

Delivery on Paxsters takes longer than NZ Post thinks it should

Work measurement for Paxsters is flawed

"Why does it take much longer to deliver mail on a Paxster than NZ Post thinks it should?" This is the question being asked by many Delivery Agents.

The PWUA believes the problem lies with the Work Measurement times used by NZ Post. The times for Paxster delivery were calculated from NZ Post studies of four posties driving Paxsters in New Plymouth for 3 to 4 hours a day between January and April 2016.

The PWUA has identified reasons why these studies were flawed and likely to result in incorrect time estimates including:

- Studies need to be made of a large number of workers with a variety of different characteristics - age, sex, size, experience
- Studies need to involve a large range of terrain, not just one city
- Studies need to include a range of different footpath conditions, including where pedestrian traffic makes footpath travel slow or impractical
- Studies need to also be conducted in winter, not just summer
- Studies need to be performed over 9 hours of delivery, not just 3 hour or 4 hours when the workers are still fresh

An examination of the calculated time used by NZ Post to "size" the workload and determine the number of DAs needed in a branch reveals some startling results.

For instance a standard letter is calculated as taking 0.6566 second (in addition to the delivery point time) to remove from the letter bundle and place in the letterbox, whereas a circular is calculated as taking 0.0168 second. That is 39 times less time to deliver a circular than a letter, according to NZ Post.

The delivery point times are also puzzling. A cluster of 8 letterboxes that can be reached from the Paxster receives a total calculated delivery point time of 26.088 seconds, whereas a similar cluster of 8 letterboxes that are 4 metres away from the Paxster (requiring a dismount) receives only 12.084 seconds.

In July 2016 the PWUA wrote to NZ Post outlining its concerns over the inadequate work measurement studies.

The Union never received a reply.

The PWUA understands that NZ Post had now made most of its work measurement staff redundant, so further studies of true Paxster delivery times are unlikely to be undertaken.

If managers tell DAs that they should be working faster and delivering more mail each day, the DAs can ask their managers to try to justify the calculated times they are using.

DAs are paid by time, not by the company's unscientific and incomplete 'calculated' times.

PWUA stops audio recording on Paxsters

Christchurch Delivery Agents were outraged to discover that, without their knowledge, audio recordings were being made while they were driving Paxsters on their delivery rounds. They were particularly upset that their conversations were being secretly down-loaded and listened to.

When the PWUA strongly objected to NZ Post about the recordings the company claimed that the PWUA appeared to have no legal basis for objecting to the audio recording of Paxster

drivers and members of the public.

It was only after the PWUA raised the issue in the news media as a matter of public interest that the company quickly ordered the audio recordings be switched off.

It became clear to the PWUA that statements made by the company were not true - that audio recordings were to be used solely for the health, safety and security of DAs.

Two complaints have been lodged with the Privacy Commission.

"Overtime for Delivery Agents is not compulsory"

"Delivery agents are entitled to elect not to work overtime, despite the Collective Agreement providing for this" states the PWUA's lawyer in a letter to NZ Post earlier this month.

"The Delivery Agents have this right as a result of the provisions of Section 67E" (of the Employment relations Act).

Section 67E says: "*An employee is entitled to refuse to perform work in addition to any guaranteed hours specified in the employee's employment agreement if the agreement does not contain an availability provision that provides for the payment of reasonable compensation to the employee for making himself or herself available to perform work under the availability provision.*"

The lawyer has also advised the company that it cannot require DAs to work longer hours on some days to make up for when they had less work than their rostered hours on other days: "Delivery Agents are entitled to be paid for all of the hours they are rostered. Hours worked outside their rostered hours are overtime hours, and should be paid accordingly."

The lawyer's letter raised a dispute with NZ Post over the operation of the Collective Agreement, and invited the company to attend mediation.

NZ Post replied saying it disagreed with the Union's arguments, but it made no mention of Section 67E of the Act or the right of DAs to refuse to work overtime.

While the dispute is being progressed the PWUA's legal advice is that a DA who acts genuinely believing they are entitled to decline overtime would be protected from any allegation of misconduct.

Air sampling for "particulates" at Courier Post

A fine black grime on parcels arriving in postie branches has led the PWUA to ask for air sampling for diesel "particulates" at a Courier Post depot. (Particulates are the fine dust-like particles able to enter deep into the lungs which are present in diesel exhaust.)

The PWUA is concerned that the black grime is not only in the perspiration and nostrils of some inside staff, but also in their lungs.

Although the company tests for carbon monoxide gas, it appears there had been no previous sampling for the presence of the carcinogens in the fine particles in diesel exhaust.

Following the PWUA's initial request, NZ Post organised swab sampling of product and surfaces. The results showed that although there did not

appear to be any particulates revealed by the swab tests the company decided to ask for further analysis at an analytical lab or a lab with an electron microscope.

At the Seaview Courier Post depot in Lower Hutt the diesel trucks have their motors turned off after they have entered the building. However as the trucks leave again they need to idle their motors while waiting for the exit door to open to its full height.

The Union wants to see the testing done at a time when a number of diesel trucks are entering and leaving in a close time frame.

The PWUA has asked to be present during the air sampling for diesel exhaust particulates, and to be provided with a copy of the testing report.

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Bargaining ready to begin at DX Mail

The PWUA and DX Mail management continue to make steady progress toward the negotiation of a Collective Employment Agreement for posties, mail sorters and administration staff.

The Bargaining Process Arrangement which sets out the process and rules of the negotiations has now been agreed between the PWUA and DX Mail.

The Union and the company are now arranging the process of exchanging each other's claims. These will form the basis of the negotiations for the Collective Employment Agreement for the PWUA members at DX Mail.

The PWUA will be represented at the negotiations by union officials and a number of DX Mail union members.

PWUA asks Converga to change its 'consultations'

Converga management recently sought feedback from its staff about reducing the total number of work hours at one of its Wellington worksites.

Converga had given the workers a document setting out the names and proposed new hours of work. Any alternative proposals from the staff meant that those who had had their

hours reduced were unstandably reluctant to disadvantage other staff who were unaffected by the changes.

Not surprisingly Converga received no alternative allocation of the loss of hours in the feedback form its staff.

Converga did not give an assurance that it would follow a fairer process in any future restructuring proposals.

Bullying included two threats to kill

A Hamilton postie was expected to continue working with her supervisor after the supervisor had threatened to kill her - even though NZ Post accepted that the threat to kill had actually happened.

The postie had been harassed and terrorised for 8 months by a supervisor - including two threats on her life.

The postie had approached the management several times throughout the year but the bullying continued.

The postie applied for and has now been granted redundancy. The PWUA is supporting the postie in taking a personal grievance against NZ Post for what the union believes was a serious mishandling of her case.

The postie has expressed "much appreciation" for the PWUA's support and said she felt very empowered after coming forward and exposing the bullying culture at the Hamilton branch.

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POSTAL WORKERS UNION OF AOTEAROA (NORTHERN)
PO Box 95211 Swanson Auckland 0653

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:

- \$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.