

## Electricity Reform: Western Power Staff

The State Government has reassured Western Power staff that their jobs and conditions will not be affected under electricity reform.

Jobs and conditions can be guaranteed because the State Government will retain ownership of the disaggregated Western Power. The new entities – State Generation, State Networks, State Retail and Regional Power – will remain firmly in public hands. Western Power is NOT being privatised.

The State Government has already moved to address union concerns over job security by developing a comprehensive employee relations plan and job transfer policy.

This job transfer policy spells out there will be:

- No forced redundancies as a result of disaggregation
- No loss of salary
- Positions within the new business for all current Western Power employees
- Transfer to the new corporations of all entitlements such as superannuation, long service leave and sick leave.

And this is not just a promise. The State Government will legislate to give effect to the essential components of the transfer policy, such as maintenance of wages and entitlements.

There are a range of other measures being developed to make sure that the interests of Western Power staff and their families are fully protected.

These initiatives are being developed in close conjunction with the Union Consultation Committee representing the main Western Power unions.

### CERTAINTY FOR STAFF

The State Government understands that staff are anxious about the future and looking for certainty.

A range of policies and practises are being developed now – in consultation with unions – instead of after the event. Many of these have been based on experience gained from the Eastern States.

There is also a firm timeframe for implementing change with clearly defined milestones.

The State Government will clearly spell out its industrial relations policy – as it relates to the disaggregation of Western Power – through a memorandum of understanding with the relevant unions. This could include issues such as staff employment, salary maintenance, employment conditions, relocation arrangements, career development and staff communication.

The State will also provide further certainty by making sure that the key elements of the staff transfer policy are enshrined in legislation.

### BUSINESS AS USUAL

In many ways, it will be business as usual for Western Power staff after disaggregation.

For many years, Western Power has been operating as distinct divisions (Generation, Networks, Retail). Disaggregation gives formal acknowledgment to that structure. The Government expects the new divisions will be operating as strengthened business units from 1 January next year before being formally established in July 2004, subject to Parliamentary approval.

Current jobs will transition in a seamless manner.

### USE OF CONTRACTORS

The use of contractors in place of full-time employees is a major concern for some staff. The State Government will require Western Power and its successor entities to adhere to a firm contractor policy.

The policy would include elements such as:

- Contractors should not be used to avoid training existing staff or employing new staff to cater for emerging areas of work
- Each corporation must establish a formal list of preferred contractors
- Preferred contractor details are supplied by the corporation to relevant unions
- Audits of contractors are undertaken on a regular basis.





## APPRENTICESHIPS AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

The State Government has a firm commitment to building trainee and apprenticeship opportunities within Government-owned corporations.

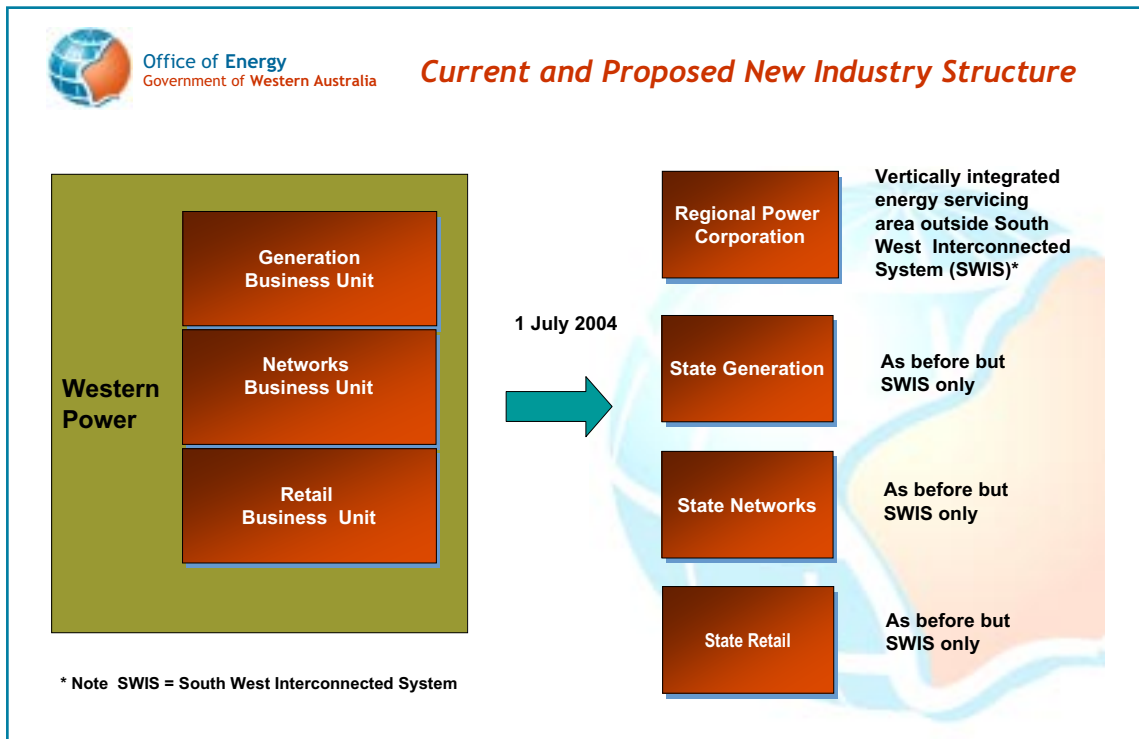
The State has agreed that Western Power and its successor entities will be required to adopt specific provisions on employee to apprentice ratios to address apprenticeship intakes.

## HAVING YOUR SAY

The Union Consultation Committee meets regularly with the Electricity Reform Implementation Unit. Concerns and issues can be raised through your union representative on this committee.

Further information on electricity reform is available on the website <http://www.eri.energy.wa.gov.au>

Enquiries can be made to the Electricity Reform Implementation Unit on (08) 9420 5750.



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**Electricity Reform Implementation Unit**