



Auscript announces office closures in Sydney, Hobart and Adelaide

The ASU was informed by members on the afternoon of the 15 January 2020 of Auscript’s intent to close the Sydney, Hobart and Adelaide offices and of the resulting job losses.

We understand that members were given extremely short notice of these critical workplace changes while the Union was not informed about these changes by the company at all.

However, members can be assured that the Union has already written to the company on the afternoon of the 15 January, expressing our disappointment with the lack of consultation with employees and the Union and that we seek an urgent meeting regarding this matter with the company (see attached letter from ASU to Auscript).

We are aware that Auscript is having video conference meetings with employees on the afternoon of the 15 January. Meanwhile, the ASU via its letter is seeking formal information on the office closures and an urgent briefing and meeting with the company to discuss this critical matter.

If the ASU is not satisfied with the quality and substance of this

information and consultation then we shall consider lodging a dispute with the Fair Work Commission. The ASU will keep you informed of any major developments.

More information

For more information, please get in touch with the relevant contact below.

If you’re not a member of the ASU, you can join online now at our secure form: <https://asujoin.asn.au/>

Branch	Contact	Mobile / Email
QLD Together	Peter Cattach	0409 064 310
	Megan Denny	0419 667 931
ASU NSW USU	Emily Callachor	0417 420 924 ecallachor@usu.org.au
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SA/NT	Scott Cowen	0413 444 685

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A•S•U

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Wednesday 15 January, 2020

Ms Angela Howard
Senior HR Business Partner
Auscript Australasia Pty Ltd
Level 22, 179 Turbot Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

By email: ahoward@auscript.com.au

Dear Ms Howard

Re: Closure of Auscript offices and staff redundancies

We have been informed by members today that Auscript has announced the closure, or at least partial closure, of the Sydney, Hobart and Adelaide offices and that many staff may be made redundant as a result of these closures. We are further informed that the Hobart office has already been closed today and staff sent home. We are in possession of a company document which announces these changes and that video conferences are being held with staff this afternoon in various locations (please see Attachment 1).

The ASU is very disappointed that Auscript has not informed us of these major workplace changes and that no consultation has occurred with the union as per the Auscript Australasia Enterprise Agreement 2010 'Agreement'.

For example, under clause 3.2 AUSCRIPT RESPONSIBILITIES, at 3.2.8, it says,

"To engage with the Union (or any other union or representative group) in accordance with the Act or any other industrial relations legislation which may apply from time to time".

We also have serious reservations that you have met your consultation obligations to the union and your employees under clause 3.3 EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION. And if it is correct that the Hobart office has already been shut down and employees have been sent home, then you may be in breach of the Notice Period, clause 9.1 of the Agreement.

What you have announced today is a "major change to the composition, operation or size of the workforce or to the skills required of employees" and this may result in the termination or redundancy of many employees.

The union is considering its legal options under the Agreement, including filing a dispute with the Fair Work Commission.

We seek an urgent briefing and meeting regarding these office closures. We need you to send us in writing your plans for the office closures and the employment impact on our members. Meanwhile, I can be contacted on my mobile 0418 513 843 for a briefing.

**Australian
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Union**

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Melbourne & Sydney**

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TW: @ASUnion

Furthermore, there is an opportunity for a face to face meeting regarding this critical matter. I shall be in Brisbane on another matter this Friday 17 January. While I have meetings in the morning, I do have some time in the early afternoon for a personal meeting before catching the plane back to Melbourne. I look forward to hearing back from you as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Rizzo". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M'.

Tel: 03 9342 1440
Mobile: 0418 513 843
Email: mrizzo@asu.asn.au

Michael Rizzo
National Industrial Officer

Encl.

c.c. Sharron Myers, General Manager – Operations smyers@auscript.com.au

Operations – It Matters

As you are aware, our business is operating in a time of changing client and business needs. This year, we will maintain our strong focus on improving our performance while also ensuring the future health of our business.

As part of this, we are also seeking to refine our operations to become more efficient. Historically, our operational model has been to set up offices in most of the States in which we operate. However, given that most of the work we do is remote - the location of our Court clients does not drive office locations and there is no requirement from our clients to have offices in all locations.

With this, we are proposing to centralise some of our workflows to better manage quality and the way we work given our contracts require us to deliver to quality and timeframe targets. This involves a proposal to close our office in Hobart, cease production tasks (audio transcription, annotation and document merging) in our Sydney office, and centralise the support of online production. We will retain Court Monitors locally.

Affected team members have been informed today and we will now consult with them on what this may mean for their employment, and how we may minimise the impact on them and support them through this process.

At a high level, it is proposed that the functions of audio transcription, annotation, document merging, quality and supervision of contractors will no longer be completed in Hobart, Sydney or Adelaide.

It is proposed that our Court Monitors will continue to support our clients in the same manner, on site at court or on location for our private clients.

These proposed changes seek to enhance our delivery performance and will not adversely impact the servicing of our Court clients in these locations.

We appreciate and understand that any type of workplace change can cause uncertainty amongst other teams as well. That's why we have scheduled in video conferences for offices later this afternoon, Wednesday 15 January, so you can ask any questions you may have.

Times and details are as follows:

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Times and details are as follows:

- Melbourne: 4.30pm local time
- EMP: 4.00pm local time
- Brisbane HQ: 4.30pm local time
- Perth: 3.00pm local time

Like many other businesses, in this ever-changing, demanding and competitive world, we are proposing to take proactive steps now to ensure we become the best we can be, to futureproof our business.

Embracing new ways of doing things is the norm for businesses who want to stay ahead - but we understand that new approaches, new people, new work and new technologies can at times be confronting and especially, challenging for those directly impacted.

I appreciate your understanding and support as we work together during this time.

Regards

Sharon Myers
General Manager - Operations