is **a proposal only** and management is seeking comment, feedback and suggestions from all staff. Notwithstanding where employees have expressed an interest in a voluntary redundancy, some have been accepted on the basis that it is consistent with achieving this change proposal or it provides an opportunity to re-profile or redesign the workplace. Where voluntary redundancies have taken place, individual change proposals have been prepared and consultation taken place with workgroups and employees directly affected.

Where possible, employees directly affected by the proposal have been contacted and informed that this is the start of the consultation process, not the end.

The General Manager will be presenting this change proposal at regional meetings – **the dates for these are to be determined.**

For those employees who wish to provide comment, please send to Tracey.Simpson@parks.tas.gov.au by **(date to be finalised)**. The General Manager will review these comments and may, accordingly, make changes to this strategy.

1. Why and How

The Tasmanian Government has committed to achieving its budget targets through a more productive, effective and smaller State Service. This means ensuring that the State Service:

- *Delivers the right services to meet the needs of the community when these needs can only be satisfied by Government.*
- *Is lean and uses public resources as wisely and efficiently as possible to get the best return for Tasmania.*
- *Has the right people, with the right skills and knowledge, in the right positions to deliver these services.*

(Managing Positions in the State Service (MPSS) September 2014)

Consistent with these State Service objectives, this paper outlines: the rationale for, strategies, and actions, to achieve budget targets within the PWS Division. All strategic options developed by the State Service Management Office (SSMO) have been utilised. They are:

Strategic Option 1 Reviewing agency services

Strategic Option 2 Managing employees whose positions are no longer required

Strategic Option 3 Increasing the rate of natural attrition

Strategic Option 4 Managing vacant positions

Strategic Option 5 Re-profiling and redesigning the workplace

Strategic Option 6 Reviewing systems and processes

The primary methods adopted include:

- Offer all PWS permanent employees the opportunity for a Targeted Negotiated Voluntary Redundancy (TNVR). This offer was open from 23 January 2015 and closed 20 February 2014.
- Closed EOI at level processes (where there are more employees than positions).
- Identifying positions that are no longer required (then allocating alternative duties, reassigning duties or redeployment).
- Targeted and Negotiated Voluntary Redundancies for identified employees.

2. PWS MPSS Objectives

- 1. Identify and implement structural savings to reduce the Division's salary budget;**
- 2. Minimise reductions in service provision to stakeholders and clients; and**
- 3. Minimise the adverse impact on the health and wellbeing of PWS employees.**

The challenge to achieving objectives 1 and 2 is to identify where the PWS can reduce employee numbers while minimising adverse impact on service delivery. This requires an understanding of the current and future service delivery demands in terms of geographic location and management functions.

The changes needed to achieve these budget savings will result in stress, which if not managed may have a significant impact on an employee's health and wellbeing. The impact will affect all employees, from those who will be directly involved in closed EOI at level processes; the front-line staff facing demanding customers and stakeholders knowing they do not have the time or resources to fulfil those demands; and the managers and supervisors expected to maintain staff morale. In regard to any closed EOI at level process, the area targeted will be minimised to reduce the number of employees directly affected.

3. The Business Environment and PWS Response

In determining how the PWS needs to change to meet budget targets, consideration must be given to the current and future changes in the social, political, economic, and physical environment in which the PWS operates. The major

challenges facing the PWS are listed below, which will be taken into account in implementing this strategy.

Wildfire Suppression

The additional land management responsibilities of the PWS are already having an impact on employee time devoted to fire suppression activities, as the current level of wildfire suppression capacity needs to be maintained. Hence, there are no planned reductions in the number of employees in the fire crew or fire section. Additionally, statements of duty for new roles within the organisation will highlight the expectation that employees will be expected to assist with wildfire suppression operations where they have the capacity to do so.

Fuel Reduction Burning – the Government has funded a four year fuel reduction burning program totaling 28.5M. The PWS leads the program and will have a major role in planning and implementing fuel reduction burns. Employee numbers dedicated to planning and conducting fuel reduction burns need to be either maintained or increased to address Government expectations.

Land and asset management responsibilities

With the additional 720,000 hectares added to the management responsibility of the PWS, asset responsibilities have increased significantly. The infrastructure associated with the ex-Forest Reserves has required additional resources allocated to cover servicing and maintenance of visitor assets. Hence, the location of the ex-Forest Reserves are a significant factor in assessing geographically where services are required.

As a result of the *Forestry (Rebuilding the Forest Industry) Act 2014*, the PWS has management responsibility for an additional 400,000 ha of Crown land known as “future potential production forest land”. The PWS will respond to customer and stakeholder issues, but will have limited capacity to undertake proactive management of this land.

Infrastructure Management

The additional visitor facilities and roads associated with the ex-Forest Reserves have increased the importance of understanding and monitoring the current condition of this infrastructure. Engineering inspections are critical to ensure infrastructure is safe to use. Beyond safety, the PWS does not have the financial capacity to maintain all infrastructure to a standard acceptable to all users; hence, there is a need to improve our ability to document and analyse this infrastructure related information; to identify management priorities; and to develop maintenance programs. This is one of the major roles of the asset services employees in Hobart and the regions. Field officers at B3 and above have an important role of inspecting infrastructure and recording defects. A supervising B4 field officer should be in place where there are two or more field officers.

Project Management

Generally, the PWS manages major infrastructure construction or maintenance projects annually. Additional project managers and workplace supervisors are required for temporary periods to address the demands of these major infrastructure projects.

Technology

An important business strategy for the PWS is to invest in information technology that will result in greater efficiency. Information technology is to be used to:

- Connect with customers. On-line business solutions will free up employees previously required to complete customer transactions over the phone.
- Assist with reserve planning. The use of geographic information systems will allow the PWS to map reserve attributes, threats and management responses.
- Identify infrastructure management priorities. New asset management systems will allow field staff to identify and record work either required or completed in the field without the need to travel back to central offices.

Tourism and Recreational Use – Impact Assessment

The Government is looking for developments which broaden the range of recreational experiences on offer in Tasmania by improving access for tourists while maintaining the integrity of our natural areas. This increased focus will require the PWS to respond to an increased number of development applications and ensure that assessments are consistent and comprehensive, yet completed within a reasonable timeframe. While environmental assessments will continue to be undertaken by rangers and regional employees, there is a need to increase the capacity of the PWS to deal with the more complex proposals.

Retained Revenue and Enterprise Management

The PWS is able to retain some revenue for use in funding services and management of national parks and reserves. Park entry and facility fees account for a significant proportion of this income. This self-generated income accounts for approximately 25% of the PWS budget and offsets employee related costs as well as management of parks and reserves, particularly the maintenance of visitor facilities. Employees that provide services subject to fees generally need to be retained so that the level of customer service is maintained.

4. Government MPSS Strategic Options and PWS Response

MPSS Strategic Options	Tactics/Actions	Within the PWS
<p>1. Reviewing agency services.</p>	<p>Identifying services that are no longer a priority and/or reducing the level of service. Agencies to share resources and skills.</p>	<p>Organisational reviews have occurred to identify internal and external factors likely to place additional or changed demands on PWS services – see The Business Environment and PWS Response on page 3. The services and functions that need to be either maintained or even increased include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fire management (wildfire suppression and fuel reduction burning); - Infrastructure management; - Project management; - Environmental assessment associated with tourism and recreational developments; - Enterprise management and other services subject to fees; and - Use and support of technology. <p>Through significant land tenure changes, the demands on the PWS have increased. With a reduction in human resources and recurrent funding allocation, the PWS will not be able to maintain the current level of service – particularly in regard to infrastructure. The minimum level of service required is that infrastructure is managed to ensure that it does not result in an unacceptable risk to people.</p> <p>Situations where there are two or more persons delivering a similar service have been reviewed to determine whether a reduced level of service is possible.</p>

MPSS Strategic Options	Tactics/Actions	Within the PWS
<p>2. Managing employees whose positions are no longer required.</p>	<p>Vacancy control through identifying positions no longer required; and redeployment.</p> <p>Employee Assistance Program.</p> <p>Guiding documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support for Change and Transition (DPIPWE). - Targeted and Negotiated Voluntary Redundancy (DPIPWE). 	<p>Consistent with the Government MPSS procedures, the PWS will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify employees. - Provide employee support. - Redeployment. - Consider TNVR where appropriate. <p>TNVR will be considered where roles are no longer required (i.e. will not be backfilled); and where employment options for the employee are limited (e.g. specialised roles).</p> <p>The option of voluntary redundancies will be raised with employees involved in closed EOI at level processes.</p>
<p>3. Increasing the rate of natural attrition.</p>	<p>Workforce renewal incentive program (WRIP).</p> <p>Leave without pay (LWOP).</p> <p>Targeted and Negotiated Voluntary Redundancy (TNVR).</p>	<p>Employees were invited to express an interest in a WRIP in October 2014. Nine employees expressed an interest in a WRIP and, to date, three have been accepted. The management strategy associated with any accepted WRIP is listed in the table (from page 8). Vacancy control processes outlined in SSMO documents apply.</p> <p>LWOP may only achieve short-term reduction in employee numbers. LWOP applications will be assessed in accordance with DPIPWE guidelines. LWOP application for employees likely to be identified as a result of the implementation of this strategy may not be accepted where it will delay the process.</p>

MPSS Strategic Options	Tactics/Actions	Within the PWS
<p>4. Managing vacant positions.</p>	<p>Detailed in: Managing Positions in the State Service – Tools and Guidelines (September 2014).</p> <p>Guiding documents: Internal Position Management (DPIPWE).</p>	<p>In accordance with the DPIPWE procedures, when a position becomes vacant the PWS will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - determine whether the role is required and review the SoD; - where possible, use identified employees to fulfil any vacant position (including reassignment of duties); and - utilise HDA and MRDA payments to local employees to cover service delivery in the short term (less than six months) while the reviews are completed.
<p>5. Re-profiling and redesigning the workplace.</p>	<p>To be achieved through a combination of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closed EOI at level process – internal EOI amongst those employees affected by a reduction or redistribution of positions. (Ref: DPIPWE Organisation Change). - Redeployment. - Targeted and Negotiated Voluntary Redundancy (TNVR) to those employees whose duties no longer exist. <p>Guiding documents: Organisation Change (DPIPWE).</p>	<p>The PWS has adopted the following principles in re-profiling and redesigning the workplace:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Structure is responsive to the PWS business environment (see The Business Environment and PWS Response on page 3). 2. Amalgamating sections/units involved in similar service delivery e.g. leases and licencing. 3. Centralising resources to cope with complex functions requiring a range of staff knowledge, skills and experience. 4. Maximising span of control. 5. Field staffing levels appropriate to the level of servicing required. 6. Minimising part-time roles. The PWS has a number of employees that work part-time. In some cases this can result in significant inefficiencies as workers who are part-time still require supervision and office resources (desk, IT) to the same degree as a full-time worker.

MPSS Strategic Options	Tactics/Actions	Within the PWS
		<p>For example, three employees part-time with a combined total of one full-time employee adds considerable administrative burden and costs. It may be that the nature of the work necessitates these part-time arrangements, but these situations are to be assessed.</p>
<p>6. Reviewing systems and processes.</p>		<p>This is an ongoing process. The PWS will continue to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - document common, critical processes and ensure employees understand their roles and responsibilities; and - make use of technology to increase efficiencies.

5. MPSS – PWS – Proposed changes

The changes proposed in PWS are across all regions, and Hobart offices.

The changes acknowledge that there are key areas including wildfire suppression; fuel reduction burning; land and asset management responsibilities; infrastructure management; impact assessment of tourism and recreational use; and project management that are a high priority.

The proposed changes include:

Head office (Hobart)

The focus in the Head Office has been to identify where management and supervisory positions can be adapted to take on different responsibilities or increase their span of control and then to streamline the number of positions. Some changes have been or will be able to be made through vacancy control where there have already been positions vacant or not filled on a permanent basis and where existing staff have elected to take TNVRs Management positions associated with tourism services and reserved leases and licenses have been combined to improve efficiencies in supervisory roles. A vacant position has already been abolished to enable this change. PWs is re-focusing on providing a much improved service to the tourism operators licensed and leased within reserved lands.

Training and development positions will be able to be reduced following a TNVR; and a marine research position will be abolished in due course.

Within Crown Land Services, there has been a considerable review of the roles and positions required to enable an efficient delivery of services to the community and local government in particular. The completion of some long term projects such as CLAC transfers has enabled resources to be freed up. The branch is relatively top-heavy and supervisory roles can be utilized more effectively so the emphasis is on reducing these supervisory positions at Band 7, 6 and 5.

In the visitor services area, again the emphasis will be on reducing supervisory positions where there is duplication involving the management of community programs; and interpretation and education.

It is proposed to have a reduction in the number of Discovery Ranger positions but with a commitment to provide a minimum number of hours for those that are employed permanently providing a more efficient delivery of services for the community and also reducing the level of supervisory administration required.

Southern region

The PWS acknowledge the need to ensure a strong on-the-ground presence in the regional areas especially in popular parks with high visitor numbers and has identified where there can be a reduction of one each of a field officer and a ranger, both of which will require a closed EOI at level process to be conducted. A vacant administrative position in the field can also be abolished and the functions undertaken in the Regional Office.

Consistent with the management arrangements in the Northern Region, is proposed that volunteer coordination can be undertaken by field staff with a reduction in a position currently involved in coordinating volunteer activities.

Northern region

As noted above, the PWS acknowledges the need to ensure a strong on-the-ground presence in the regional areas especially in popular parks with high visitor numbers. It is proposed to reduce only two ranger positions in the northern region which will enable service delivery to continue to be provided to a high level with current staffing. This process may be further streamlined internally due to either recent vacancies and interest from existing staff in TNVRs, negating the need for any closed EOI at level.

North West Region

As noted above, the focus is on ensuring that there is minimal disruption or impact on service delivery on-the-ground, so the delivery of efficiencies will be through rationalizing administrative positions in regional planning and in regional administrative support and having those duties reduced and abolished, respectively. There will a small reduction of one field officer and two VROs (visitor reception officers) but maintenance of a minimum number of permanent hours for those staff that are retained, so that for visitors the on-ground presence of staff is unchanged.

6. Timeframes

Step	Actions	Est. Working Days	Condition	Commence	Finish	Lead
1	EOI WRIP – all staff.		Nil	1 October 2014	31 October 2014	Peter Mooney
2	EOI TNVR – all staff one month.	20	Nil	23 January 2015	20 February 2105	Peter Mooney
3	Accept/Reject support for TNVR.	3	Nil	10 March 2015		Peter Mooney
4	Draft proposal and information regarding targeted positions and closed EOIs at level (considering EOI for TNVR).	10	Step 2 complete	10 February	25 February 2015	Mark Bryce
	Consultation:					
5	Discuss consultation timeframes with CPSU.	1	Nil		6 March 2015	Mark Bryce
6	Schedule and conduct meeting with individuals potentially directly affected by targeted positions or directly affected by closed EOI processes.	7	Step 5 completed	10 March 2015	2 April 2015	Branch Managers
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct meetings in each Region to present proposal and outline staffing strategy/change proposal. - General communication (email) to staff regarding planned staffing strategy. - Individual group meetings as required. 		Step 6 completed where practicable	tbc	tbc	Peter Mooney Mark Bryce
8	Allow minimum of two weeks for unions and staff to respond to proposal.	10		tbc	tbc	Mark Bryce
9	Consider union and staff response and adjust strategy if necessary.	5		tbc	tbc	Mark Bryce
10	Provide final proposal to unions and staff (with reasoning).	5		tbc		Peter Mooney – unions Branch Managers - staff
11	Submit applications to SSMO for all closed EOIs at level.	3		tbc		Mark Bryce
12	Implement strategy.			tbc		Branch Managers