



22 May 2015

Forestry Corp Enterprise Agreement Negotiations PSA Update #2

A further three days were set aside for these bargaining meetings on 11, 14 and 18 May 2015.

Your PSA Bargaining Team of experienced delegates and professional industrial staff met management, along with representatives of the other unions.

WHAT PROGRESS WAS MADE SINCE LAST WEEK ON THE MAJOR ITEMS?

1. Management continue to insist the scope of negotiations include individual contracts for FC Staff employed at Levels 7&8.

This has been rejected.

The PSA maintains any negotiations must include all staff at Levels 1-8. This will maintain coverage of all PSA members as is the current situation.

Management have provided no benefit for this proposed change and there is NO advantage for staff who will under this proposal have access to current conditions and entitlement.

MEMBERS OF STAFF AT LEVELS 7&8 SHOULD NOT SIGN THESE CONTRACTS AND REQUEST THEM BACK IF THEY HAVE SIGNED. STAFF EMPLOYED AT LEVELS 7&8 ARE STILL COVERED BY THE CURRENT AGREEMENT.

Management continue to insist that negotiations on wages only include an offer of 2.5% and 1.5% pay increase for a two year agreement.

The unions have collectively rejected this.

The PSA has insisted as the current offer for

Public Sector staff is 2.5% the same offer should be made by Forestry Corporation. This is in line with current Government wages policy.

For the duration of the EA 2.5% per annum should be the pay increase.

Management continue to insist negotiations should include reductions and or removal of current allowances.

The PSA opposes this proposal.

2. Management have proposed the removal of all Western Allowances. FC believe these allowances are "outmoded".

The PSA rejects this premise and the proposal to remove this allowance.

3. Management continue to insist that all 35 hour per week staff move to 38 hours per week. It has also been suggested if this were to occur, staff would be placed on TRPs (Total Remuneration Packages).

The PSA confirmed the position that if management propose this, it will ONLY be considered on a basis of:

- extra hours be at staff members' request and initiation without pressure
 - Full payment for extra three hours at current hourly rate.
 - NO TRPs – full entitlement to all flex conditions, overtime and other provisions.
4. Management responded to the PSA with clarification of the Fire Fighting overtime provision changes that have been discussed previously.

The PSA and FC are now close to final agreement on a simplified version of the Fire Fighting overtime provisions. Management say there will be a gain overall to employees. The detail of their proposal is being reviewed so that we can guarantee there is no disadvantage to members. FC will achieve certain efficiencies if the arrangements are implemented.

WHAT DID THE PSA PUT FORWARD?

The PSA has, through its delegates, highlighted members concerns of:

- Salary progression
 - Hours of work
 - Maintenance of redundancy provisions
 - Maintenance of Fire Fighting Overtime minimums
 - One agreement for all PSA members.
1. Salary Progression within Levels

The PSA proposed a clause be inserted to the EA requiring management and the unions have in place by six months of the signing of the agreement, an agreed system to apply the clause 21.2 Salary Progression.

2. Hours of work

Whilst Management have proposed moving all 35 hour people to 38 hour weeks, this will not work for all members. PSA have indicated members need the right to maintain current week maximums and all flexible working hours conditions

3. Redundancy Provisions

The PSA indicated this concern, but no changes have yet been proposed by management.

4. Fire Fighting Overtime

The PSA is closely checking the current and proposed arrangements and will be shortly looking forward to engaging a wider review of these from the membership to ensure nothing has been missed or overlooked.

5. Enterprise Agreement Coverage

The PSA insists the agreement must include Levels 1-8.

At the meeting held on Monday 18 May, FC were unable to respond to the PSA insistence that current Salaries and Conditions must be maintained. The PSA is concerned the parties are too far apart to finalise negotiations at this time. The parties must continue to negotiate.

At this meeting, the AWU official left the meeting insisting they wished to withdraw from joint negotiations and conduct their own negotiations for an agreement to cover field based staff.

The PSA sought to ensure any negotiations with the AWU would not negatively impact on PSA members. See PSA email to FC Management [HERE](#).

(<http://psa.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Email-to-Peter-Baxter-18-May-2015.pdf>)

A letter was sent to FC requesting assurances no further discussions will take place in the negotiation of the enterprise agreement without the presence of the PSA. You can read a copy of that letter [HERE](#).

(<http://psa.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Letter-to-Baxter-20-May-2015.pdf>)

No response has been received at this time.

**Kerrie Butson and James Shaw
On behalf of your PSA Bargaining Team and Dept Committee**

Join the PSA

membership.psa.asn.au/join

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