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Dear Member

QR Enterprise Agreement Negotiations

This week the RTBU had discussions with Queensland Rail in respect of your enterprise agreement negotiations. This follows the Government formally recognising that QR should be treated as a Government Owned Corporation in respect of the negotiating framework provided rather than being classified as public service. QR remains a Statutory Authority.

As far as the Union is concerned this is of little consequence to us as we consider that whatever framework the Government determines to use is merely that of the employer and we will seek to negotiate the best possible outcome for our members solely from our members' perspective.

Nonetheless, this is positive as it now provides us with the opportunity to commence discussions and hopefully quickly secure replacement agreements given the timeframe for some of our members since their last pay increase.

Under legislation, fourteen days' notice has to be provided by the employer before formal negotiations can commence but I am pleased to say that discussions surrounding the core issues will commence next week and both parties have indicated a preference to try and ensure an agreement can be reached as quickly as possible.

One very positive aspect of these negotiations is that as a result of the High Court decision which kicks the obnoxious draft agreements voted down by members last year into touch we are starting negotiations from a much better position than last year.

Specifically, all the conditions that had been removed from your agreement by the LNP Government through legislation are back in place and the demands that the LNP Government put in place in respect of requirements for EAs no longer exist in Government policy.

Furthermore, while we certainly hope we do not get to this stage, the right to participate in protected industrial action which was removed for all intents and purposes by the LNP Government now exists in respect of all agreements under the Fair Work Legislation. I reiterate that we are hopeful that we certainly do not get to a stage where we would have to consider such balloting but it is important that this democratic right is there for workers to consider if necessary.

I will ensure members will be kept up to date in respect to this matter.

Unity is Strength

Owen Doogan
**RTBU State Secretary,
Queensland Branch**