

"A 12 month term is a sensible period of time given the financial uncertainty with both PSG but also New Zealand's economy."

**--- Peter Fenton, General Manager,
Postal Services Group NZ Post, May 2008**

89% vote to reject 33-month CEA: Mediation 5 August

Widespread opposition to the low wage increases and 33-month term of the proposed new Collective Employment Agreement has been reflected in an overwhelming "no" ratification vote by PWUA members.

In a series of secret ballots at meetings held on worksites with PWUA members, 89% have voted to reject Post's latest offer.

The Bargaining Process Agreement for this year's CEA negotiations requires the PWUA and Post to seek mediation to try to reach a settlement within two weeks of any rejection of Post's offer.

Post has now agreed to mediation with the PWUA negotiating team in

in Wellington on Tuesday 5 August.

Some of the matters the PWUA intends to raise in mediation include:

- The length of the term.
- The potential for wages to fall behind prices - inflation has already swallowed up the first 4% rise.
- A time-line for the Working Party on flexible rosters and rewards.
- An improved formula for the payment of cut-ups.

Even Postal Services Group General Manager Peter Fenton had initially preferred a 12 month term.

The PWUA has since learned that the proposal for the 33-month term came, not from the company, but from the EPMU negotiating team.

"Cut-ups" and flexible rosters

The need to improve the formula for posties to qualify for cut-up payments will be raised by the PWUA in mediation on 5 August. Only a small percentage of cut-ups performed since 1 July have qualified for the cut-up payment of a meal allowance.

The current CEA proposal is for a Working Party to meet after the end of September to review the first three months of cut-ups and to determine what adjustments may be required.

The PWUA and the company will then work on developing a flexible roster and reward (FRR) system in delivery for those branches which choose to opt into the FRR.

FRR will guarantee the minimum

weekly wage for a postie provided for by the CEA. However when mail volumes are heavy, posties will be paid for their extra effort as they were in the recent popular "Fair(er) Days Pay" pilots.

FRR will also provide possibilities for greater flexibility of working hours.

Some members expressed disappointment that there was no clear timetable for getting FRR to a pilot stage for those branches who may wish to opt into FRR.

The union will raise in mediation the need for a clear FRR timetable for the Working Party - and to keep this timetable as short as possible - and much shorter than 33 months.

Food prices rise 8.2pc

Family
staples
drive
inflation



A front page story in the Dominion Post earlier this month may help to explain why Post's latest wage offer has been rejected by PWUA members.

Statistics New Zealand's Food Price Index shows a rise of 8.2% for the year July 2007 to June 2008.

Along with fuel going up 26% in the past year, these increases have a bigger impact on workers on low wages.

Inflation for the year July 2007 to June 2008 has already reached 4%. The Wespac Bank is predicting that inflation will reach 5.5% later this year.

The Postal Workers Union of Aotearoa believes the scale of pay rises in the company's offer may not be enough to cover rising prices during the term of the Agreement.

Postie regrading

The PWUA petition to the GM of Human Resources to seek a review of the NZ Post Job Evaluation System committee's decision not to regrade posties to Grade 3 will be sent to the company in early August.

Lost Time Injuries: Just what the doctor ordered!

Some Post employees continue to be pressured to return to work early after suffering work-related injuries.

PWUA members do not have to attend a Post nominated or Care Advantage doctor in the first instance - they can go to their own doctor.

Workers may suffer aggravations to their original injuries which may require further time off, or a longer period on light duties, when they have been recalled to work early - even when their doctor had specified a period of time off work.

Post defines a Lost Time Injury (LTI) as a work-related injury that results in the employee being absent for the whole of their next work shift.

The PWUA has told the company that Post's narrow focus on reducing Lost Time Injuries is contributing to the problem.

The PWUA believes a more accurate measure of workplace

safety is not just the complete shift lost from work, (LTI), but also the time at work on "light duties" when an employee is not fit for normal duties. This combined measure of time off work, and time on light duties, would reduce the pressure on injured workers to be present every day at the workplace.

If a doctor specifies a period of time off work, or at work on specified light duties, it is important that employees insist that the company complies with the doctor's orders.

Some Post employees have expressed concern that the company may link workplace injuries to the BUIP.

The PWUA has argued that workplace injuries should not be linked to the BUIP - injured workers could feel pressure not to report work-related injuries because it would have an adverse effect on the bonuses of their work colleagues.

More postie uniforms to be made in China?

As Post prepares to make a new selection of uniform suppliers, the PWUA will again be taking up with the company the manufacture of postie uniforms in China.

A group of Wellington posties had attended the movie China Blue in late 2006 about 14 year-olds making jeans in a garment factory in China. Among other violations of their rights, workers had their wages withheld for three months to prevent them leaving the job.

The PWUA has been trying to get guarantees from NZ Post that its Social Responsibility Code for the

protection of the rights of workers in China is being complied with.

Factories in China are sub-contracted by the New Zealand company which supplies postie uniforms to NZ Post.

Post has not agreed to a PWUA claim in the CEA negotiations for an urgent audit of the Social Responsibility Code for the overseas sourcing of uniforms.

The PWUA continues to campaign on the rights of workers making postie uniforms in China - their wages and conditions of work, and their right to freely organise a union.

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The next steps for CEA:

25 July: Post notified of "no" vote on PWUA Collective Employment Agreement.

A two-week period begins for the PWUA to seek an improved offer from Post in mediation.

5 August: Date agreed by Post and PWUA to meet in mediation in Wellington.

Meeting of PWUA negotiating team in Wellington.

Emails and text messages about progress in mediation sent to all PWUA delegates and branch contacts.

6 August: If the Terms of Settlement are amended in mediation a new round of ratification meetings will take place.

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POSTAL WORKERS UNION OF AOTEAROA (NORTHERN)

14 Ahirin Ave, Avondale, Auckland 0600

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

Home Phone

Deduction Authority for
 Postal Workers Union of Aotearoa (Northern)

I authorise my employer to deduct
 \$4.00 per week when I am employed for 30 or more
 hours per week, or

\$2.00 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.