



RMS Needs to Manage Overtime Better

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The NSW Public Accounts Committee tabled a report today recommending that, as a matter of priority, Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) better determine acceptable levels of operational overtime to reduce overtime costs.

The NSW Auditor-General conducted a performance report in June 2012 on the management of overtime in RMS to resolve whether their use of overtime is effective. He determined that the currently attained overtime target of less than ten per cent of base salary and wages, needed to be revised to strengthen the RMS's effort to reduce overtime. He also recommended the RMS disclose this revised performance in its annual report.

The NSW PAC highlighted that even though RMS made some changes, they have not gone far enough. For example, the RMS deferred the first four recommendations on setting acceptable levels of overtime and sick leave for two years, blaming restructuring.

However, in answers to questions on notice, the RMS appeared to reject the recommendation on sick leave, claiming 'there was no evidence to suggest that sick leave caused overtime'. The Committee found it surprising that RMS was unable to find any connection between high rates of sick leave and the need to use overtime, particularly given that at the same time Sydney Trains recognised the relationship between these two.

The committee further noted that an industrial awards consolidation process planned by RMS should reduce the need for overtime by offering opportunities to reform work practices.

NSW Public Accounts Committee Chair, Jonathan O'Dea said: "We need real reform on overtime. Taxpayers are tired of having their tax dollars spent on questionable overtime. We need to properly and promptly address this issue, with RMS setting and adhering to a reduced cap on overtime".

Full details of the Report and the Committee's recommendations are available on the Committee's website at: <http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/publicaccounts>.

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