

Mail Officers \$2.50 an hour less than the 2021/22 Living Wage

PWUA stepping up its campaign for the Living Wage

NZ Post has plenty of money to spend on rebranding itself but said it couldn't afford to pay its employees the Living Wage, currently \$22.10. (See box opposite.)

The PWUA is campaigning to win a starting rate of the Living Wage for all NZ Post employees in the next round of pay negotiations.

The current Collective Agreement expires on 31 March 2022. Negotiations for a new Collective Agreement are expected to start in around eight months time.

In their first year at NZ Post DAs are paid \$1.14 an hour less than the 2021/22 Living Wage which will be \$22.75 from 1 September. The DAs' low pay rate *includes* allowances for working six days a week and for working outside in falling rain and snow.

Posties with many years experience and skill can still only reach a pay rate that is \$1.21 above the 2021/22 Living

Wage, but only because of built in allowances.

Mail officers in processing centres are even worse off. They will start at \$2.50 below the 2021/22 Living Wage. The top rate for Mail Officers is still 75 cents below the 2021/22 Living Wage.

Mail Officers only reach the Living Wage if they are working through the night.

Mail and parcel delivery was an essential service throughout the COVID-19 lockdown and NZ Post's employees worked long and hard to keep their fellow citizens supplied with essential items and information.

The PWUA says NZ Post should be paying all its employees at least the Living Wage so that they have enough income to live a decent life and are able to participate fully as citizens in their own country.

The Living Wage would benefit employees and their families but also the New Zealand economy.

The Living Wage

Over the last 30 years New Zealand has gone from one of the most equal countries in the so-called rich world to one of the most unequal countries.

Although the Minimum Wage (\$20.00) is compulsory, the Living Wage is voluntary and paid by employers who want to make sure that their employees get enough money for their families to live with dignity.

The Living Wage is an hourly wage a worker needs to pay for the necessities of life and to be able to participate as an active citizen in the community.

It reflects basic expenses such as food, transportation, housing and child care and is calculated independently each year by the New Zealand Family Centre Social Policy Unit.

The 2020/21 Living Wage is \$22.10 but will increase to \$22.75 on 1 September.

For more information:
www.livingwage.org.nz

OMS Direct Dispatch trial unsuccessful

NZ Post has been trialling a system in which Delivery Agents in some branches have been loading the mail in their OMS bins straight into the Paxster without checking that the sorting machine has sequenced the OMS mail correctly.

NZ Post has confirmed to the PWUA that the sole aim of OMS Direct Dispatch is to reduce delivery costs.

Five Auckland delivery branches were included in the trial. In four of the five branches DAs have refused to continue with the trials. Feedback to the PWUA from all of these branches has indicated that DAs are very concerned about the negative health and safety effects, both for NZ Post employees and also members of the public.

DAs report that the increased attention required to scan additional mail item sequences distracts them from scanning the footpath ahead between delivery points and could cause them to collide with pedestrians or cars.

The problem is exacerbated by the company requiring that DAs spend

more time out on delivery. DAs report that they are required to lean forward more frequently in the Paxster to search for mail items which causes back and shoulder pain over a 9.5 hour shift.

The DAs are also concerned about the negative impact on customer service. Machine missorts are not corrected at the branch before delivery, resulting in increased numbers of service failures.

Senior NZ Post management, including the CEO, have previously told the PWUA that safety is the company's top priority. They have also said that customer service is more important than cost savings.

However, despite these assurances, the company has claimed that OMS Direct Dispatch is a success that will lead to significant cost savings for the company.

DAs are encouraged to take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of the public, by refusing to engage in any work practice that they consider jeopardises health and safety.

Te Iho - future jobs

The PWUA has been pressing NZ Post to release details of the number and design of jobs the company is anticipating to have after its Te Iho transformation.

The PWUA expects the company to reveal its future work requirements promptly so that members can plan for their own futures.

At the PWUA National Delegates' Meeting in April the company said the details should be available by the end of May, but they are now saying it will probably be July.

Christchurch and Wellington will be the areas first affected, with Auckland changes planned for two years away.

PWUA delegate forums will be set up in each region to examine the company's plans and seek agreement on a just and fair transition for members into the future structure.

Eye protection for DAs who wear prescription glasses

It is a safety requirement that NZ Post must provide eye protection from UV radiation to DAs.

For DAs who must wear prescription spectacles to drive their Paxster NZ Post had not provided any UV eye protection.

The PWUA said the company should reimburse DAs for the cost of buying prescription safety glasses from an optometrist, in accordance with clause K43 of the Collective Agreement.

NZ Post said they wanted to conduct a trial to find the safest practicable solution, however they then refused to include prescription safety glasses in the trial.

Instead the company provided some DAs with a number of different "over-glasses" which sit on top of their standard prescription spectacles. The company concluded from the trial that any of the over-glasses were suitable to supply to DAs

However the PWUA noticed that some of the "over-glasses" supplied by NZ Post were not safety glasses as they did not meet the NZ-Australian Standard for safety glasses. They filtered UV

light, but in the event of an accident they could shatter and cause damage to the DA's eyes and face.

The company did not tell trial DAs which over-glasses met the safety standard and which didn't.

The PWUA is concerned that some DAs may be continuing to use over-glasses supplied by NZ Post that may cause them injury in the event of an accident. The PWUA has raised this matter urgently with the company but has received no response for many weeks.

The company still refuses to reimburse for what may be the safest option, prescription safety glasses, citing in one email their fears of the expense for the company.

The PWUA has consulted Specsavers and found that for \$299 a DA can get a pair of prescription safety glasses with 100% UV protection in a large range of attractive frames. This seems to the PWUA to be a small price to pay to protect employees' eyes.

The PWUA is continuing to pursue this safety matter with NZ Post.

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Volunteer Leave for NZ Post employees

NZ Post encourages employees to join community service activities with its Volunteer Leave policy.

Employees who wish to apply for one day's paid leave for a community service activity can ask their manager for a copy of the policy.

PWUA wants fair wages for workers overseas making NZ Post uniforms

The PWUA wants to know what are the "ethical working conditions" that NZ Post requires of factories making the company's uniforms overseas.

The PWUA wants any manufacturing to be done in countries where the Governments have, like New Zealand, ratified the Core Conventions of the International Labour Organisation.

Convention 87 provides for Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise (and join trade unions).

Convention 98 provides for the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining.

The PWUA wants to be sure that the overseas workers can form independ-

ent unions, and that they can freely negotiate a Collective Agreement.

After earlier uniforms were manufactured by Lane Walker Rudkin in Christchurch, the supply of the current red and yellow uniform was awarded to a New Zealand company which contracted the manufacturing to garment companies in Asia.

A concern for the wellbeing of the overseas workers led the PWUA to seek access to the "social audit" reports of the auditing companies whose representatives had visited the factories on behalf of the New Zealand supplier.

At that time NZ Post agreed to provide

the social audit reports to the union but only after the three PWUA representatives signed a confidentiality agreement about not publishing or using any of the information.

NZ Post is about to enter into a contract with a company for the supply of the new 'rebrand' uniforms. The PWUA has written to NZ Post for discussions before the contracts have been let for the overseas manufacture of uniforms.

NZ Post has replied to the PWUA asking for more information from the union about the proposal to ensure fair wages and working conditions for the overseas workers making uniforms for NZ Post.

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POSTAL WORKERS UNION OF AOTEAROA (NORTHERN)

6A Western Springs Road, Kingsland, Auckland, 1021

I hereby appoint the Postal Workers Union of Aotearoa incorporated to be my authorised representative under Sections 18 and 236 of the Employment Relations Act 2000. For the purpose of this authority any duly appointed representative of the PWUA is empowered to act on my behalf in any matters related to or arising out of the negotiation and application of any Employment Agreement or any other matter relating to my employment at my request. This authority shall continue in force until revoked by myself, giving two weeks notice.

Name (PLEASE PRINT)

Signed Date...../...../..... Appointment No.....

Employer Site.....

Department..... Position.....

Home Address.....

Suburb..... City..... Post code.....

Phone..... Email.....

Deduction Authority for Postal Workers Union of Aotearoa (Northern)

I authorise my employer to deduct:

\$5.95 per week when I am employed for 30 or more hours per week, or

\$2.95 per week when I am on-call, or employed for less than 30 hours per week from my pay and credit the Postal Workers Union of Aotearoa Northern District.

Please stop any other deductions from my pay to any other union.