A UNION has accused IBM of talking down the effect on staff numbers of its decision to shift Telstra work to India, saying the company was simply delaying layoffs by redeploying staff to jobs that eventually would be offshore.

Community and Public Sector Union officials are "still concerned" about the redeployment process, claiming IBM is not providing staff with training and support needed to find alternative work.

According to IBM, the layoffs may not be as severe as first thought. Initial estimates were that up to 450 positions would be affected.

An IBM spokeswoman said the company wanted to save as many jobs as possible, and was redeploying staff to other Telstra projects and business with other clients.

CPSU assistant secretary Larissa Andelman said 16 staff had been made redundant so far and within the next four weeks 55 staff would be affected when another parcel of work was moved offshore.

IBM had picked up extra work, but it would only delay the layoffs, she said.

"The time frame for layoffs has been extended because IBM Australia has got work from other companies," she said.

"That work is short-term. We are still concerned about the lack of investment by the company in training people and providing people with jobs outside IBM."

According to IBM sources, many workers have been transferred to other Telstra projects, including maintaining and developing the LinxOnline Order (LoLo) tool.

Work on LoLo, which provides an interface for Telstra wholesale customers to order services, would be shifted to India in November, sources said.

The LoLo project had become known as "The Titanic" because staff feared they would be laid off en masse when the work was offshored.

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