



QUEENSLAND BRANCH

PN COAL CIRCULAR

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Circular No: 14/2017

Date: 13 January 2017

Dear Member

Beware of People Offering Cheques that can't be Cashed

I have been made aware of a few recent instances where members are being called early, called late or asked to perform duties or shifts that fall outside the current enterprise agreement. In return they are being offered inducements like added time at the end of their shifts, extra pay if they do it, or being relieved early for that shift - only to find out that that commitment is forgotten when it comes to cashing the cheque.

The PN Coal enterprise agreement has been put in place to ensure that all players follow the rules and it's an enforceable document. If either party steps outside the rules, then the agreement is where we all look. The problem is whenever someone "AGREES" to step outside of the rules, they are in essence agreeing to play by an unknown set of rules. You have NO WAY of enforcing a commitment made verbally over the phone by someone who may or may not have the authority to make that commitment.

The best option is to simply stay inside the agreement, that way everyone is playing by the same rule book. I am told that at times PN is offering to bring forward shifts well beyond the current lift up of two hours with the promise that crews get off earlier, or lay back more than 4 hours for a better start time. Make no mistake, I get why this sounds attractive, but do not forget we are about to go into negotiations with PN about your new agreement and the more people who step outside the rules the harder it becomes to set firm rules into the future.

PN needs to pick up their game when it comes to meeting its obligations to call and roster crews in accordance with the agreement and needs to stop relying on the good will of drivers when it falls apart.

Obviously most drivers are willing to help out when it comes to emergencies like derailments or natural disasters etc., (and I would like to think this is a common theme, that rail workers pull together in tough times), but those sorts of situations are not what this is about.

PN wants to operate a model of long start windows and indicative start times and "They will call you when you are needed" type daily rosters, but by the same token, as drivers you also have an expectation to be called at the right time and not be called sooner than necessary or 5 mins after someone realises you have not arrived for your shift.

It's simple - when you agree to go outside of the terms of the enterprise agreement, you do so understanding that you have no way to enforce that "AGREEMENT" when it falls apart.

As 2017 is upon us and your current agreement is expiring soon, (PN should issue the Notice to commence Bargaining today), you are asked to keep an eye out for meeting notices and newsletters from your union about negotiations.

Please make sure your union has your correct email address so we can keep you up to date. If you need to change your details please email info@rtbu.com.au or call our membership team on 07 3839 4988.

Unity is Strength

Bruce Mackie

State President, RTBU Qld Branch