



14 October 2016

AGL Macquarie Enterprise bargaining discussions finalised

The current Macquarie Generation enterprise agreement is due to expire on 31 December 2016. Discussions commenced for a new agreement on 14 June 2016.

A members' meeting was held on 5 July 2016 to settle a log of claims from the PSA and other unions. The CFMEU lodged a separate log of claims. There were two independent bargaining agents who did not submit logs of claim.

Eleven meetings were held and four PSA delegates participated in the process.

After initial resistance to the majority of issues on our log of claims, the PSA and other unions have been able to negotiate substantial improvements to condition. We were, of course, unable to gain agreement on all the matters in our log of claims. You will have received from AGL a table summarising the agreed changes but the main points are as follows:

Pay increase

A 3.5 percent increase for each of three years with a three-year term to the agreement. Increases will apply from the date the agreement is voted up.

Job security/redundancy

The main focus for discussions was on issues relating to improved job security. Although AGL refused the addition of a NO forced redundancy clause, it did agree to adding provisions to cover circumstances where redundancy is not voluntary.

This will protect members from falling back to the provisions in the National Employment Standards of only 12-16 weeks' pay. We were able to negotiate improvements in the redundancy provisions, increasing the maximum payout from 52 to 63 weeks' pay and adding a safety net for new employees of a minimum of 12 weeks' pay. Additional clarification/restrictions were agreed regarding the circumstances, in which redundancy could apply with a stated commitment to rely on natural attrition and voluntary processes wherever possible.

A job assistance package was also added providing for access to up to \$5000 worth of training and assistance and further access to the employee assistance scheme. Requirements to provide a statement of duties and separation certificate were also added.

Improvements were made to the contractor entry procedures to provide protection against employees being made redundant in favour of contractors.

The period for notice of substantial change to roster was increased from six months to nine months to buffer employees from the financial impact of a potential change of roster.

Leave provisions

Domestic violence leave was improved to reflect policy and increased from five to 10 days' entitlement.

Improvements were made to purchased leave for shift workers and to union delegate leave to remove some inequities.

Partner leave increased from 35 hours to 70 hours and adoption leave increased from eight weeks to 14 weeks; the same as parental leave.

Personal/carers leave

Substantial discussion was held regarding the evidence requirements of the personal leave clause. As a result of discussions, it was evident the parties were in agreement about the issues discussed and the difficulties raised were not about the substance of the agreement but rather the implementation. A further newsletter will be released soon to address these issues in more detail.

It was agreed AGL would accept statutory declarations signed by any person authorised to witness such documents and would not seek to restrict those authorised. It was also agreed that option 11 in the evidence requirements allows for employees to discuss their absence with their senior manager and no further evidence is required if the manager is satisfied their absence was legitimate. This seems to have been an unutilised provision of the agreement.

Referral to company doctors

The PSA objected to the current clause which seems to allow AGL to refer an employee to a company doctor for any or no reason. Clause 45:15 now outlines an escalation process which requires AGL to first consult with the employee and, if necessary, their own treating doctor, prior to any referral to a company doctor. It also makes

it clear the consultation process applies if seeking to determine fitness for work.

Time in lieu

Substantial discussion was also held regarding when Time in Lieu (TIL) provisions applied. It seemed this was also largely an implementation issue and AGL could not be budged in relation to making all TIL payments at overtime rates. AGL made it clear that the preference was to pay employees at overtime rates and that TIL was ONLY to be used when specifically requested by the employee. This matter will also be the subject of a further news bulletin.

Production technicians

Agreement was also reached regarding a process to phase out the production technician (PT) classification and to provide all PTs with the best opportunity to obtain an operator position should they desire to do so. This process was endorsed by a sub-committee of PTs. It is hoped this will remove a source of constant industrial unrest.

Voting process

As you will have been advised, voting process opens on 13 October and closes on 18 October 2016 and will be conducted as an attendance ballot at the request of the unions. The voting venue will be Bayswater Induction Centre. Alternative arrangements can be made for anyone unable to attend during those days.

The PSA encourages ALL MEMBERS TO VOTE 'YES' to accept the proposed agreement.

