

11 December 2017

Ausgrid bargaining update

Protected Action Ballots are in the post

The Fair Work Commission has approved for a protected action ballot order at Ausgrid. The unions have submitted member lists to the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) and the following key dates have been provided by the AEC for the ballot:

- » Ballot open date: AEC will post ballots on 7 December 2017. **These will likely hit your mailbox around 11 December 2017**
- » The ballot will close at 10:00am 8 January 2018 AEDT
- » The AEC will complete the ballot by 12 January 2018

Please keep an eye on your mailbox, once you receive the ballot: ***Please vote in the protected action ballot and vote yes***

It is vitally important that we get a high voter turnout and a high yes vote in this ballot to show Ausgrid our collective power and unity. This is likely to lead to a better deal at the bargaining table. The unions are continuing to negotiate, but we can only get so far without the ability to take protected industrial action. We are hopeful that the action may not be necessary. However, the ballot is an important tool to keep Ausgrid accountable.

Why should I vote yes?

Here are some good reasons why you should vote yes:

- » You have not seen a wage increase in almost four years, meaning your wages have gone backwards with CPI

- » Your job security is at stake post-June 2020 and a strong enterprise agreement is your only protection from forced redundancies
- » We have been bargaining since 2014 and its time to finish this
- » A high voter turnout and majority yes vote shows our unity and power
- » Ausgrid must be pushed to take a more generous approach on industrial issues, they won't do this without industrial pressure.

Bargaining update

The following issues have been agreed to in-principle with the combined unions:

- » Dispute Resolution and Consultation clause
- » Redundancy:
 - At 1 July 2020 a cap of 250 redeployees can be made forcibly redundant (this is the date where the employment guarantee period expires)
 - After 1 July 2020, a global cap of 250 per annum (global means both voluntary and forced)
 - Once the agreement is approved redeployees will be offered a \$75,000 incentive which they will have three weeks to accept or not. If it is rejected there will not be another shot at the \$75,000.

Outstanding issues in contention:

- » Career, Remuneration and Capability (CCR) – this is one of Ausgrid's core bargaining claims. Some of the concerns with CCR are:



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- Ausgrid is including a requirement to “exceed expectations” to progress, which the unions are concerned is an unrealistic standard that is difficult to measure
- The CPSU NSW is concerned that CCR may increase the gender pay gap at Ausgrid which would not be fair or equitable. We are awaiting information about what the gender pay gap will be under CCR
- » Pay – the unions are claiming three per cent per annum (back-pay has been requested as well). Ausgrid has offered 2.5 per cent in year one, 2.5 per cent in year two, two per cent in year three and a \$1000 payment on agreement. This is not enough considering there has not been a pay increase for four years.

Update on CPSU Claims

Ausgrid has not changed its bargaining position on CPSU claims since 27 September 2017 and the current position is:

- » Paid Parental Leave: the CPSU NSW claimed 20 weeks, Ausgrid’s offer is 16 weeks (the current agreement is 14 weeks)
- » Superannuation to be applied on paid parental leave: Ausgrid has said no at this point
- » Lactation breaks are in the agreement, except for wording around the rights of lactating mothers to make a phone call to seek support if they are having difficulties
- » The CPSU’s cessation of pregnancy clause has been rejected by Ausgrid. This clause requested that the paid parental leave entitlement applies after 12 weeks’ gestation. The entitlement to paid leave in situations of miscarriage and stillbirth

remains ambiguous as Ausgrid’s a parental leave policy is applied inconsistently. The CPSU NSW is fighting to ensure that the rights of a women in this situation are clear so that they don’t have to fight their manager as well as deal with their grief. We are also mindful that at a certain point a stillborn or infant death will involve a funeral and the expense associated with this. Employees should have paid parental leave payment available to allow them the financial ability to make these arrangements

- » Ausgrid has rejected the CPSU NSW’s anti-discrimination/pay equity clause
- » Delegate rights: Ausgrid has rejected a minimum number of days of delegate leave. They have included some wording around part-time delegates having the same rights as full time delegates

Negotiations are continuing.

Your CPSU NSW contacts – email us if you have any questions

If you have any questions you can contact your union officials Ian or Vera by emailing the following:

Ian Braithwaite – Organiser

ibraithwaite@psa.asn.au

Vera Babicheva – Industrial officer

vbabicheva@psa.asn.au

Sign up members/join your union

This is a member-only communication. However, if you have non-members around you that are eligible to join, please ask them to join the CPSU NSW. To join the CPSU NSW go to the following link:

<https://membership.psa.asn.au/register>

