

NTEU WA Division



Work Health and Safety Update



**National Tertiary
Education Union**
Let's aim higher

The Animal Hospital @ Murdoch University

In May 2022 the NTEU lodged a first time
Section 82 Referral to WorkSafe

Due to serious and ongoing physical and psychosocial concerns



The Animal Hospital @ Murdoch University



- 1 The NTEU lodged a s82 request with WorkSafe early May 2022
- 2 This was the first application made to WorkSafe for a s82 under the new WHS legislation after coming into effect 31 March 2022
- 3 The major concern that lead to the s82 application was the psychosocial hazards affecting the TAHMU section of Murdoch University
- 4 **These psychosocial hazards arose from a number if factors including staffing levels, workloads, workers self-harming at work, effects of patient care, lack of procedures**
- 5 **Manual handling of patients was also a concern**
- 6 There were a number of Hearings in the WHS Tribunal
- 7 The matter was dealt with by Cmr Emmanuel

The Animal Hospital @ Murdoch University

8 A number of orders were issued requiring WorkSafe to undertake their investigation within a period of time

9 **The investigation went for approximately 6 weeks**

10 **The inspector issued 9 improvement notices**

11 **They addressed psychosocial hazards, manual handling & training, procedures etc**

12 The timing of the notices ranged from May to December 2022

13 Some were extended to October 2023

14 A review took place in October 2023, including WorkSafe, the NTEU and WHSR's

15 There was significant progress made in the area of Psychosocial hazards avoidance and compliance with the improvement notices related to those hazards



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- 16 **Further improvements are to be carried out in the area of manual handling and WorkSafe will be providing further recommendations**
- 17 Given the complexities of the matter arising from the years of buildup prior to the s82 being lodged, and whilst it has taken time to deal with the hazards (especially psychosocial), the s82 process has delivered significant improvements at The Animal Hospital, for members and staff
- 18 **Notwithstanding there is still some work to be done, this has been a significant win for the NTEU on behalf of its members and staff.**

NTEU Plans for 2024

Under the WHS Act, the NTEU has been focusing on members' psychosocial health and wellbeing

- **Workloads** (being excessive work) are a real problem - especially for Academic Staff
- **Constant Change Management** is a contributor to members' psychosocial harm
- **Poor management** of staff is another significant contributor
- A recent survey by the NTEU identified **sexual harassment, sexism and gender bias jumping by 52%**

As a result the NTEU is placing a strong focus on healthier workplaces in 2024 via the enforcement of clauses in our new EBA's and the use of the WHS Act

NTEU Plans for 2024

- This includes **better change management clauses** that require the employer to consider WHS factors when restructuring (the remaining employees are usually left to deal with the restructured workplace and resulting workloads)
- We have fought for **improved workload clauses** that provide for better consultation and staff engagement as well as the employer needing to set workloads that are consistent with the WHS Act and Regulations
- The EBA's also contain **improved appeal clauses** in the event of a dispute arising from being allocated an unfair, unreasonable and/or unsafe workload

The NTEU will continue to use the WHS Act to ensure and fight for Members' WHS in their respective workplaces

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