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Dear Member

PN Coal Qld Negotiations update

PN Qld Coal negotiations continue, but not a lot of progress was made again this week. As reported last week, there appears to be a degree of inflexibility on the part of Management which is most likely due to the fact that, for all intents and purposes, the current Agreement is entirely their baby.

This week PN tabled two options that they would prefer to resolve some of the outstanding matters:

OPTION A

- Pay increase 2.5% every year
- Travel to Train Shifts i.e. travel up to 2 hours UNPAID and then work up to 12 hours on the locomotive doing safety critical tasks with the up to 12 hours worked credited to the duty cycle
- A duty cycle based on 108 days =584.64hours
- Additional hours worked above duty cycle paid at total remuneration rate
- Annual leave will be credited to the duty cycle at 8,12 hours , but will also be deducted at that
- ROPs will be defined as per the current EA
- Lift up and lay back will be defined in the current EA
- Ability to cash out annual leave

OPTION B

- Pay increase at CPI maxed at 3.5% per year
- Duty cycle over a year 1976 hours
- Annual leave as per current EA, i.e. (leave deduction based on rostered shifts)
- ROPs BEST ENDEAVOUR to be signed off by 23.59 hours and if you work past 0001 you will be paid base rate until a finish time before 04.00 hours
- 4hrs lift up and Lay back

Not surprisingly all workers representatives at the table were shocked and dismayed at such a feeble attempt by the company to address the issues that have clearly been driven from the workforce.

The Company does not want to entertain an all-purpose rate nor have any reasonable shoulders placed on ROPs to make your life as a train driver just a little bit predictable.

The fact remains every time your representatives put up some improvements the company says that is a cost to the company and what are drivers prepared to give away to pay for it.

Your representatives again reinforced that an all-purpose rate and defined shoulders on ROPS are two very important issues and subsequently put back an alternative that included:

- An all-purpose rate (APR)
- A very reasonable pay increase in recognition that an APR is in fact also a pay rise
- An 8 week 304 hours duty cycle
- Payment for working on ROPs
- ROP shoulders to be developed by roster committees elected by Drivers in every depot
- 25 actual days leave per year deducted at 7.6 hours per day and paid at APR
- 2 hours lift up and 4 hours lay back or as otherwise agreed in the depot
- APR paid on all holidays, long service leave , superannuation, and personal leave
- Longevity and productivity bonus preserved in the EA as per other PN agreements (if they are not in the agreement they can be ceased at any time)

Once again the RTBU ensured that PN Qld Coal understood that their employees, our members, expected to be recognised in this Agreement for their efforts in securing record profits for their shareholders. The continuation of an Agreement overwhelmingly designed to benefit shareholders was not an outcome that would be acceptable to members. Good wholesome profit for PN was certainly healthy, but the main creators of these profits, the frontline workers, deserve appropriate recognition.

The Company is still resisting putting some very important policies into the enterprise agreement saying that they do want policy matters in the agreement.

THE DIFFERENCE? POLICIES CAN NORMALLY BE, UNILATERALLY CHANGED BY MANAGEMENT UNLESS SECURELY PROTECTED BY THE AGREEMENT.

PN management have once again cancelled discussions for next week instead choosing to seek instructions from their senior management team, as well as saying they intend to go into the workplace and consult directly with the wider workforce. Whether or not it is there foremost intention, it could be reasonable to perceive this as being somewhat contemptuous of the very committed Traincrew representatives on the negotiating committee. It will be interesting to see if they go directly to the workforce to listen to the views of Drivers or simply try and sell their package on the basis that it is in your interest to TAKE ONE FOR THE TEAM.

The negotiating committee will meet as planned next week and continue to work on some of the issues left on the table for discussion.

Whilst members will appreciate negotiations are not going terribly well at the moment, it is often a tough game and we will persevere on your behalf with the hope that a breakthrough can be made with management taking a more reasonable position in these negotiations.

If you require further information please do not hesitate to contact any of our negotiating team.

Yours in Unity



Bruce Mackie
QLD State President