



Stat Report 2019/17

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Silent Killers: Stress, Fatigue and understaffing

Stress, fatigue and understaffing are silent killers in healthcare.

We know from our own research, from independent third-party research and from research conducted by the Victorian government that there is a crisis with under-staffing across all of our key clinical disciplines. While much of that research has focused on pathology services, we know the findings equally apply to all areas of the healthcare system and to our disciplines.

It is alarming that our surveys, conducted over a number of years, confirm an entrenched workplace culture of staff feeling pressured into doing unpaid work, and not necessarily because they've been asked by their supervisor. It is also very concerning that there remains such a heavy reliance on unpaid work in order for the clinical workload to be completed.

When asked about the reasons for doing unpaid work, approximately 85% of respondents say being unable to complete tasks within ordinary hours; 68% indicated it was because of the department being understaffed; 65% are doing unpaid work for patient care reasons; and approximately 58% indicated the unpaid work was due to urgent requests. These figures are strongly suggestive of a workplace culture which has 'normalised' unpaid work, unsustainable workloads and 'the negative health impacts on the workforce.

Our research showed that when asked if there were sufficient staff to cover the workload when staff take annual leave or sick leave, approximately 87% of respondents indicated there are not enough staff and more than 50% of respondents indicating they had been refused leave because of understaffing. This sort of situation creates more stress and contributes to the fatigue members feel.

One of the issues highlighted from a 2018 survey is the rise of management's use of on-call and re-call to cover understaffing. Understaffing and an increasing need to use recall compounds high workload stress and is emerging as one of the leading causes of stress related injuries. This kind of approach to managing clinical services in public health appears to stem from the failure of health services to guarantee the appropriate mix of staff needed; under-resourced and understaffed services.

When asked about whether there is an adverse impact on their general health and well-being from high workloads, 80% of respondents indicated there is an adverse impact. Of those who indicated there is an adverse impact on their health and well-being, nearly 85% of respondents indicated that the impact has worsened in the past 4 years. Many respondents identified increases in stress and exhaustion as some of the major impacts on their health and well-being.

It is clear that there are increasing health and well-being risks as more staff across a range of disciplines are highlighting ever increasing workloads that cause stress and fatigue. The level and regularity of stress leading to adverse health and well-being impacts being reported is of major concern. As members noted in their comments the workloads are increasing stress which results in greater anxiety and exhaustion. Under such circumstances people's health and well-being is being put at risk by huge workloads; and in such circumstances puts patient safety at risk as errors are more likely to be made.

Here's a small sample of what our members say about this very serious issue:

- "Headaches on a weekly basis"
- "Chronically tired, sore legs and feet, many people with hand problems from capping samples, back problems"
- "Anxiety from constant stressful environment. Also physically tiring as more workloads added to your shift and expected to complete."
- "I experience more stress, I have shorter lunch breaks (or attend meetings during them), I am very tired by the end of the week."
- "Feeling of not coping taking more sick days"
- "I plan to quit very soon. I'm so sick of being taken advantage of. If I don't do the unpaid work my patients suffer and treatment is delayed."
- "Generally negativity and expectations that non-patient related duties can be performed to the detriment of patient-related duties."
- "Pressure at work leads to it carrying over into time after work. Constantly thinking of everything that needs to be done"
- "Not sleeping properly, reliance on alcohol to wind down, stress and anger management issues"
- "Exhausted and less likely to have a life! Repetitive strain aches and pains"

Unless the chronic understaffing is seriously addressed by the government, members and patients will be exposed to greater risks to their health and well-being; and it will only be a matter of time before patients and members are being injured. Addressing high workloads and the welfare and safety of members remains the highest priority issue that we will continue to pursue.

Paul Elliott
Secretary

Bargaining Updates

Caraniche

Negotiations with Caraniche are continuing albeit slower than the Union would like. Meetings with management are proving useful as the Union works through the claim and the agreement.

If you have queries regarding negotiations with Caraniche please contact the Union on 9623 9623 or at enquiry@msav.org.au

Melbourne IVF

MIVF management have put the MIVF Scientists "Agreement" out to vote this week as you know. There is an access period of a week during which you have time to consider the "Agreement".

The ballot will open on 13 June 2019 and close on 19 June 2019.

Note that NO AGREEMENT was reached with the MSAV negotiating team in relation to the following issues:

Pay increases:

MIVF refused to increase the pay offer above 2.5% per annum. This is despite annual increases of **3.25%** for IVF embryologists working in the public sector, and annual increases of between **2.75% and 3.25%** offered and accepted by nurses at Melbourne IVF.

No credible reason has been given for not matching the MIVF Nurses increases. The Nurses voted down the first Agreement that was put out by MIVF management. Subsequently the following pay increases were negotiated:

Consultation over staffing and workloads

MIVF has refused to include the same staffing clause that has been agreed by IVF Australia, in NSW. MIVF has only agreed to include paragraph (a) in your Agreement. Therefore MIVF management would not be required to respond and take action over scientists' concerns over workloads.

APPROPRIATE STAFFING – IVF Australia clause:

- (i) The Employer is committed to ensuring that staffing levels are appropriate thereby ensuring the delivery of quality client outcomes and keeping within best practice principles.
- (ii) Where an employee feels their workload is unreasonably heavy on a regular basis, then they have a responsibility to discuss their concerns with the Employer.
- (iii) The Employer has a responsibility to facilitate employees in raising concerns relating to workload, to respond to issues raised by employees promptly and take appropriate action.
- (iv) Where the employee is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken to address the workload issues, the employee may utilise the dispute settlement procedure of this Agreement.

Annual Leave

Embryologists in the public sector and nurses at MIVF get 5 weeks annual leave per annum. MIVF refused to increase the quantum of annual leave.

The MSAV negotiating team offered a compromise – to give scientists the option to trade annual leave loading for additional annual leave. This was agreed in principle, subject to a minimum annual leave balance. A very restrictive clause has been inserted into the Agreement without consultation – which means that almost no-one would be able to access the additional leave in practice.

What now?

It is up to members to decide how to vote.

If the Agreement is voted down by the majority of scientists – that is, a majority of those who vote register a NO vote – we will be back at the bargaining table looking to negotiate an improved offer, particularly re wages. Make sure you make your voice heard by using your vote.

Community Sector Agreement

The Fair Work Commission has informed the union that there are a number of mainly technical issues with the new agreement and have not yet approved it.

Based on the correspondence from the Commission it appears that the Victorian Hospitals' Industrial Association (VHIA) failed to prepare and submit the correct forms with the application for the approval of the new agreement.

As a result, the agreement has not yet been approved. The Union is working closely with the VHIA to make sure the issues highlighted by the Commission are addressed and the correct paperwork is filed.

None of the issues raised by the FWC relate to the benefits and improvements negotiated in the

new agreement, so please be assured these are not at risk.



**A Special Membership Offer
for Melbourne Pathology**
Visit msav.org.au/melbpath for details

Victorian Royal Commission into Mental Health

The VPA is currently preparing its submission to the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System.

It is important that we reflect VPA members' experiences and views in the submission, and the survey is one way of gathering that information.

If you have already completed the survey – thank you!

If you haven't yet done so, can you please complete the survey as soon as possible. It will only take 15 minutes of your time.

You can access the survey here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VPARC>

For information about the Royal Commission go to: <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/mental-health/priorities-and-transformation/royal-commission>

Women's Leadership Development

FINAL CALL: UP TO \$7,000 AVAILABLE FOR WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Women currently working in the health sector have a final opportunity to register their interest in a scholarship worth up to \$7,000 to support participation in an accredited leadership development program.

Funding must be apportioned by the end of this financial year and it is unsure when these grants will be available again. Find out more and register your interest by completing the Expression of Interest form here prior to 5pm on June 21: www.wla.edu.au/health

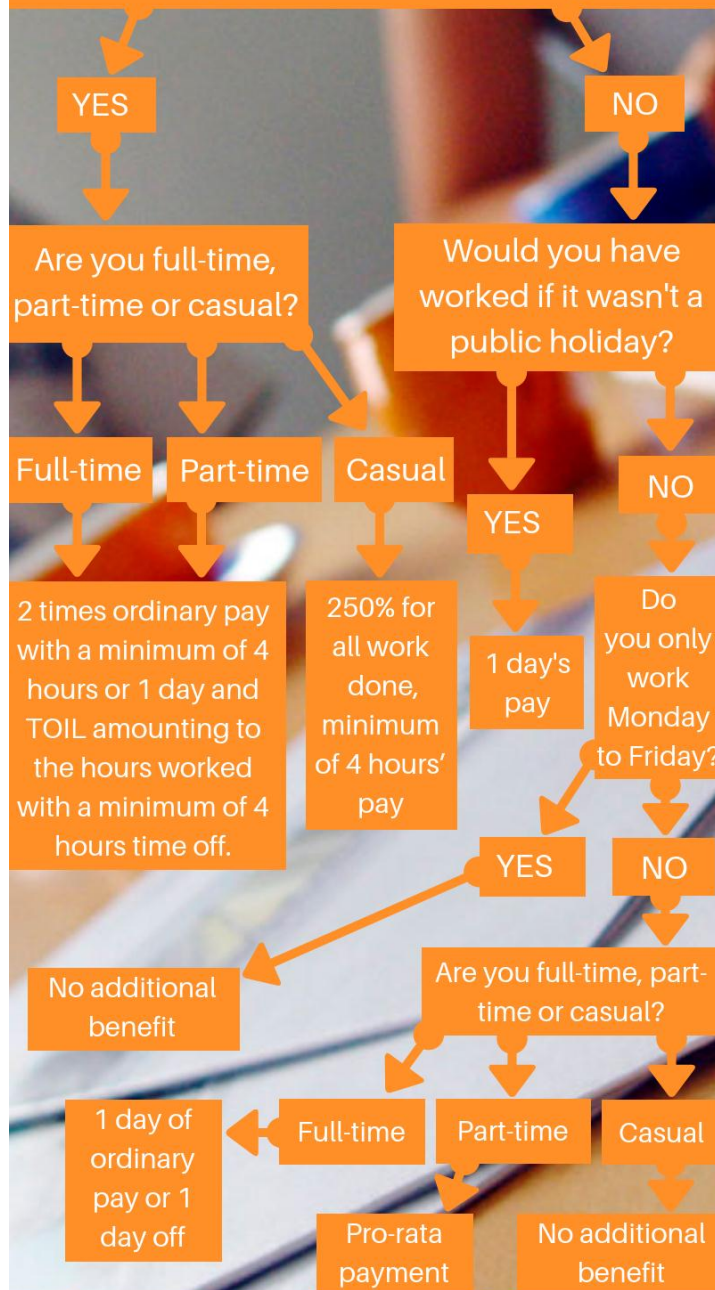
Long Weekend – Public Holiday Pay

Monday 10th June will be a public holiday which means there will be public holiday pay. The graphic below outlines how your public holiday pay will be determined for those covered by the public health agreement. The graphic covers the majority of circumstances but it won't cover everything, especially if you work across more than one public health service.

If you're unsure about how your public holiday pay works, or if you work in the private or community health sectors contact the Union on 9623 9623 or via enquiry@msav.org.au

Public Holiday 2019 Payments

Did you work that day?



End of Financial Year

The End of Financial Year is coming which means that it's almost tax time. If you're a member on Annual Subscriptions you should have already received your receipt so you can use them to claim your membership in the current Financial Year tax returns. If you haven't yet received your

receipt please get in contact with the Union as soon as possible.

If you pay your membership through Direct Debit you will continue to receive your receipts as you pay your membership each month. We will also email members on Direct Debit a tax receipt after the last direct debit is done in June for the current Financial Year.

If you haven't paid your membership you will want to do it ahead of the end of Financial Year. If you're not a member we can't help you at work and we can't extend the Professional Indemnity Insurance to cover you.

Don't forget your union membership is tax deductible!

If you have any queries about your tax receipts please contact Anastasia on (03) 9623 9623 or at enquiry@msav.org.au

New Subscription Rates for 2019/2020

Medical Scientists Association of Victoria

MSAV Subscription Rates for 2019/20 Financial Year

Full Time

Over 24hrs per week

Annual Sub = \$678.55

Per Month = \$56.55

Part Time

8 to 24hrs per week

Annual Sub = \$407.00

Per Month = \$33.92

Sessional

Less than 8hrs per week

Annual Sub = \$209.10

Per Month = \$17.42

Non Working

Parental leave, overseas, interstate, retired

Annual Sub = \$90.80

All prices include GST

Need more information?

Phone: 9623 9623

Email: enquiry@msav.org.au



Authorised by P.Elliott, Secretary, MSAV, 62 Lygon St, Carlton VIC 3063

Victorian Psychologists Association Inc.

VPA Inc. Subscription Rates for 2019/20 Financial Year

Full Time

Over 24hrs per week

Annual Sub = \$678.55

Per Month = \$56.55

Part Time

8 to 24hrs per week

Annual Sub = \$407.00

Per Month = \$33.92

Sessional

Less than 8hrs per week

Annual Sub = \$209.10

Per Month = \$17.42

Non Working

Parental leave, overseas, interstate, retired

Annual Sub = \$90.80

Private Practice

Annual Sub = \$309.15

Student

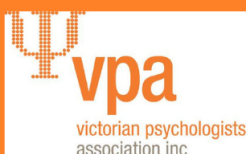
Annual Sub = \$34.20

All prices include GST

Need more information?

Phone: 9623 9625

Email: enquiry@vicpsych.org.au



Authorised by Dr R. Kelly, Secretary, VPA Inc, 62 Lygon St, Carlton VIC 3063

Association of Hospital Pharmacists

AHP Subscription Rates for 2019/20 Financial Year

Full Time

Over 24hrs per week

Annual Sub = \$678.55

Per Month = \$56.55

Part Time

8 to 24hrs per week

Annual Sub = \$407.00

Per Month = \$33.92

Sessional

Less than 8hrs per week

Annual Sub = \$209.10

Per Month = \$17.42

Non Working

Parental leave, overseas, interstate, retired

Annual Sub = \$90.80

Pre-Registration

Annual Sub = \$121.05

All prices include GST

Need more information?

Phone: 9623 9624

Email: enquiry@msav.org.au



Authorised by V Roginatto, President, AHP, 62 Lygon St, Carlton VIC 3053

VPA Professional Development Seminar

**Save the Date for the VPA Professional Development Seminar on the afternoon of
Wednesday 11 September 2019**

The subject for the seminar is Gender Dysphoria and it will touch on the following themes:

- Overview of gender in childhood and adolescence
- Gender dysphoria in childhood and adolescence
- RCH Gender Service model
- Working with families of Trans and Gender Diverse children and adolescents
- Therapeutic models of care for adolescents and adults

The seminar will be held at the Royal Children's Hospital's conference facilities at Flemington Road Parkville.

Registrations will open soon. Attendance is free to VPA members

Insuring Hospital Pharmacists

Are you a hospital pharmacist worried about your Professional Indemnity Insurance? Join the AHP today and get the insurance you need!

That's right! Not only will you get access to professional support to protect and advance your rights at work, your membership includes Professional Indemnity insurance.

Our policy, which meets Pharmacy Board requirements, means you're covered for up to \$20 million in any one claim and up to \$80 million in total in any one policy period. And since it is the right insurance for hospital pharmacists, it's the only insurance policy you'll need.

Constant restructuring, longer unpaid hours, more work job cuts and tough negotiations over pay and conditions are a challenge for everyone. That's why it pays to belong to the AHP to protect and advance your rights at work.

And we've got your Professional Indemnity insurance covered too – it's the only cover you'll need!

[Join today](#)

Positions not backfilled?

Let us know

The Aged Care Royal Commission (ACRC)

The Aged Care Royal Commission was established in 2018. Its terms of reference require it to examine and report on, amongst other things, 'the quality of aged care services provided to Australians, the extent to which those services meet the needs of the people accessing them, the extent of substandard care being provided, including mistreatment and all forms of abuse, the causes of any systemic failures, and any actions that should be taken in response'. (Full terms of Reference here: <https://agedcare.royalcommission.gov.au/Pages/Terms-of-reference.aspx>)

Members of the Health Services Union can provide valuable insights and suggestions from their experiences working across a range of occupations directly in the sector and in health services that interrelate with aged care.

While the HSU recognises the importance for members to be seen and heard in this process, it is very important that prior to providing evidence to the ACRC, members understand their rights and role in the process.

Community Forums

The ACRC is hosting travelling community forums in regional and metropolitan areas around the country. The community forums provide an opportunity for the public to hear about the work of the ACRC and to provide information by way of speaking or providing written accounts. Although community forums are a more "informal" approach to information gathering, participants may still be subject to the formal powers of the ACRC.

This means, for example, that if you speak at a forum you may later be compelled as a witness to appear at a hearing, or to provide documents, relating to your testimony at the community forum. Witnesses who are compelled to give evidence do not enjoy the usual protection against self-incrimination. This means you can be forced to give evidence even if that evidence might implicate you in a breach of the law. However there are restrictions on how this sort of evidence can be used against you if the matter later goes to court.

Submission via the HSU

The HSU is working with a qualified legal team to prepare a comprehensive formal submission. The submission will be largely made up of statements from members and officials, along with supporting evidence such as academic research. The union's national office will work with the legal team, branches and members to collect and compile the required evidence. There is no obligation for members to participate and those that do will be given thorough information about how their information will be used by the union and how the ACRC may use it too. For example, a member may wish to obtain advice from the union's legal team about the Commission's processes before they agree to proceed any further.

The HSU encourages members wishing to contribute to do so through the union's formal submission. This way, members can access support throughout the process. Members should carefully consider the extent of involvement they are willing to have in the ACRC. Remember that Royal Commissions have extensive powers. Any information provided by you may be taken as formal evidence and subject to requests to appear at hearings or produce additional documents. If you have any questions regarding the HSU submission or about the Commission, please contact National Research and Policy Officer Lauren Palmer via email at: lauren@hsu.net.au

Professional Development Seminar

**Wednesday 11
September**

Save the Date!



Psychologists: If you need help at work you need the VPA Inc.

If you are a psychologist and not in the VPA, you are taking unnecessary risks with your reputation and career. [Download an application form and join today.](#)

Common beaches of employment entitlements and negotiation of enterprise agreements

The VPA routinely assists members over issues such as harassment and bullying, under classification, organisational re-structuring, incorrect calculation of leave entitlements and health and safety. In addition, it negotiates enterprise agreements for psychologists in the public and private sectors to ensure that rates of pay and conditions remain up to date.

Support the Healthy Futures campaign



The Union strongly believes that climate change is union business. We know that climate change threatens our health by increasing the risks of heatwaves, bushfires, droughts and storms, displacing people and straining our health systems.

And right now HESTA and First State Super (FSS), Australia's biggest health industry super funds, are investing our money in fossil fuels - coal, oil and gas.

Join us in asking HESTA and FSS to divest from fossil fuels at www.healthyfutures.net.au/divest.

Stopping Gendered Violence at Work

Far too often women are attacked, harassed and threatened in their workplaces. And it needs to stop. That's why the Union is fighting back against gendered violence in the workplace – it's a very serious occupational health and safety issue.

Gendered violence is like a disease in our workplaces. Working women's experience of violence at work indicates that the problem of gendered violence is endemic in our workplaces.

Sign up to support the campaign at: <http://www.unionwomen.org.au/stopgv>

Do you need access to Domestic Violence services?

If you're experiencing domestic violence and need help, here is a list of Victorian services which may be able to assist you.

[Safe Steps \(formerly Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service of Victoria\)](#)
[Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Victoria \(FVPLS\)](#)
[Centre Against Sexual Assault \(CASA\) Forum](#)
[Community Legal Centres](#)
[Court Network](#)
[Domestic Violence Victoria](#)
[Elder Rights Advocacy \(ERA\)](#)
[Elizabeth Morgan House Aboriginal Women's Service](#)
[inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence](#)
[Men's Referral Service](#)
[No To Violence](#)
[QLife Australia](#)
[Seniors Rights Victoria \(SRV\)](#)
[The Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence](#)
[Victoria Legal Aid \(VLA\)](#)
[Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency](#)
[Women with Disabilities Victoria \(WDV\)](#)
[Women's Housing Ltd](#)
[Women's Information Referral Exchange \(WIRE\)](#)
[Women's Legal Service](#)
[Women's refuges](#)

Worth Reading: Minimum wage joke falls flat before bad economic report card

"We are satisfied that the level of increase we have decided upon will not lead to any adverse inflationary outcome," said Fair Work Commission president Justice Iain Ross when delivering last week's minimum wage decision.

It would be nice to think he was trying to be funny.

The 3 per cent rise from July 1 comes after a 3.5 per cent rise last July and a 3.3 per cent rise the July before that.

The compound impact of those two earlier rises was 6.9 per cent – a figure that saw inflation plunge and the wage index register the smallest of improvements, according to the most recent figures.

No, Justice Ross, there certainly won't be any "adverse inflationary outcome" from a lower minimum wage rise. You'll actually be contributing to weaker wages growth in the new financial year."

Read the entire article by Michael Pascoe in The New Daily at:

<https://thenewdaily.com.au/money/finance-news/2019/06/02/minimum-wage-sluggish-economic-growth/>

Worth Reading: How the 'rebel women' of Broken Hill shaped the mining town and Australia's early union movement

"From leading marches on horseback, to insulting police officers and starting their own hospitals, 'rebel women' in Broken Hill helped shape the mining town and the union movement in Australia.

Between 1889 and 1917 the far-west New South Wales town was a hotspot for industrial action, where strikes and rallies led to crucial workers' rights, like the eight-hour day and penalty rates.

The role of women in that action has been explored in an exhibition at Broken Hill's Albert Kersten Mining and Minerals Museum.

Museum assistant and researcher Gritta Walker said women were drawn to the town in its early days for work opportunities, but also because it [was a place of social activism](#)."

Read the entire article by Aimee Volkosfsky in the ABC at: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-05-03/rebel-women-of-broken-hill-shaped-union-movement/11062436>

Worth Reading: Cruel, and no deterrent: why Australia's policy on asylum seekers must change

"The Coalition's election victory on May 18 had an immediate psychological effect on the refugees on Manus Island, with reports of several people attempting [suicide](#).

Two class-action lawsuits currently before the High Court [allege](#) "torture", "persecution" and "other inhumane acts" in Australia's offshore detention centres. This action follows an action for damages in 2018 that the federal government [settled](#) for A\$70 million, effectively admitting that the claims of mistreatment were well-founded.

The Iranian-Kurdish journalist and poet [Behrouz Boochani](#), who has been detained on Manus for six years, has borne witness to a cruel system in his book, [No Friend But the Mountain](#). Written secretly on a mobile phone, the book has won a swag of major Australian literary awards."

Read the entire article by Alex Reilly in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/cruel-and-no-deterrent-why-australias-policy-on-asylum-seekers-must-change-117969>

Worth Reading: Are you burnt out at work? Ask yourself these 4 questions

"It's normal to feel stressed at work from time to time. But for some people, the stress becomes all-consuming, leading to exhaustion, cynicism and hatred towards your job. This is known as burnout.

Burnout used to be classified as a [problem related to life management](#), but last week the World Health Organisation [re-labelled the syndrome](#) as an "occupational phenomenon" to better reflect that burnout is a work-based syndrome caused by chronic stress.

The newly listed dimensions of burnout are:

- feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion
- increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job
- reduced professional efficacy (work performance)."

Read the entire article by Michael Musker in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/are-you-burnt-out-at-work-ask-yourself-these-4-questions-118128>

Join the Union

Are your workloads increasing? Are your stress levels increasing? Join the Union today!

To protect our professions we must strengthen our collective voice by increasing our membership. You can help by sharing one of the images below on Facebook.



[Share on Facebook](#)



[Share on Facebook](#)



[Share on Facebook](#)

Your Union is on Facebook

Keep up to date with what's happening by liking us on Facebook

[Medical Scientists Association of Victoria](#) | [Victorian Psychologists Association Inc](#) | [Association of Hospital Pharmacists](#)

Get the most out of the Union's website

The Union's website has a number of special features for members. These features, like the Members section and the Forums, require you to have a log-in and password.

But to ensure that your privacy is protected we have created the website in such a way that you will need a separate log-in and password for the Members section and the Forums section. It might seem to be inconvenient but it does better protect you and your private information. It also means that we can be more certain about the source of a hack if such an event is ever to arise.

Australian Unions Member Benefits app

Over the last month Australian Unions launched some new and exclusive Member Benefits - did you see our recent email telling you about this? If not, check your inbox! Search for "Lifestyle Rewards" for your login code.

Our program has expanded to include:

- Discounted movie tickets for Village, Hoyts, Palace and Event cinemas.
- Discounted electronic gift cards including major theme parks, zoos and aquariums.
- A discounted accommodation booking site.
- A new secure member only website and smart phone app.

All this is free to all members of affiliated unions. If you have not got a login and would like join in [register for Member Benefits now.](#)



Share STAT Report

Is there a copy of STAT Report on your Union noticeboard or in your staff room?

If not print out a copy and leave it on the noticeboard or in the staff room for your colleagues.

[follow on Twitter](#) | [friend on Facebook](#)

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