

Collective Employment Agreement negotiations

Company offers only 3.75% for one year

A wage offer from Post of 3.75% for a one year term was made at the conclusion of the first three-day negotiating session last week.

This low wage offer from the company comes after Post has been making apparently contradictory statements about the health of the company's business.

Postal Services General Manager Peter Fenton has said that revenue is down, profits are down and costs have increased, and these

pressures have been factored into its wage offer.

However CEO John Allen in his 25 March "Update" says "Across the Group, we've seen solid performance ... with positive performances by Datamail Group, Postal Services and Express Couriers".

The PWUA does not expect its members would accept the 3.75%.

Post and the PWUA will meet for a further two days of negotiations on 4 and 5 June in Wellington.

Post challenged on five-day delivery

Although the five-day week claim remains on the negotiating table, the company has completely reversed its position on five-day delivery. Peter Fenton's 2000 statement that five-day delivery was inevitable no longer stands.

In the face of increasing competition, Post now wants to continue six-day delivery. (Meanwhile the private mail company DX is advertising for posties to work five days Monday to Friday.)

However the Minimum Wage Act

requires an employer to "endeavour" to roster full-time employees over five days of the week. In past negotiations Post has not complied with this provision of the law and had not made any serious attempts to discuss the five-day claim.

The PWUA has challenged the company to meet its legal obligations in these negotiations.

The PWUA is also exploring the possibility of holiday weekend Saturdays as non-work days for posties.

C motor allowance will be increased

The C motor allowance for employees required to use their cars will increase from 1 July. The rate is expected to move from 62 cents per kilometre to over 70 cpk.

Agreement was reached during last week's negotiations that the C motor rate paid by Post would be a "median rate" published annually by the Automobile Association.

The median rate is the middle rate of three separate tables of calculations of engine sizes and distances. The rates are published by the AA in June each year.

Over the last 18 months the rate has ranged between 70.3 and 72.9

cents an hour.

It is expected that the recent increased fuel costs will be reflected in this year's AA rate.

Following the CEA negotiations in 2006, the PWUA and Post had made a joint approach to the Inland Revenue Department over the issue of non taxable allowances. The IRD has agreed that the "AA published rate" used as the C motor allowance would not attract Fringe Benefit Tax.

In the meantime the PWUA is waiting to study a Court decision which denies posties an entitlement to be paid C motor to return to their branches.

Union co-operation to strengthen bargaining

The PWUA has met a second time with the EPMU in efforts to strengthen the bargaining position of both unions' members in the negotiations for new Collective Employment Agreements (CEA) at Post.

Last week PWUA representatives Graeme Clarke and John Maynard met with Anna Kenny, Andrew Little and Mark James from the EPMU.

The PWUA gave the EPMU a detailed report on the present state of the PWUA claims and also the company's claims in the current CEA negotiations. The PWUA proposed mutual support for the many common claims:

- A bigger wage increase.
- Grade 3 regrading for posties.
- Regrading of Mail Officers.
- An extra week of annual leave.
- Increased sick leave.
- More Saturdays off for posties.
- Improvement in the BUIP.
- Training allowance.

The PWUA explained the importance of the PWUA claim for paid cut-ups for posties doing cut-ups within rostered hours.

The PWUA also discussed with the EPMU the results of the Fair Days Pay pilot and explained the PWUA's rationale for taking part in the trial and the possible benefits for the CEA.

The PWUA stated the importance of inter-union co-operation at all levels of both unions - members, delegates, office holders, organisers and advocates.

Any lack of co-operation between the two unions would provide Post with a distinct advantage in the bargaining process.

The PWUA is expecting a report from Anna Kenny during the EMPU's next bargaining round this week, and before the EPMU reaches a final settlement with the company.

Holiday pay for on calls needs correcting

The PWUA has drawn the company's attention to an error in a clause in the Collective Employment Agreement which adversely affects holiday pay calculations for on call workers. Clause M14 page 80, does not, in fact, meet the requirements of the Holidays Act.

Post has been calculating annual leave pay for on calls based on their pay in the 12 months of the year in which the on calls earned their leave entitlement.

However a change in the Holidays Act on 1 April 2004 now requires that holiday pay must be based on earnings immediately before the on calls actually take their leave.

For example on calls may have had an annual pay rise or a service step increase during the year after they earned their leave, and before they actually took their leave, and

would have missed out on the higher pay rate being used in their leave calculation.

The Holidays Act says that holiday pay must be calculated on:

- The average of the previous four weeks earnings immediately before the holiday is taken (less irregular overtime), or
- The average of the 12 months earnings immediately before the holiday is taken, whichever is the greater.

On calls who have worked regularly in the four weeks immediately before taking their leave would have much higher holiday pay than if the calculation was based on irregular work periods earlier in their employment.

On calls who believe they may be entitled to holiday backpay can make a request to their manager or contact their PWUA delegate.

PWUA CEA for new union members

Post has agreed that employees who join the PWUA can immediately come under the coverage of the PWUA Collective Employment Agreement (the "White Book").

This decision follows examples where Mail Centre workers who had just passed their Mail Officers test and who were new PWUA members wanted to gain the higher pay rate in the PWUA CEA. However the new PWUA members were denied the backpay which was paid out to existing PWUA members.

Under the Employment Relations Act, for the first 30 days of their employment all new employees for

any employer are required to be offered an Individual Employment Agreement based on the CEA of the largest union.

At any time within the first 30 days, or later, new employees can join any union. However Post would only allow workers to change to the CEA of the PWUA at the next negotiations of a new CEA.

Post's agreement will now allow new workers who freely choose to join the PWUA to immediately be covered by the PWUA CEA and not remain on an Individual Employment Agreement based on the EPMU's CEA.

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Overwhelming response to Grade 3 postie petition

Completed petition forms calling for a review of postie regrading have been flooding in to the PWUA union office. Although the Job Evaluation System's committee moved the postie job up 10 points, a further 10 points is needed to move the postie job up to Grade 3 - a 13% increase in pay. (See Redback issue 66).

There is only one postie on the JES committee. There was one dissenting view recorded for the decision not to increase the points for the "knowledge and understanding" factor.

Three dissenting views were recorded for the decision not to increase the points for the "interpersonal and communication skills" factor.

The petition calls for the General Manager Human Resources to review the JES committee's decision not to move posties up to Grade 3.

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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.