

# STAFF ROOM NEWSLETTER



September 2009  
Volume 29, Issue 1

## Inside this Issue

### 1 New Teachers

### 1 New Principals, CRT Co-ordinators and Office Managers

### 1 Administration Fee

### 1 Some schools don't support the system

### 1 Bookings Officer's Hours

### 2 Flu Season Overdue

### 2 Recesses, Lunchtime, Other Breaks

### 2 Contracts

### 2 Morning Calls – only immediate bookings.

### 2 Bursars

*The FBI, the CIA and the LAPD are assigned to catch a rabbit believed to be hiding in one of 3 forests. The FBI plant secret informants in all areas of their forest, question all animal and mineral witnesses and after two weeks declare that these things described as "rabbits" simply don't exist.*

*The CIA after two weeks and no success burn their forest killing everything within. Without apology they declare, "The rabbit had it coming".*

*LAPD had far more success. After only two hours they emerge from their forest with a badly bruised and beaten bear which is screaming "OK. I'm the rabbit. I'm the rabbit"!*

**\*\* Please run off 4 copies. One for Principal, one for CRT Coordinator and 2 for the staffroom table. Many Thanks.**

## New Teachers

Welcome to any new teachers and Principals to our system of CRT management. Having to regularly double-up when teachers are away is now a rarity. We have plenty of CRTs to service our schools at this stage. Hopefully you are now familiar with our company and our booking procedures. If not, remind your Coordinator to bring you up to date. Your School Office will have our business cards with phone numbers and booking procedures on the back. Make sure you get one.

### Important Points:

If you are away you can ask us for a particular CRT (your favorite) and we will do our best to get that person. Otherwise we chase up others who are familiar with your school. You or your Coordinator can ring us any time.. all hours of the night..... to make a booking. When no-one is on deck, our answering machines will take the message and we'll get onto it at 6.30 am. That's smarter than sleeping in and ringing at 8 am. when there are hardly any CRTs left.

### OUR PRIORITY ORDER FOR CRTS IS ALWAYS AS FOLLOWS:

1. Whoever you ask for.
2. Someone else who knows the grade.
3. Someone else who has worked at your school.
4. Introduce a new face.

Inner Suburban Schools must ring Peter on **98550550**.

Outer Suburban Schools must ring Pam on **87741580**.

## New Principals, CRT Coordinators, Office Managers

It is important that any new Principals, Coordinators or Office Managers should provide us with their name and after hours contact details. Remember, our emergencies usually happen outside school hours. We recently sent out an info. query. Please update and return.

## Group Payroll-

### Admin Fee

Don't forget there is a term Payroll Service Fee if you don't make at least 5 days of bookings in a term.

All but 2 schools avoided the Payroll Administration Fee last term. To avoid the fee simply ensure you make at least 5 full days of bookings. There are 8 schools who are currently below the mark for this Term. It would be worthwhile for Bursars to bring this to the attention of your Principal so the Fee can be avoided.

### Some schools don't support the system

Teacher Agencies sprang up as the result of a 5-year scarcity of CRTs in the 90's.. Such scarcity comes in waves. Currently the State is experiencing an unusually low incidence of colds and flu and so CRTs have been in plentiful supply. The situation is not likely to last. Please utilize our CRTs during these quiet times otherwise they all leave and work in a bank! Please also be aware that STS works to a very low profit margin. It is only the huge turnover that keeps us viable. Growth in bookings over many years enabled us to bring our fees down from \$5.50 per booking in 1996 to ZERO in 2009. Where else in the world can you get such service for free? Don't kill the golden goose... use our CRTs as much as possible. Otherwise we go broke and you're all back to your Winters of Discontent unable to fill 20 vacancies a week. Many of our CRTs have enjoyed a wonderful relationship with your school for years, yet some schools would dump them in favor of a flavor of the month outsider who will likely leave you for a contract in busy times. Each time you put a freelance CRT on your books (**even if it's only for one day's work**) it's not just a matter of sighting their VIT card. Your Office Staff have to collect and check about 5 pages of documentation. Then enter it all onto the School's database, prepare taxation forms, send copies to the ATO. Enter Superannuation details.

Forward Super every quarter. Prepare and post salary each fortnight. Finally, prepare and post dozens of group certificates in July.

**Do your teachers realize how much work they create for office staff by employing outsiders?**

When you book through STS all that work is done for you. So if you know teachers looking for work (whether they be strangers to your school or past staff-members) you should encourage them to pull their weight and become part of our system. The reason our CRTs are free is the large turnover. Schools that continually make only 5-10 bookings a term through STS are letting down those who support it.

**Your Booking Officers' Hours**

Note: Booking Officers (Pam and Peter) are on deck at the following times:

- Mon to Thurs** 6.30 am - 10.00 am  
and 3.00 pm - 9.00 pm.
- Fri.** 6.30 am. till 10am
- Sat.** Closed all day
- Sun.** 5pm - 9 pm

Outside these times please leave booking details or any other messages on their answering machines. You can be confident that they will be attended to. The earlier you ring (even 2 am in the morning).....the greater the chance of getting the best, most appropriate replacement teacher.

Please leave details exactly in the order shown on the back of our business card.

Don't forget an after-hours contact no.

**Because they close at 10 am, you need to get sick by 9.45 otherwise you'll leave other classes doubling-up.**

**Flu Season Overdue**

Flu Season usually arrives mid August. During Flu Season there are less CRTs available (CRTs also get sick, so do their children).

Most of you realize that part-day bookings don't get filled until the morning of the job **no matter how long ago you made the booking.** Coercing any one of our CRTs to accept a part-day is not acceptable. It is unreasonable to expect them to give up half a day's salary to do you a "favor". Ask yourself how many half- day's pay you would donate to a CRT. Your best chance of getting your preferred CRT (whether for a full or a half-day) is by ringing the agency as soon as possible and requesting your choice. Full-day bookings with 48 hrs notice always

have the best chance for the CRT of choice. When flu season hits, some days are so busy we run out of CRTs. Any unfilled positions will then more likely be part-days. On such occasions we ring the school early so they can arrange to double-up or drag one of their specialists into a classroom for the day. During 2008 we took 8,500 bookings...only 72 went unfilled. About 50 of those were during August-October. Most were part-days or specialist vacancies and a lot were called in late (after 8am.). During the rest of the year unfilled bookings are unlikely to occur.

**Recess/ Other Breaks**

New Coordinators may not be aware that under current regulations CRTs are employed for up to 6 hours in a given day. In most schools that will be 9 am till 3.30 pm less half an hour for a luncheon break (for which they are NOT paid). You cannot legally require them to perform any duties outside paid time. This means that before or after school they cannot be required to teach, conduct Yard Duty, attend meetings or assemblies. Regardless of the length of your school's lunchbreak, CRTs are required to be given a full 1/2 hr. lunch break uninterrupted by any duties, including watching children eat their lunch. These rules will likely apply until the Government decides to pay CRTs 7.6 hrs each day (as with permanent staff). Follow these rules. Your Principal has enough to worry about without putting their house on the line over an insurance issue. Any queries on this matter, ring Russell.

**Our Schools Have Agreed to the following fair (legal) policy:**

**Before school**

No yard duty, no assemblies. Let them spend this voluntary time preparing.

**Recess**

15 mins Break, 15 mins Yard Duty

**Lunch**

30 mins Break 30 mins Yard Duty

**After School**

No Yard Duty, no compulsory meetings. Allow them 15 min voluntary closure time, uninterrupted. They may be tidying their room or writing notes for the returning teacher. They should sign the time sheet and leave about 3.45

**Two Notable Exceptions:**

- 1) If a CRT commences work on or after 12.00 noon, you need NOT offer any lunchbreak and can expect them to work through till 3.30 (3 ½ hrs.).

2) If the CRT is booked for 5 consecutive days (or more), then the CRT becomes the teacher they are replacing..... required to do the exact same Yard Duty, attend Meetings, Assemblies, write Reports, work the same hours, etc. as other staff members. **But must also be given the absent teacher's Preparation Time.**

**Note:** We don't make the rules. We just follow them. Ensure you are complying with regulations set down by the Department of Labor and Industry as well as the Department of Education. We protect our Principals by bringing it to your attention. If you believe anything is incorrect or recently been changed, please let us know immediately.

**Contracts**

If the school needs one of our teachers to fill a contract or on-going position please let us know **first**. We need to keep our availability list as accurate as possible. Even if you fill a position from open advertising we really appreciate you informing us if it's one of our teachers. (It is likely to be one of our CRTs). Teamwork helps us to more efficiently service your school.

**Morning Calls**

Our Booking Officers are flat out each morning from 6.30 till 9.15. Please avoid any non-urgent calls during this time. Many thanks.

**Bursars**

Please enter the school code and week number when you pay us by EFT. It avoids confusion when some weeks are for the same amount.

Many thanks for the great job you are already doing.

**Don't use these comments in your School Reports?**

- Gates are down, lights are flashing but there's no train coming!
- When his IQ reaches 50... sell!
- If you stand close to her you can hear the ocean.
- Takes her 2 hours to watch "60 Minutes".
- He has reached rock bottom and starting to dig.
- Has had delusions of adequacy.
- Any more stupid ... she'd need to be watered twice a week.