

Submission to Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee, Inquiry into the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS)

Comments regarding proposed restructure of staffing model and roster for Visitor Services Officers (VSO)

1. Proposal for 8.5h shifts for VSOs is unacceptable.

It discriminates against older VSOs and it removes work life balance, especially impacting parents and carers.

2. Length of the consultation period (two weeks) is unacceptable.

Information about the proposal was presented to VSOs in one hour-long session (5.30 - 6.30 pm) on 18 Sep 2014. The closing date for comments from VSO's was set for 7.00pm on 2 Oct 2014.

In this period VSOs were given only one hour meeting time on 30 Sep 2014, that is 48 hours before closing time. Moreover, these two weeks fall within an extremely demanding work period for the VSOs. Visitor Services Section is experiencing an acute shortage of staff, the new recruits are being trained on the floor by the VSOs and the two weeks set for consultation covered Parliamentary sitting days.

Proposed restructure constitutes a major change to working conditions of VSOs and as such requires informed and considered response. Proposed timeframe is unacceptable.

Proposed restructure is yet another repeated attack on VSO's conditions of work. The Visitor Services Section has been reviewed every two years over the last ten years. This creates a very uncertain and stressful working environment for VSOs.

This ongoing and repeated erosion of workplace rights and conditions and the manner in which these plans have been implemented, with little genuine interest in seeking input amounts to work place bullying and harassment.