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Dear Member

## QR EA Bargaining Commences

Bargaining with QR commenced this week, with discussions focusing on logistical matters setting the scene for the proper negotiation of key issues.

QR provided us with a list of their log of claims which is long and has proposed a lot of change at a central level as well as in business specific areas.

Some of the items proposed are familiar from previous rounds of bargaining, having been long term wish list items that tend to be quickly kicked into touch. Others are newer, and are now being pursued by QR as a result of the draconian changes to the Qld IR laws by the Newman Government.

It's likely and quite justified that members will view the proposed list with some horror in its current form, and some items in any form just won't be acceptable. That's often the case.

The difference with this round of bargaining isn't necessarily the over the top claims made, it's the format. Usually the claims from QR aren't put into one document right at the beginning. It's not an unusual approach, but one we see more of in the private sector.

Normally, the different areas get together in their bargaining groups (AS/PT, Rollingstock, Infrastructure, etc.) and work on specific measures. Elsewhere a group works on the core conditions (those things that apply equally everywhere). The employer usually puts their claims for the various areas directly rather than in one document. This time around they've put it on one document.

Don't forget though – the primary aim of Your Union is to protect your current conditions as best as possible in the government driven hostile environment and pursue improvements in areas that members have indicated as important. However, these negotiations are being conducted whilst a Newman lead State Government that has a massive majority is watching on, this has clearly got most members saying we need to keep looking to maintain current protections in new agreements.

During upcoming negotiations as issues both positively addressed or still in dispute become clearer, further updates will be provided in the regular newsletters from the RTBU specifically about these negotiations.

### Unity is Strength

Bruce Mackie

**FMOMs Divisional Organiser**