

# **SACS Funding Campaign 2007**

## **Lobbying Kit**

**Australian Services Union  
02 9310-4000**

**Council of Social Service of New South Wales (NCOSS)  
02 9211-2599**

Authorised by Sally McManus, Secretary NSW/ACT Services Branch Australian Services Union and  
Linda Frow, Acting Director, NCOSS.

## The problem

### Background

- On March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2006 the NSW Industrial Relations Commission awarded a 3.5% increase in award wages for SACS workers each year for the next three years. The second of these increases is payable from the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2007.
- These increases are fair and reasonable and have been granted under the laws of the State of NSW. They are significantly less than the 6.7% increase recently awarded to Federal MPs and to increases being awarded in other industries.
- These increases in wages will have to be paid by every service covered by the SACS Award (unless the organisation has its own Enterprise Bargaining Agreement which excludes the Award rates of pay).
- Each year the Commonwealth and State governments supplement or index grants to non government organisations. These increases are designed to meet the increased costs of wages and of inflation.

### Current situation

- Following a sector campaign, we have been advised that all NSW Government departments that fund NGOs subject to the SACS Award will:
  - *provide 3.3% in 07-08 in all State-only funding programs to NGOs, commencing from 1 July 2007.*
  - *provide 3.3% in 07-08 in Commonwealth-State funding programs to NGOs for the portion of the program that is funded by the State (eg SAAP, Community Legal Centres but does not include HACCC). NSW will also lobby the Commonwealth to match for its portion to the full 3.3%.*
  - *DADHC will include 3.3% indexation in 07-08 HACCC plan (NSW will also lobby the Commonwealth to match for its portion to the full 3.3%). It would be unacceptable if HACCC services again had to bear a loss of 1.2% out of much needed growth funds.*

This commitment will significantly assist the NGO sector in lobbying the Commonwealth to match the 3.3% State contribution. It also places the State in a more principled negotiation position and provides at least some certainty to many organisations facing salary increases on 1 July 2007.

- This victory is due to the efforts of organisations, workers and service users in the weeks running up to the State Budget. Now we need to put the same effort into lobbying the Commonwealth to at least match this level of indexation.
- So far, the Commonwealth has only offered 2.15%, leaving services to try and find the difference of 1.2%. We believe, for example, that the total figure NSW SAAP services will have to find is in the order of \$700,000 – a small amount for the Commonwealth with its current surplus, but an impossible amount for services.

## Our task

- To convince Federal MPs to put pressure on Treasurer Costello to pay 3.3% across all NGO funding programs. Stress to the Commonwealth that our demand for a minimum 3.3% indexation is simply about adequately funding the real cost of community services. The simple message is that if they do not provide 3.3% indexation, services will need to be reduced. The blame for this will rest solely with the Commonwealth because the NSW Government is willing to pay its fair share.
- We need to convince them that services do not have any capacity to find even small amounts in their very tight budgets without impacting on the services they can deliver. This is especially the case since this is the second year in a row that Commonwealth indexation has fallen short.
- We need to take advantage of the fact that MPs are returning to their local areas in preparation for the upcoming election. We need to put as much local pressure on them as possible, so they understand it is their voters that will be losing services.
- We need to work **together** to get a commitment from the Commonwealth Government. The Commonwealth is opposed to State awards and may try to argue that community organisations are covered by WorkChoices not the SACS Award. We need to avoid being diverted in our campaign by these kinds of arguments.

## The Solution

In order to get the commitment we need from the Commonwealth Government we must do a number of things. The **ACTIONS** that we need every workplace to **IMMEDIATELY** undertake are listed below:

### Stage One - Letters

- Each organisation needs to calculate exactly what the increase in wages will cost their service. A “ready calculator” is attached at **attachment 1**.
- Once you have calculated the cost to your service you need to continue to use the “ready calculator” to then estimate the number of hours of service delivery that would need to be cut from your service, identify the client group affected and what they will miss out on as a result.
- Having completed the “math” you then need to take that information and use it to write a letter that you will need to send to a variety of places. A DRAFT letter is attached at **attachment 2**. However you should attempt to make this letter as personal as possible.
- Finally you need to have the letter posted **and faxed** to the people listed in **attachment 3**. **Please get the letter to your MP as quickly as possible.**

### Stage Two – Phone

- Once you have complete stage one you need to move on immediately to stage two. In stage two we are asking you to make as many phone calls as possible to the person listed on **attachment 3**.
- When you make these phone calls you can use the script set out at **attachment 4**.

### Stage Three – Visit your Local Member of Federal parliament.

- It's important that you follow up all of the above with a visit to your Federal Member of Parliament.
- In rural and regional areas where distance may be a problem it might be useful to link with other organisations in centres where local member's offices are located.
- Ring and make an appointment to speak with your local member. A set of notes to assist you in this meeting are at **attachment 5**.

### Stage Four – Local media

- Send out a press release to your local media outlet. (See **attachment 6**.)
- Offer to provide the media outlet with a photo opportunity if possible, allowing for the privacy/confidentiality of your service users.
- Please let us know if you generate local media coverage and the responses of your local MPs. This will help us to lobby the government.



## Attachment 2: Draft letter

Date

Addressee

Dear ***(insert the name of the person to whom the letter is addressed)***

Re: URGENT FUNDING INCREASES NEEDED FOR SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES IN NSW.

I am writing to you to seek your help in ensuring that the Commonwealth Government fully indexes grants to organisations like ours to ensure that we can afford to pay the wage increases due in our industry on July 1<sup>st</sup> 2007 without the need to cut services.

I am from ***(insert the name of your organisation)***. As you know we deliver services like ***(insert the description of the type of services you deliver)*** across our local area. Our services are important for our clients who are predominately ***(insert the details about your clients)***.

Unless the Commonwealth Government fully indexes our grants then we will be forced to cut services to clients. The NSW Government has already agreed to index their share of our grants by 3.3%. We are asking for your help to ensure the Commonwealth does the same.

This indexation will help to deal with the immediate issue of salary increases. It does not cover historic under-funding but it will at least mean the immediate cost increases are met.

These salary increases have been set by an independent umpire and are legally obliged to be paid. They are modest compared to salary increases in some industries, including the 6.7% increase recently awarded to Federal MPs.

Our services are delivered to the Australian community on behalf of the Government. Accordingly it is only fair that the Commonwealth Government's contributions reflect the real cost of service delivery.

In recent years our service has been under increasing pressure to meet the increased need for services. We cannot afford to cut our services further; we need your support to ensure that the Commonwealth Government fully indexes our grants.

Without proper Commonwealth indexation we will have a shortfall of ***(insert the figure (e)) this year.***

If this is the case then we will be forced to reduce the hours of services available at ***(insert the name of the workplace)*** by ***(insert the figure (f))*** hours.

This means that the following types of services will no longer be available, ***(insert the information about the types and amounts of of services that will be cut., eg homelessness beds, refuge beds, respite hours etc)***

The NSW Government has shown its commitment to a viable community services sector through proper indexing. I urge you to ensure that the same guarantee sought from the Commonwealth Government is forthcoming.

Yours sincerely

## Attachment 3: Persons to whom you need to send your letter

### Who do we write to?

- Your local member.

### Plus:

- Treasurer, The Hon Peter Costello, MP  
Minister for Ageing, Christopher Pyne (HACC)
- Minister for Community Services, Senator Hon Nigel Scullion (SAAP)
- Attorney-General, The Hon Philip Ruddock, MP. (Community Legal Services)

### Who do we call and meet with?

- **Your local member**

Name	Party	Electorate Office details
<u>Abbott, The Hon Tony,</u> <u>Member for Warringah</u>	LP	Level 2 (PO BOX 450 NSW), 17 Sydney Road, Manly NSW 2095 Tel : (02) 9977 6411, Fax : (02) 9977 8715 E-mail: Tony.Abbott.MP@aph.gov.au
<u>Albanese, Mr Anthony,</u> <u>Member for Grayndler</u>	ALP	334A Marrickville Road ( NSW), Marrickville NSW 2204 Tel : (02) 9564 3588, Fax : (02) 9564 1734 E-mail: A.Albanese.MP@aph.gov.au
<u>Anderson, The Hon John,</u> <u>Member for Gwydir</u>	Nats	206 Conadilly Street (PO BOX 725), Gunnedah NSW 2380 Tel : (02) 6742 3155, Fax : (02) 6742 1840 E-mail: <u>John.Anderson.MP@aph.gov.au</u>
<u>Andren, Mr Peter, Member</u> <u>for Calare</u>	Ind.	Suite 2, The Reliance Centre (PO Box 181), 203-209 Russell Street, Bathurst NSW 2795 Tel : (02) 6332 6229, Fax : (02) 6332 6240 E-mail: Peter.Andren.MP@aph.gov.au
<u>Baird, The Hon Bruce,</u> <u>Member for Cook</u>	LP	Shop 3, 346 Port Hacking Road (PO BOX 819, Caringbah NSW 1495), Caringbah NSW 2229 Tel : (02) 9525 8200, Fax : (02) 9540 1587 E-mail: Bruce.Baird.MP@aph.gov.au 35 Sturgeon Street (PO BOX 156), Raymond Terrace NSW 2324
<u>Baldwin, The Hon Bob,</u> <u>Member for Paterson</u>	LP	Tel : (02) 4983 1330, Fax : (02) 4987 5444 E-mail: Bob.Baldwin.MP@aph.gov.au
<u>Bartlett, Mr Kerry, Member</u>	ALP	186 Macquarie Road (PO Box 376), Springwood

<u>for Macquarie</u>		NSW 2777 Tel : (02) 4751 7494, Fax : (02) 4751 7495 E-mail: Kerry.Bartlett.MP@aph.gov.au
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<u>for Kingsford Smith</u>		806-812 Anzac Pde, Maroubra NSW 2035 Tel : (02) 9349 6007, Fax : (02) 9349 8089 E-mail: Peter.Garrett.MP@aph.gov.au
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<u>Hull, Mrs Kay, Member for Riverina</u>	Nats	Griffith: 100 Yambil Street ( NSW), Griffith NSW 2680 Tel : (02) 6964 1212, Fax : (02) 6962 7722 Wagga Wagga (MAIN OFFICE): Suite 2, 11-15 Fitzmaurice Street, Wagga Wagga NSW 2650

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<u>Turnbull, The Hon Malcolm, Member for Wentworth</u>	LP	Level 1 (PO Box 1840, Bondi Junction NSW 1355), 5a Bronte Road, Bondi Junction NSW 2022 Tel : (02) 9369 5221, Fax : (02) 9369 5225 E-mail: Malcolm.Turnbull.MP@aph.gov.au
<u>Vaile, The Hon Mark, Member for Lyne</u>	Nats	Port Macquarie: Suite 3, 2 Horton Street, Port Macquarie NSW 2444 Tel : (02) 6584 2411, Fax : (02) 6584 3624 Taree: 219 Victoria Street (PO Box 330), Taree NSW 2430 Tel : (02) 6552 5222, Fax : (02) 6552 5835 E-mail: Mark.Vaile.MP@aph.gov.au
<u>Vale, The Hon Danna, Member for Hughes</u>	LP	Shop 1, 9-15 East Parade (PO Box 1014, Sutherland NSW 1499), Sutherland NSW 2232 Tel : (02) 9521 6262, Fax : (02) 9545 0927 E-mail: Danna.Vale.MP@aph.gov.au
<u>Windsor, Mr Tony, Member for New England</u>	Ind	Shop 5, 259 Peel Street (PO Box 963), Tamworth NSW 2340 Tel : (02) 6761 3080, Fax : (02) 6761 3380 Toll Free : 1300 301 839 E-mail: Tony.Windsor.MP@aph.gov.au

## **Attachment 4: Script for Phone call**

**You need to make sure you get to speak to your LOCAL Member or their electorate officer.**

**In the conversation you need to ensure that you cover the points set out below.**

- On **(insert date)** I wrote to **(insert name of local member)** to request a meeting regarding indexation for community services. I am ringing to arrange that meeting
- The Commonwealth Government must guarantee that the level of indexation is at least 3.3%. This is necessary to ensure that the wage increases that fall due on July 1 can be fully funded without organisations having to cut service delivery to people in this electorate.
- The NSW Government has already committed to 3.3% indexation. We are seeking a guarantee from the Commonwealth that they will at least match this.
- We are simply asking that the Government make an adequate contribution towards the real costs of delivering services to people in this community.
- This is not much to ask when MPs have been given a 6.7% increase.
- **You should then set out the particular services that will have to be cut by your organisation and identify the client groups who will be identified.** If we don't get adequate indexation, we will lose **XXX** (beds, respite hours etc) in this electorate.

**Remember that at the end of your call you want to have a scheduled time to meet the local member.**

## **Attachment 5: Notes for meeting with local member**

**In the conversation you need to ensure that you re-iterate the points already made in your letter:**

- We need your help in ensuring that the Commonwealth Government fully indexes grants to organisations like ours to ensure that we can afford to pay the wage increases due in our industry on July 1<sup>st</sup> 2007 without the need to cut services.
- Each year the Commonwealth and State governments supplement or index grants to non government organisations. These increases are designed to meet the increased costs of wages and of inflation.
- Our services are delivered to the Australian community on behalf of the Government. Accordingly it is only fair that the Commonwealth Government contributions reflect the real cost of service delivery.
- In recent years our service has been under increasing pressure to meet the increased need for services. We cannot afford to cut our services further.
- Our request for a minimum 3.3% indexation is simply about adequately funding the real cost of community services. Unless the Commonwealth Government fully indexes our grants then we will be forced to cut services to clients.
- The NSW Government has already agreed to index their share of our grants by 3.3%. We are asking for your help to ensure the Commonwealth does the same.

**You should set out the particular services that will have to be cut by your organisation and identify the client groups who will lose out.**

**Remember that at the end of your meeting you need to ensure that your local member commits to supporting an increase in your funding and will contact the Treasurer and other Ministers to make sure that happens.**

## **Attachment 6: Draft Press Release**

**(PRODUCE ON YOUR OWN LETTERHEAD)**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Commonwealth Government to cut services at (insert organisation name)**

The Commonwealth Government has threatened to cut services at **(insert name of organization)**. This local community organisation currently delivers services to **(identify client group)** in the **(name of local area )** area.

**(insert name of Organisation)** claims that the failure of the Commonwealth Government to provide a 3.3% increase in funding to cover wage increases that fell due on July 1<sup>st</sup> will mean a cut in services.

Local community member **(list the name of your spokesperson)** says that the cuts are imminent but so far there has been no commitment from the Government to date.

“Unless the Commonwealth Government fully indexes our grants then we will be forced to cut services to clients. The NSW Government has already agreed to index their share of our grants by 3.3%. We are simply asking that the Commonwealth do the same”.

“In recent years our service has been under increasing pressure to meet the increased need for services. We cannot afford to cut our services further. Despite our desperate attempts to move the Commonwealth Government, the money has not been forthcoming. Unless we get a decision soon we will be faced with some very serious decisions. These decisions will see services cut.”

“Whilst Mr Costello sits on a budget surplus of \$10.6billion, community organisations that provide help to local people will be struggling to pay the wages bill” said **(insert the name of local spokesperson.)**

**(insert name of service)** has estimated that the total short fall in funding is in the order of **( insert the figure (e))**. If this funding is not forthcoming then services like **(list the types of services that would be threatened)** will have to be cut.

“Our services are delivered to the community on behalf of the Commonwealth, it is only fair that they meet the real costs of service delivery. In recent years our service has been under increasing pressure to meet the increased need for services. We cannot afford to cut our services further. We need an answer now, “said **(insert the name of local spokesperson.)**

Contact **(Name of spokesperson)** Phone **(insert phone number including mobile)**