



Public Service Association of SA

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David Brown  
Chief Executive  
Department for Correctional Services

By email: [DCSOCECorrespondence@sa.gov.au](mailto:DCSOCECorrespondence@sa.gov.au)

Dear Mr Brown

**Re: Respecting your employees**

The Public Service Association (PSA) writes to you following disturbing reports emanating from your recent Senior Manager's Forum. It has been reported, with photographic evidence to substantiate the report, that DCS management has been celebrating keeping staff wages low during a cost of living crisis.

The PSA calls on you to apologise to the DCS workforce for the lack of dignity and respect shown to them by your management.

Words cannot express the deep disappointment and anger felt by the PSA and our Correctional members following this recent statement. Our Correctional members feel devalued, unheard, and, frankly, betrayed. The idea that "keeping staff on relatively low incomes in the face of inflation" is being touted as an achievement is not just deeply insensitive—it signals a failure by your department to show any respect or care for its workforce. For a government agency that is tasked with a mission of public service to promote such a disgraceful notion is entirely unacceptable.

This management position is in direct conflict with the Public Sector Values and the broader South Australian Public Sector Values and Behaviours Framework, in particular 'Respect'.

It is especially troubling that this message emerged under the oversight of senior Executive leadership. A Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive have a responsibility to set the tone and culture for the entire department, and to hold your leadership team accountable for statements and policies that reflect a true commitment to respect and staff well-being. By allowing remarks that celebrate low wages in the face of hardship, leadership has sent a message that our Correctional Officers and the entire Correctional Services workforce are valued only for their cost savings, rather than for their critical contributions to public order and safety.

Our Correctional members are the backbone of a system that operates under constant pressure and demand. They face personal risk, endure physical strain, and sacrifice time with their families to ensure the security and order within our prisons and keep the broader community safe from those who commit

some of the worst crimes. They deserve the utmost respect for what they do, not the total lack of respect shown by your management team.

Our members at prisons sites across the state have passed a motion which reflects how they have been affected by your management's actions and the impact this has had on their relationship with you and your department:

***Motion Passed:***

*That the Public Service Association members of the Department for Correctional Services have no confidence in Chief Executive David Brown and Deputy Chief Executive Hayley Mills. The recent statement made at a DCS senior management forum, listing "keeping staff on relatively low incomes in the face of inflation" as an achievement, has deeply upset the correctional services workforce. This statement, and the fact that the DCS Executive has not condemned the actions, nor seems to be able to recognise the hurt or apologise for causing it, confirms what members have thought for some time: DCS Executive has no respect or care for the workforce which operates the Department they are responsible for.*

*Many employees are struggling financially, relying on overtime to cover basic expenses, and this remark reflects a disturbing disconnect from staff realities. At a time when retention and attraction in our industry is hard, and when wages need serious improvement to be competitive against these issues, the Executive's celebration of keeping workers' wages below inflation is insulting, unacceptable and counter productive to their own responsibility to the proper resourcing of the Department.*

*The employees of this Department are its greatest asset, yet it is apparent this is a view not shared by the Executive. We believe that both Mr Brown's and Ms Mills's demonstrated lack of empathy and understanding toward staff concerns calls for immediate action to rectify these issues, including fair wage adjustments and a formal apology to all DCS staff for the insensitive and totally inappropriate management position.*

Now is the time for Executive to act, to address the damage done by these remarks, and to start rebuilding trust and integrity within your department.

The PSA once again calls on you to apologise to the DCS workforce for the lack of dignity and respect shown to them by your management.

I urge DCS leadership to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of Correctional staff by advocating for and providing fair wages, respect, and meaningful support to them. This is not just about negotiating wages; it is about showing a genuine commitment to positive change in the relationship with your employees.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'NBrown', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

**Natasha Brown**  
**General Secretary**