



# Public Service Association of SA Inc

Community and Public Sector Union • SA Branch • SPSF Group

2 October 2014

The Hon Jay Weatherill MP  
Premier of South Australia  
GPO Box 2343  
ADELAIDE SA 5001

*Also - Direct resp. HEALTH CHILD DEU Housing of various specific Boards*

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Previous Cases	

Dear Premier,

**RE: REFORM OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES**

The Public Service Association of South Australia (PSA) has accessed the Reform of Boards and Committees Interim Report (the Interim Report), from the 'yourSAy' website.

The PSA has a number of concerns in relation to the proposals outlined in the Interim Report.

The Interim Report indicates that submissions or comments are being sought by 17 October 2014. However, insufficient information has been provided to allow for any meaningful submissions to be developed.

There has been no information provided about the number of staff who will be affected by the decision to abolish a large number of boards. It is also of concern that until last week's announcement in the media, many staff employed by boards were unaware that their board may be abolished.

It is also not clear how consultation with union stakeholders will occur in those areas where there are union representatives on boards providing representation for union members at a peak level on a number of important matters.

The matters below provide a small example of some of the PSA's other specific concerns:

**a) The Public Employee Housing Advisory Committee**

This Committee has been established for a considerable number of years. The Committee has representatives from the major public sector unions. This allows the unions to be directly involved in the provision of advice to the Minister about of public employee housing. It ensures that Government complies with the requirements to consult with unions regarding the provision of employee housing which is obviously a significant industrial issue for unions such as the PSA, the Australian Education Union and the Police Association. The setting of rents, establishment of housing standards and provision of maintenance are just some of the issues addressed by this Committee. The Interim Report simply states that there will be a transition to an alternative governance model.

**b) The Health Performance Council**

The Health Performance Council was established to provide a co-ordinated health system in South Australia after hospital boards were abolished. It is an independent body which reviews South Australia's health system across public, private and community sectors. This includes primary care and hospital care.

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As it is separate from the Health Department; agencies and health services, it has the independence to provide frank advice on whether strategies are being implemented as planned. It reports to the Minister for Health and its report is required to be presented to Parliament. The Interim Report simply states that this Board is to be abolished and an alternative engagement model developed.

Clearly this Council plays a vital role in ensuring that a quality health system is maintained in South Australia. It also provides a mechanism for community and stakeholder engagement.


**c) The Guardianship Board**

South Australia is recognised for pioneering guardianship legislation and assisting other states to develop good systems of guardianship. The Guardianship Board is able to make very good and timely decisions using an inquisitorial approach, exploring issues for itself, rather than using an adversarial model which uses lawyers to argue the case for different points of view. This approach is less intimidating for people coming to Board hearings, as well as being efficient and effective. To move the Guardianship Board to the South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal puts it very much in the Justice System and PSA members believe this will diminish both its effectiveness and efficiency.

- d) There are also a number of member-driven Boards that are identified either to be abolished or for further investigation to be carried out to determine their future. These Boards provide valuable and meaningful services to thousands of public sector employees and it is essential that the PSA is specifically consulted in relation to their future governance.

The PSA seeks your assistance in ensuring genuine consultation with the PSA over the proposals outlined in the Interim Report. Further details are required to enable the PSA to engage in a process which impacts on both PSA members and the community of South Australia.

Yours sincerely,



**JAN McMAHON**  
**GENERAL SECRETARY**

PREM14D05317



Hon Jay Weatherill MP  
Premier of South Australia

Ms Jan McMahon  
General Secretary  
Public Service Association of SA Inc  
GPO Box 2170  
ADELAIDE SA 5001

Dear Ms McMahon

Thank you for your letter of 2 October 2014 to the Premier of South Australia, the Hon Jay Weatherill MP, about the Boards and Committees reform.

Your correspondence has been provided to the Ministers responsible for the three Boards and Committees you have highlighted, to respond directly to these matters.

In addition, a response will be forwarded to you to address the reform process more generally.

Should you have any queries about your letter, please contact the relevant Minister's office.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jay Weatherill', enclosed in a faint circular outline.

**Premier's Correspondence Unit  
Office of the Premier**

7 October 2014

cc: *Office of the Hon Jack Snelling MP, Minister for Health*  
*Office of the Hon Jennifer Rankine MP, Minister for Education and Child Development*  
*Office of the Hon Zoe Bettison MP, Minister for Social Housing*