

Wins achieved by union members but claimed by NZ Post

Important gains in wages and conditions made by union members at NZ Post have been claimed by senior company management as their ideas.

During last year's wage negotiations the unions put forward wage claims from members that would have taken everyone above the Living Wage rate. (At the time the Living Wage was \$23.65 and the Government's Minimum Wage was \$20.20).

NZ Post came to the negotiations with no immediate offer of a wage rise.

After hearing the unions' arguments the company came back with a wage offer which was immediately rejected by the unions.

It wasn't until the second week of the bargaining, after the unions' evidence and arguments had been presented

repeatedly and forcefully that NZ Post agreed to raise everyone above the Living Wage.

However in a company communication directly to its employees shortly afterwards NZ Post management claimed that they were *"proud that all NZ Post employees will now be paid above the level of the 2022 NZ Living Wage. This has been an objective of the Board and senior management for some time ..."*

In fact the evidence is that the company resisted these wage rises for as long as they could.

If it was not for union members empowering their delegates and officials to negotiate on their behalf it is likely that many NZ Post employees would still be struggling on poverty wages.

Skin cancer screening checks came from the PWUA

In the latest incident NZ Post has told staff that the skin cancer screening checks for employees who work outdoors was a company initiative.

In fact the skin checks came from a claim from PWUA members, supported by the E tū union, that led to skin cancer screening checks becoming a contractual right for union members (clause O.24 of the PWUA Collective Agreement).

NZ Post came to the negotiations last year with no such claim.

In the past skin cancer screening

had been haphazard and not necessarily undertaken by suitably qualified health professionals.

By having this check included as a contractual term the PWUA can enforce NZ Post's compliance with this important health check for outdoor workers.

NZ Post has since agreed to the PWUA request that SDCs and SDSs who have previously worked as posties or whose current duties require them to work outside to also be covered by the free skin checks.

Eligible employees are entitled to a free skin check once a year.

Menstrual Leave - company guidelines to managers contrive to deny access

NZ Post is insisting that employees seeking menstrual leave must discuss their health needs with their leader, even if he is a male.

The PWUA has cited international evidence showing that such a requirement prevents many female employees from applying.

In justification, the company has said that *"leaders need to have full oversight of absenteeism and the management of workflow which they can't do if they delegate some of their authority to*

approve leave to ... anyone else."

NZ Post appears to be saying that menstrual leave may be denied if there are insufficient numbers of staff.

The PWUA has told the company *"The proposed [management] guidelines ... do not meet the intent of the contractual provisions which is to acknowledge and mitigate a unique disadvantage that women face in their employment."*

NZ Post has provided no response to these points to the PWUA.

NZ Living Wage rises to \$26.00 an hour

On 1 September 2023 the Living Wage will rise to \$26.00 an hour. However NZ Post employees will only receive a 3% pay rise on 1 July this year which means that grade 2 employees and posties in their first year of employment will fall below the Living Wage on 1 September.

The PWUA is interested to see if the Board and senior management will lift the wages on 1 September to maintain the Living Wage as they claimed to have achieved last year.

The Collective Agreement contains a Variation of Agreement clause which would allow the company and affected employees to agree to maintain the Living Wage by lifting all steps of Grade 2 and the bottom step of posties to \$26.00 an hour from 1 September this year.

Lack of union member benefit

The lack of a union member benefit paid by NZ Post at last year's Collective Agreement settlement signalled a shift in approach to the unions by senior management. It appears to the PWUA that this shift, along with NZ Post claiming achievements actually won by the union, may be a part of a broad strategy to discourage NZ Post employees from becoming union members.

If that is the case then union membership, which enables workers to collaborate to protect and improve their pay and working conditions, may now have become more important than ever.

Next round of grocery vouchers coming soon

The next round of grocery vouchers are due to be sent out in June.

The vouchers are funded from \$2.00 per member per week paid to the PWUA by NZ Post as agreed at the Collective Agreement negotiations last year.

After the Union has paid GST the June vouchers are expected to be \$40 for each qualifying PWUA member.

PWUA recommends all Health and Safety reps be given NZ Post's SWAG document

The PWUA recommends that all Health and Safety reps are given a copy of NZ Post's 19 September 2022 Health and Safety document "Worker Engagement, Participation and Representation" by their local management.

The PWUA has advised the company of the union's support of the structures and processes set out in the document.

However the Union has also advised the company that the Health and Safety reps who are members of the Safety and Wellbeing Action Group (SWAG) reps must be released from their work to be able to participate fully in the SWAGs. This includes time for preparation for the meetings, attending

the meetings and time for any follow up actions as set out in the document.

The document also sets out:

- Three year term of the Health and Safety reps.
- Job description of the Health and Safety rep.
- The training courses for the reps.
- Depending on the number working on a site a *minimum* of between 4 and 8 meetings a year.
- The seven regional SWAGs meet every 6 months attended by the chairpersons of every SWAG within each region.
- The National Health and Safety Network meets every 6 months attended by 2 PWUA delegates and one PWUA official.

PWUA speaks to Committee of MPs at Parliament

Ask the people what minimum level of mail service they want after NZ Post no longer runs at a profit. This was one of the requests made by the PWUA to a Select Committee at Parliament earlier this month.

If the Select Committee decides to call for public submissions then residents, businesses and community groups can state what number of delivery days they want as a minimum and whether they would support an on-going taxpayer subsidy to maintain an appropriate minimum mail delivery service.

The PWUA had asked to speak to the Select Committee following up on the PWUA members' petition presented in Parliament in September last year. The petition focused on the concern of PWUA members about the steady deterioration of NZ Post's mail delivery service

The Union asked if a scaled down corporate model mail system should be

decided by a few people in secret.

The Union asked the Select Committee to seek the views of the public as to whether they would agree with a taxpayer subsidy to guarantee an acceptable minimum level of postal service.

The Union told the Select Committee last month that it is also concerned that NZ Post may increasingly require residents to position their letterboxes in groups or nests at street corners for easier and quicker access for delivery by contractors or posties. NZ Post already requires this arrangement in some rural areas and the Union's concern is that it may increasingly become a requirement in new or existing urban areas.

Representatives from NZ Post followed the PWUA's presentation and were asked questions by the Select Committee based on the PWUA's concerns set out in its submissions.

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Fill in the uniform survey this month!

The PWUA encourages everyone to fill out the uniform survey, after several postponements, now due out on Monday 24 April.

The PWUA is recommending that if posties become too cold and/or too wet to feel safe in the new uniforms they return to the branch and fill in an HS1, or enter the details on Vault.

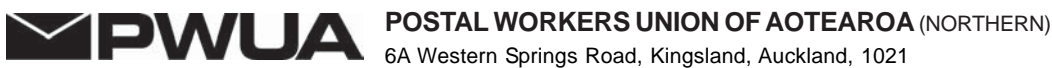
If they need to go home for a shower and dry clothes they must be paid their guaranteed hours for the rest of the day.

Trial of smaller eBikes

Feedback from posties about the difficulties of mail delivery on the heavy GSD S10 Tern eBikes has led to NZ Post running a trial of smaller Tern eBikes in New Plymouth. The NBD P8i eBikes suitable for people 147-190cm tall are lower, shorter and 10kgs lighter.

Among other factors the 8 week trial covers performance, handling, range, effort and fatigue.

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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..... Site.....
 Department..... Position.....

Home Address.....
 Suburb..... City..... Post code.....
 Phone..... Email.....

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.