



The Association of Professional
Engineers, Scientists &
Managers, Australia

New South Wales Branch
Phone: (02) 9263 6500
Facsimile: (02) 9264 1224
Level 1, 491 Kent Street
Sydney 2000
infonsw@apesma.asn.au
<http://www.apesma.asn.au>

28 September 2012

Mr Peter McIntyre
Managing Director
TransGrid
PO Box A1000
SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1235

Dear Peter

Removal of 9 Day Fortnight for Head Office Staff

Last week I was contacted by a number of members who were concerned by a rumour that was spreading through the organisation that attempts were being made to remove the 9 day fortnight for employees who were employed in TransGrid's Sydney Office.

I was unaware of whether there was any substance to the rumours as I had not been advised by the organisation of any change in its approach to the appointment of staff and I could therefore not provide them with any detail on the matter. However, I was able to establish that the concerns appeared to have arisen from comments which were made by you during a recent meeting of Group Managers.

Despite trying to contact you to discuss the issue late last week I had to wait until yesterday to get a response from the organisation on the matter, and only then following a meeting that had been called to discuss another matter entirely.

What I was told was that all future appointments to new or vacant positions based at the Sydney Office would be to a standard 5 day work week unless some other arrangement could be negotiated by the employee/potential employee through an Individual Flexibility Agreement (IFA).

I was further told that TransGrid didn't believe that it had to talk to the unions about this because you were "allowed to do it under the Agreement".

Putting to one side the clear difficulties that I have with those particular comments, I'd appreciate it if you could please confirm whether or not that is your position on the matter.

If it is TransGrid's intention to proceed that way could you please advise APESMA of the following:

- Why is the organisation seeking this change?

- What are the specific business needs that now require employees appointed to new or vacant positions at the Sydney Office to no longer have access to a 9 day fortnight?
- Where in TransGrid's opinion does the Agreement provide the organisation with an unfettered right to remove the 9 day fortnight from positions?
- Why was this matter not tabled for discussion during the negotiations for our current Agreement? This is particularly curious given that TransGrid raised its concerns in relation to senior staff covered by the Agreement having access to a 9 day fortnight, which we then dealt with through the SP35 concessions.
- Why can't it wait until we meet to negotiate the next Agreement when you are legitimately free to pursue whatever changes you want?
- What impact do you think this change will have on the recruitment and retention of employees to the Sydney Office?

It is also noteworthy that our **Sydney 9 Day Fortnight – Single System of Work Agreement** is up for its 2 year review this month. That Agreement provides that any change to the 9 day fortnight system, including who gets one we would argue, must be by agreement, with access to the disputes procedure in the event that we are unable to agree.

I look forward to your early response to the above matters. Once I have received your comments I intend to meet with our members to discuss how they would like the Association to respond to the issue.

In the meantime, I call on the organisation to cease the implementation of the proposed removal of the 9 day fortnight from any position that is covered by the TransGrid Agreement until this matter is appropriately resolved.

If you would like to discuss this matter further with me I can be contacted on 0413 746 431.

Yours sincerely,

per: 

Gordon Brock
Senior Industrial Officer