



# Wavelength

A newsletter for members of the CSIRO Staff Association

September 2009

## Staff Association meets with CEO Megan Clark

Staff Association representatives, Michael Borgas (President), Sam Popovski (Secretary) and Paul Girdler (Lead Organiser) met with CEO Megan Clark and Craig Roy (Executive Manager, Human Resources, Safety and Sustainability) on 2 September to discuss a range of issues of importance to staff, including:

- Progress on implementation of the Psychological Health and Wellbeing initiative;
- The CSIRO Diversity Plan and support for work based childcare;
- Enhancing support for capabilities (e.g. technical staff, workshops) and for training and development;
- Continuing problems with bureaucracy and frustration with SAP processes.

The CEO responded earnestly to all of the issues and advocated a joint approach to resolving many of them ([read on...](#))

### Psychological Health and Wellbeing initiative

The report from the Psychological Health and Wellbeing working group has been submitted to the CSIRO Executive Team (ET) for implementation. The ET have formed their own working group to respond to each of the recommendations in the report. Their response will be provided to the Staff Association and discussed in detail at the next meeting of Consultative Council on 4 November.

The initiative should lead to improvements in a range of areas including the matrix structure; allocations policy; Science Investment Process; project management; linkages between

science and support staff; and psychological health and wellbeing programs.

In a related initiative, CSIRO's new policy on Bullying and Harassment is in the final stages of consultation. The policy, which was developed with Staff Association input, should improve awareness of discrimination, harassment and workplace bullying and the protections available to staff.

### Diversity and Childcare

A draft CSIRO Diversity Plan will be discussed at the CSIRO Executive Management Council (EMC) meeting in December. The Staff Association had substantial input into the plan in its earliest stages but have been frustrated by the rate of progress.

In the meeting with Megan Clark, the CEO envisaged that a working group with Staff Association representation would be established following the EMC meeting to develop ideas for the final plan. As part of the working group process, we will engage with members who have an interest in equity and diversity including gender, age, culture, sexual orientation, disability and indigenous issues.

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(L-R)  
Michael  
Borgas

Megan  
Clark

Sam  
Popovski

Paul  
Girdler

Also at the meeting with the CEO, the Staff Association raised concerns with the organisation's approach to work based childcare. Existing childcare facilities at Black Mountain, Clayton and North Ryde may be placed under pressure due to new costing arrangements being negotiated with Corporate. In addition, members at ARRC and Waterford in Perth facilitated a survey which clearly demonstrated demand, but are still pushing for Corporate to conduct a feasibility study on childcare options. Following the meeting, the Staff Association is confident that progress can be made on these matters.

### **Support for capabilities and training and development**

Members have provided the Staff Association with a lot of feedback on the lack of support for capabilities, particularly since RSS and the matrix structure were introduced. Examples include the decline in the number and experience of technical and project support staff as well as support from workshops, IT, libraries and other essential services.

Members are also concerned that access to training and development is inequitable and highly susceptible to funding shortfalls at a business unit level. These issues will be considered further at Consultative Council on 4 November and members are encouraged to provide feedback to Michael Borgas [michael.borgas@csiro.au](mailto:michael.borgas@csiro.au)

### **Bureaucracy update – Effort Logging and eProcurement**

The Staff Association has worked to help achieve an improved outcome for staff on effort logging. As we understand it, ultimately most staff will no longer be required to effort log. This is a significant change due in large part to the pressure applied by members through the Staff Association. The effort logging outcome is part of an ongoing campaign by the Staff Association to

reduce bureaucracy and the burden of SAP processes for staff.

Recently some members have indicated that there are problems with the new eProcurement process. The problems result in more time required for some purchasing, loss of delegation and credit card use; and slower response time from the supplier. The Staff Association have provided all of the feedback received from members to ET member, Craig Roy and are awaiting a response.

### **Job losses at Material Science and Engineering**

Staff at Materials Science and Engineering (CMSE) were informed last week that there would be up to 70 jobs lost in the division in the next 18 months. Staff directly affected are located at Belmont (Geelong), Highett, Clayton and Lindfield. CMSE Chief Callum Drummond also stated that a 'spill and fill' process would occur with some positions.

The job losses will decimate research capability in the division. Many staff at CMSE, and at CSIRO in recent times, have not had the opportunity to influence science planning and decision making. The Staff Association maintains that an overly top-down approach to science prioritisation is not an appropriate model for a creative and innovative organisation like CSIRO.

Our first priority for CMSE staff will be to support members and ensure that redeployment opportunities are identified. Members should contact their workplace delegate or Staff Association organiser at the earliest stage to enforce their rights contained within the Enterprise Agreement.

### **Merger of Exploration & Mining and Petroleum Resources**

As of 1 December, the divisions of Exploration & Mining and Petroleum Resources will merge into one division within the CSIRO Energy Group. The Staff Association has been advised that the merger will

have little effect on the vast majority of staff with the four research programs remaining intact. However, the merger is still likely to impact on groups like divisional support and the Staff Association will be seeking to protect jobs and ensure appropriate processes are enforced.

### **Fair pay and conditions for cleaners at CSIRO**

The Staff Association has been campaigning with the national union representing cleaners (the LHMU) to provide fair pay and conditions for cleaners working at CSIRO sites in the ACT. The contract for cleaning services in the ACT was recently awarded to a non-Clean Start contractor, Broadlex. Cleaners in the ACT are having their pay cut by up to 11.2%, resulting in pay and conditions much worse than cleaners at all other CSIRO sites, who are currently employed by Clean Start contractors.

The Clean Start Collective Agreement provides for fair pay and conditions for cleaners across the industry. Clean Start principles have recently been endorsed for government owned and occupied buildings by Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard. Unfortunately the Government endorsement occurred only weeks after CSIRO awarded the ACT contract to Broadlex.



**Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard signing on to Clean Start**

Members in the ACT have expressed their concerns to CSIRO management and Megan Clark has responded by indicating that CSIRO would comply with improvements to pay and conditions for cleaners in the ACT if Broadlex signed up to Clean Start. The campaign will continue, both in the ACT, and nationally to ensure that Clean Start principles apply to the awarding of future tenders for cleaning services at all CSIRO sites.

### **Election for vacant Councillor positions**

Nominations opened on Wednesday 9 September for three vacant elected positions within the CSIRO Staff Association. The positions are Governing Councillor, South Australian Councillor and Tasmanian Councillor. An election bulletin containing nomination forms is at <http://www.cpsu.org.au/aboutus/topics/8777.html> Any interested members can also contact the Staff Association at [csstaff@cpsu.org.au](mailto:csstaff@cpsu.org.au) for more information.

### **Interested in getting more involved?**

The Staff Association's strength is based on the participation of our members and delegates. The Fair Work Act and new parameters established by the Federal Government enhance the rights of delegates to represent their colleagues in the workplace. In October and November, the Staff Association will be conducting delegate training sessions throughout the country. If you haven't participated in these sessions before and want to get involved, please contact your organiser or email us at [csstaff@cpsu.org.au](mailto:csstaff@cpsu.org.au)

### **Sign up to Climate Connectors!**

Climate Connectors is a new initiative between Australian Unions and the Australian Conservation Foundation which encourages union members to sign up and put pressure on Australian and international governments before the Copenhagen

meeting in December. By signing up, you will be provided with information and be part of a collective movement coordinated through Australian Unions. To get involved and sign up, go to <http://www.climateconnectors.org/>

### **Know Your Rights bulletins**

The Know Your Rights bulletins are a series of fact sheets which help CSIRO staff better understand and enforce their rights at work. The bulletins have been emailed to all members through delegates and are also available on our website. Upcoming topics will include Annual Performance Agreement, Market Related Employment (Clause 11) and Redeployment and Redundancy provisions.

### **The Works magazine**

Look out for the next couple of editions of The Works magazine which is circulated to members quarterly. The magazines will contain articles about CSIRO research and profile Staff Association members. A reminder to all members that ideas and contributions to The Works and to Wavelength are always welcome.

### **Upcoming meetings**

The next Staff Association Council meeting will be on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of October in Brisbane. Delegate committee meetings are regularly held in each State and Territory before Council meetings and provide an opportunity for member participation through delegates and Councillors. The next Consultative Council meeting with the CEO and CSIRO Executive is on the 4<sup>th</sup> of November in Canberra. Also in November, the Staff Association will host its Annual General Meeting and members will be notified of the details soon.

**Wavelength is an official publication of the CSIRO Staff Association and is authorised by Sam Popovski, Secretary.**