



Queensland Branch

Bus Circular

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Dear Member,

Bus E-News: EBA Bargaining Update 8

Bargaining for a replacement Enterprise Agreement for Brisbane City Council continued yesterday.

On the agenda were some key issues for members. Importantly, we had an opportunity to respond to the BCC proposal for sweeping changes to rostering rules. We also discussed the critical issue of 'contingent' labour – that is, how we can reduce the number of labour hire, casual, and long term temporary roles and increase the number of reliable, permanent jobs available.

The response to BCC's proposal for new rostering rules was a firm rejection. Please note, as mentioned last week, the proposed rostering clause doesn't apply to Schedule 10 (Brisbane Transport) employees, but has an indirect effect on us, setting a poor precedent with regard to consultation.

Union reps are concerned that near unlimited capacity to change rosters and hours of work will lead to a massive reduction in standard of living. Council say they need flexibility to ensure night and weekend work is covered adequately. But so far there has been no clear problem that has to be addressed, no specific examples of where the current rules aren't working. The view of union reps is that any work can easily be accommodated with the existing rules which allow for people to volunteer for the sort of shifts being asked for. We expect this will continue to be a tough issue.

We received a further proposal from BCC regarding contingent labour, (moving non-permanent jobs to more reliable employment), but it doesn't go far enough. This will be a critical issue for this round of negotiations. It affects each union group differently but essentially means the same thing.

If you're a long term casual, ongoing temp, contract worker or labour hire employee – we know that many normal things are made harder, if not impossible. Getting a home loan, knowing if you'll be home for the kids' birthdays, or even being able to raise these issues at work without the fear of losing hours – these are often out of reach for people without secure employment.

It's time we reversed the trend. We will be putting clearer and firmer rules back to support secure jobs across the next few meetings.

We also received a nightwork proposal which goes with the rostering clause put by Council. Given the position we're in with the rostering proposal, it will be a while before we deal with the specifics of this proposal.

A draft outline of Council's planned impairment policy was also put forward. Unions want to see more detail before they agree to anything. Council want this as a policy that they can control and change any time, this is not acceptable to Unions.

Finally, we received a spreadsheet which provides BCC's position on what they want to do with specific Local Area Agreements. There are numerous LAA's and a variety of positions – too many to detail here – so you will receive further news on the LAA's which affect you and your workmates directly.

As always, your workplace delegate is the best source of information on the negotiations. We will provide a further updates as we progress.

Unity is Strength

Tom Brown
Secretary, Tram and Bus Division