

BUIP: "Posties telling the company how they feel!"

Linking 'bonus' to injuries meeting strong opposition

Post's linking of Lost Time Injuries to the Delivery Business Unit Incentive Plan has been meeting with strong opposition from union members throughout the country.

The PWUA has expressed to the company the union's concern about the so-called "creative tension" of peer pressure which could discourage the reporting of work-related injuries, or to report them as non-work related.

One of the PWUA delegates had examples of LTIs linked to bonuses at a timber company. Her brother sustained a head injury and was pressured not to take time off. Another worker with a badly injured thumb took annual leave. Both workers felt pressured to protect the bonuses of their work colleagues.

While the PWUA understands that "Take 5s" are to reward posties for becoming more aware of health and safety, punishing all posties for what may be random unavoidable injuries is the cause of much objection.

The PWUA believes that by linking Lost Time Injuries to the BUIP, the company will be placing some of its employees in a very unfair

situation. The reporting of their particular injuries could have a negative impact on the potential BUIP payments to other workers. The PWUA believes the situation thus created may constitute a breach of Clause A11 of the CEA which states:

"[NZ Post is] committed to:

• providing safe and healthy workplaces

• treating people fairly"

The PWUA has already passed on to Post the concerns of many delegates and union members including:

- Individual employees have no direct influence over most LTIs.
- A Lost Time Injury injury to a postie hundreds of kilometres away could see every postie in the country lose \$20 of their bonus that week - in effect a \$20 fine.

A petition is being circulated with this issue of Redback: That if the company and PWUA are not able to agree to an alternative measure to LTIs, then the BUIP components for Delivery should be:

- \$500 for two "Take 5s" a month
- \$500 at Christmas.

When work is a pain in the neck

Mail sorters at the new Highbrook Mail Centre in Auckland have reported high rates of back, neck, shoulder, arm and wrist pain to the PWUA. Pain resulting from repetitive movements and heavy lifting can lead to Occupational Overuse Syndrome (OOS).

Muscular pain and OOS can be prevented and treated with massage, frequent breaks and rotating tasks (www.osh.dol.govt).

A number of work places, including Vodafone and Baycorp, provide therapeutic massage to staff and have reduced strains and

injuries as a result. A weekly 10 to 15 minute massage is provided for anyone who wants the service.

As the pain reported by the mail sorters is work-related, NZ Post will be invited to provide a massage service and better job design and rotation to eliminate the hazards.

"Future Post" appears to have brought an intensification of work in the Mail Centres. The PWUA's concern about the potential for a subsequent increase in the number of work-related injuries will be raised with Post during the consultation process for Mail Centres' BUIP.

Still much for PWUA to do after CEA ratification

The 58% vote in favour of ratification of the new Collective Employment Agreement revealed a very strong vote for industrial action — 42%.

Of concern to many members was the unpopular 33-month term and the wage movements which are not guaranteed to keep up with cost of living increases.

If the 1 July 2008 4% wage increase and 1 April 2.5% wage increase do not keep pace with the cost of living, the PWUA will be seeking a meeting with the company to consider a remedy for any shortfall.

At the conclusion of the CEA mediation the company advocate himself identified Post's obligation under the CEA to be fair to employees in the context of the discussion about the wage rises possibly not keeping up with price increases. If necessary the PWUA intends to pursue the issue with the company as the CEA provides.

Following the ratification of the new CEA the PWUA is immediately following up on issues of concern to union members:

- The company's proposal to link Lost Time Injuries to the BUIP in Delivery.
- Review of the application for Grade 3 for posties.
- Back pay for Relevant Daily Pay. (See Redback issue 69).

Although the base of the PWUA was initially among posties, an increasing number of Mail Centre workers are joining the PWUA. As a result the activities of the PWUA will be further strengthened among Mail Centres and Box Lobby workers.

The recruitment of many new members by delegates and work colleagues themselves is seen by the PWUA as a significant indicator of a lively, active, healthy, growing and increasingly strong union.

Know your CEA!

Medical certificates required at 3 days?

Many Post employees believe incorrectly that it is an automatic requirement for them to provide a medical certificate on the third consecutive day of sickness.

The PWUA Collective Employment Agreement does make provision for the company to require a medical certificate for a sickness of three or more calendar days duration.

Clause E7 (page 35) of the PWUA CEA states:

"Employees must obtain a medical certificate if:

- their manager asks them ... for a period of 3 or more consecutive days ..."

However the CEA also provides in section A11 (page 15) that Post is committed to "treating people fairly".

Post has assured the PWUA that it is not current practice to require a medical certificate on every occasion of 3 consecutive days of sickness.

Post has also confirmed the PWUA's view that any request for a medical certificate should be fair and reasonable.

NOTE: This new column "Know your CEA" will appear regularly in Redback. At this year's CEA negotiations the PWUA was successful in getting the company to agree to provide one copy of the Collective Employment Agreement for each PWUA member.

Request for review of Grade 3 for posties

Over 800 posties signed a petition seeking a review of the Job Evaluation System committee's decision to keep posties as Grade 2 employees. (See Redback May 2008.)

In April this year, the JES committee increased the score of the postie job by one step, from 260 points to 270 out of a possible score of 500, but fell short of recording a score of 280 or more which would have taken posties to Grade 3 (a wage increase of about 13%).

The reasons the PWUA disagree with the JES committee's decision and seek the review include:

- Only one postie was among the eight members on the JES committee which considered the postie regrading.
- There were four "dissenting views" of JES committee members in regard to Factor 1 "Knowledge and understanding" and Factor 3 "Interpersonal and communication skills". The PWUA is seeking details of these.
- A Post Mail Centre Leader has recently given sworn evidence emphasising the increased duties and responsibilities Post has come to expect of its posties in recent years.

Although the JES decision was released in April, the PWUA withheld the petition while a claim to regrade posties was argued at this year's CEA negotiations. The claim was not successful, so the petition has now been sent to the GM Human Resources as provided by the JES review process.

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PWUA to propose to Government some non-delivery Saturdays

The PWUA will be seeking a meeting with the Government after the general election to make changes to the NZ Post Memorandum of Understanding to allow initially up to six Saturdays to be permanently non-delivery days:

- Easter Saturday
- Queens Birthday Saturday
- Labour Weekend Saturday
- Provincial Anniversary Saturday
- Depending on when they fall each year, the PWUA will also be seeking Saturdays at Christmas and New Year to be non-delivery days.

Many residents do not expect to have their mail delivered on public holiday Saturdays.

This Christmas residents who are away for one of the long weekends may be faced with a \$5 hold charge for just one day - Saturday 27 December or Saturday 3 January.

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POSTAL WORKERS UNION OF AOTEAROA (NORTHERN)

14 Ahiriri 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.