

Law no obstacle to longer enterprise agreement FWC

The Fair Work Commission has expressed the opinion that there is no legal impediment to GEO entering into a longer enterprise agreement with prison staff at Parklea Correctional Centre (PCC).

The issue of whether GEO could “make and have approved” an enterprise agreement with staff that extended beyond the end of GEO’s contract to operate the PCC (31 March 2019) was canvassed in dispute proceedings yesterday afternoon.

CPSU NSW Senior Industrial Officer, Thane Pearce, said “we’ve said there’s nothing in the Fair Work Act that would prevent GEO from making a longer agreement, and the Commission has now all but confirmed that view.”

“GEO can have confidence that making a longer agreement, covering the transitional phase to a new operator, is a live and legal option. GEO has requested 24 hours to consider its position, and we expect a response by 5pm today.”

CPSU NSW seeks a one year agreement to protect employee interests

The CPSU NSW has called on GEO to make a 12 month enterprise agreement with PCC prison staff commencing around October 2018.

After learning of the NSW Government’s decision to exclude GEO from further participation in the tender process for the PCC operating contract, the CPSU NSW revised its earlier claim for a three-year enterprise agreement and proposed instead a 1-2 year enterprise agreement, covering the initial transitional phase and protecting to the extent possible the interests of GEO’s transferring employees.

CPSU NSW Senior Industrial Officer, Thane Pearce, explained the union’s position, “ we appreciate that any new operator will probably want to negotiated new terms and conditions with staff, and their union representatives, to suit their business model. At the same time, PCC staff should be treated with respect, have some certainty over employment arrangement, and not forced to forfeit pay and conditions.”

We believe this to be an entirely balanced and fair proposition.

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