

Enhancing ethical awareness in the APS



Australian Government
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Commission

VODCAST 4: PASSION

Kelly Thompson – APS 6 Planning Section

I've been working at the Office of Planning and Construction for nearly two years now. The work I get to do is pretty interesting and you never know what's coming next. Recently, we were taken off line to do a special project, my work group and I, and I found that really interesting. I really like the variety that I get to do.

Suzanne Lee – EL2 Director, Planning Section

I really appreciate Kelly's enthusiasm. She's very passionate about things and when it's channelled into the right project it's great. Although, it needs to be managed sometimes. From experience I know that if she feels strongly about something she won't let it go.

Jenni Fortune - Local coordinator, Environment Now

I'm the local manager of a group called Environment Now. Basically we're a group all committed to the environment and preserving things. I've been managing it for about 10 years now. We are committed to saving public spaces for the future generations so that people can enjoy parks and playgrounds in 20 years from now and not have to walk around concrete buildings. As a group all our members are very active, we campaign regularly against things like urbanisation, preserving wildlife, trees. Basically our members are fantastic and keep their ears to the ground and any information that they can give us, that gives us a heads up, is very valuable.

Kelly

Part of our new project involves finding a site for a new commonwealth building so I am not going to be directly involved in the project but some of my colleagues have told me which of the sites that they are considering. One of the sites is parkland where I used to play as a kid and I've got fond memories of running around open spaces, climbing trees. Some of those trees must have been about 100 years old. It's just I've got some really good memories and all the local kids used to hang out there and I'm sure that that is still what they are still doing today. So it would be a real shame if they took that all away and put a building there instead. I would be pretty upset.

Suzanne

Kelly approached me and she had something on her mind. She wanted to discuss about one of the sites that was selected. I was a bit surprised because she's not in charge of the project, but she was concerned about one of the sites and she wanted to know if that could be excluded from the mix. Again, I was surprised. She said the site had some significant influence on the local community and if it was selected they would be upset and vocal about it. I tried to explain to her that the site fitted most of the criteria and unless there was some surprise uncovered it will be most likely be selected and again, I told her even if it is selected, only part of the land would be used and the rest of it will be as is. She seemed a little upset. I just put it down to her passionate nature. It's the way she is.

Jenni

What can I say about Kelly? She's great. She worked as part of our organisation for about four years now. She's highly motivated, enthusiastic and an excellent member to have on board. Her commitment is second to none. She gives up a lot of her time to run campaigns, voices her opinion at meetings. She's basically fantastic and I am so happy we've got her.

Suzanne

Today the Minister was ambushed at a press conference by a member of the public asking questions about the site. What worries me is that they were wearing an Environment Now tee shirt and you may know them now. They are environmental activists and I am pretty sure I have seen one of these badges on Kelly's bag. So I remembered the conversation I had with her the other day and I put the two and two together. I told her that if she continues to support Environment Now like she has been she might find herself in a lot of trouble because this has caused the Minister a lot of embarrassment and her loyalty to the agency will be questioned.

Kelly

I was so shocked by Suzanne's comments. She may as well have said that I leaked the information. How dare she question my principles like that? I never talk about my Environment Now membership at work and I wouldn't talk about work at Environment Now. Just because I've got an opinion and I am passionate she assumes that I leaked the information. Aren't I entitled to my opinions? Aren't I entitled to participate in activities outside of work? She can't rule my life like that.