

"A higher pass-on rate than the Woman's Weekly!" says Post boss

Redback up to issue 100

The strong influence of Redback among PWUA, EPMU and nonunion members alike drew a memorable comment from a Post manager a few years ago: "A higher pass-on rate than the Woman's Weekly!" he exclaimed.

The strong interest has continued throughout the life of Redback. This issue is the 100th of the current series of the PWUA newsletter.

In the early 1990s a number of postal workers had become dissatisfied with the lack of representation by the large Communications and Energy Workers Union (CEWU) and formed the Postal Workers Association (PWA) in Auckland and the Postal Workers Union (PWU) in Wellington.

The CEWA itself had been formed earlier by the amalgamation of the Post Office Union and the Electrical Workers Union.

The PWA and PWU amalgamated to become today's Postal Workers Union of Aotearoa in 1999.

The old Post Office Union's publi-

cation was the "Katipo".

As the organisers of the new union explained at the time the katipo spider is larger than the redback spider - but the redback has a bigger bite!

Redback has indeed had a bigger bite. Postal workers have often used information from Redback to assert their rights at work.

One example was the postie who had been repeatedly denied the mileage allowance payment back to her delivery branch on the days that she was entitled to it. Only when she stapled to her time docket a copy of a Redback issue explaining the correct payment of the mileage allowance did she regularly get the correct payments.

With information gathered from union members and the union advocate Graeme Clarke all 100 issues of Redback have been written and edited by PWUA members who are also themselves postal workers - a genuine grassroots union publication.

Some Redback "bites"!

- 2001: Stopping drug dogs sniffing the mail sorters.
- 2002: Backpay for mail sorters who were not paid for paid rest breaks.
- 2003: Support for postie refusing to deliver objectionable circulars.
- 2004: Posties defy management and refuse delivery in severe gale.
- 2005: Strong union members' support for wrongly suspended PWA leader.
- 2006: Mail trays under Bar Coding Machines to be raised to prevent back injuries.
- 2007: Financial benefits for managers for getting workers back to work on light duties.
- 2008: Post misleads mail sorters on sorting tests.
- 2009: PWUA successfully challenges Post trying to restrict union access to Mail Centre.
- 2010: Posties take a stand on intimidation over cut ups.
- 2011: Post fails to consult on BUIP.
- 2012: Mail Centre management don't understand work measurement.

Can the company take back money from you for overpayments of wages?

A number of cases of union members being overpaid have been raised with the PWUA.

Overpayments may occur that are not covered by the Wages Protection Act, for example payment at the wrong hourly rate.

If you are aware of such an overpayment then the law would require it be paid back except that you would have total control over the amount to be repaid each week.

However if you did not notice that you had been paid the wrong hourly rate, you had spent the money and you can't afford to pay it back, then you can decline to repay the money.

In such cases the employer can take you to the District Court to seek recovery. Legal precedent - previous cases heard by the Courts - could see the debt quashed by the Court and no

repayment required to be made.

If an employee has been paid for days they were absent and not entitled to annual leave or other paid leave the Wages Protection Act allows the employer to make deductions to recover the money.

However section 6 of the Wages Protection Act has a number of qualifications, including that the employer must make the recovery within two months.

The employee must be sent a letter from pay site showing the overpaid net amount owing (without tax included).

The employee has the right to know what the overpayment is for so can ask for an explanation if this is not provided in the letter from Post.

The notice of overpayment must normally be received by the employee no later than the next pay day.

Trial of sunglasses to fit over spectacles

Over the next months or so ten posties will be trialing sunglasses designed to fit over prescription glasses.

The PWUA had raised with the company the problem for posties who have prescription glasses and who are then not able to wear Post supplied wrap-around sunglasses.

Posties who wear only transition lenses for sun protection are not protected from glare coming through the sides of spectacles.

The trial sunglasses which fit completely over spectacles have small side shades and are very lightweight.

The sunglasses are being trialed in a number of locations and situations - working in the CBD, walking, cycling, men, women, wind and heat.

Union feedback has also been sought by Post.

A future issue of Redback will report on the result of the trial.

Post will reimburse for supplementary vehicle number plates

Posties on C motor rounds whose vehicle number plate is obscured by their Post bike rack or postie bike can be provided with supplementary number plates at Post's expense.

During a PWUA / NZ Post national meeting last year the company agreed to reimburse the \$19.28 cost of supplementary number plates.

However posties will have to pay for their own supplementary plates if:

- The number plate is not obscured.
- If a car other than the postie's usual private car is used for C motor rounds.

NZ Post says posties can purchase the plates and plate holder (and should keep a copy of the receipt until the money is reimbursed).

To obtain supplementary plates the postie needs to be the registered owner of the vehicle and have a New Zealand driver's licence or other suitable ID.

Payment can be made via credit card or cheque allowing 7 to 10 days for delivery.

To order supplementary plates contact LicenSys on 0800 736 253, fax 09 276 9829 or visit their website www.licensys.com.

PPM posties "waiving" mail "wavering"?

Posties working under the Postie Pay Model can either pick up extra work or decline (or "waive") some work as they adjust their hours in any one week to suit their personal circumstances.

However there has been some confusion created when posties who, when choosing not to do some particular work, are being asked if they are "wavering". They are mistakenly being asked if they are being indecisive or even being not committed to their work.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary includes the following definitions:

waive: tacitly or implicitly relinquish or forego (opportunity).

waver: be irresolute or undecided between different courses or opinions, falter, become unsteady.

Posties who decline extra work will be exercising their right to **waive** mail.

Posties who are free to choose not to do some work on a particular day will not be **wavering**, they will be **waiving** the extra work.

Posties need not feel they are uncommitted to their job when they **waive** mail.

The question should be whether the postie is **waiving** (declining) and not whether the postie is **wavering** (being uncommitted or indecisive).

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CEA settled for PWUA members at Post subsidiary Datam

Negotiations for the CEA for Post subsidiary Datam were concluded late last year. Benefits bargained for and achieved by the PWUA include:

- PWUA members at Highbrook site in Auckland are now covered by the Agreement.
- 2% pay increase backdated to March 2012.
- A further 2% increase in March 2013.
- Meal allowance increased from \$10.40 to \$13.84.
- 50 cent an hour increase for both Tier 3 certified trainers and Tier 3.1 Job Manager (2) roles.
- PWUA members in the mailroom now have their skills and experience recognised under "Project Mana", including back pay.
- \$200 lump sum to PWUA members on the basis that the PWUA has always been prepared to bargain jointly with all unions at Datam as this is in the best interests of all parties.

Post wants to appeal Relevant Daily Pay decision

The PWUA was successful in its case at the Court of Appeal on Relevant Daily Pay, but Post is now 'seeking the leave' of the Supreme Court to appeal the Court of Appeal's decision.

The PWUA now has three weeks to file its counter statement as to why the leave should not be given for an appeal by Post.

Relevant Daily Pay is the pay an employee would have received if they had worked on a public holiday, a sick day, a bereavement day or an alternative holiday. (Redback October 2012).

Post has not been using the correct formula to calculate employees' Relevant Daily Pay, and overtime worked has not been included in the calculations for their Relevant Daily Pay.

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POSTAL WORKERS UNION OF AOTEAROA (NORTHERN)

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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

Branch

Home Address

Phone

**Deduction Authority for
Postal Workers Union of Aotearoa (Northern)**

I authorise my employer to deduct:

\$4.95 per week when I am employed for 30 or more hours per week, or

\$2.50 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.