

CPSU NSW bargaining update: Serco seeks to divide and conquer

This bulletin serves both to update you on Friday's meeting and correct some of the assertions made by Serco in its communication to staff after the meeting.

It is true that the scope of the proposed enterprise agreement (such as which employees come under it) from the outset did not include Correctional Supervisors, and that this was a decision made solely by Serco.

But the scope of the enterprise agreement is always a matter for negotiation between the parties during enterprise bargaining – it is not a decision for the employer alone.

The CPSU NSW has raised this matter with Serco in every bargaining meeting since February and the Correctional Supervisors featured prominently in our Log of Claims. Serco's surprise at your union again raising and escalating this claim is as fake as a Bali Rolex.

Adding injury to insult, Serco has repeatedly refused to even provide reasons why Correctional Supervisors should not be included, either practical or legal, other than the company simply does not want to. That is not good enough.

Our insistence that Correctional Supervisors be included in the agreement does not justify Serco walking away. Much could still be done simultaneously while this claim would be pursued in the Fair Work Commission.

To say "real progress has been made" is a misrepresentation of talks to date in any case. Serco has dragged the chain on these negotiations from the outset – cancelling meetings, tabling cut-and-paste and incomplete proposals, and not responding to submissions from your union. Serco has flown dangerously close to breaching the good faith bargaining requirements of the Act.

But more aggravating is that its obstinate refusal to include Correctional Supervisors in the agreement has been just one example of Serco's unwillingness to treat its workers at Clarence Correctional Centre like others employed elsewhere by the company.

Other Serco employees in other centres receive paid parental leave – Serco doesn't want to provide this to you at Clarence.

Other Serco employees at other centres receive 10 days' personal leave per year – Serco doesn't want to provide this to you at Clarence.

Other Serco employees at other centres in ERT roles receive an allowance – Serco doesn't want to provide this to you at Clarence.



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In the short term our Correctional Supervisor members will be canvassed for their views as there are several ways to skin the proverbial cat. We do not believe Serco when it claims Supervisors are not interested in the agreement and do not want to change their current employment arrangements.

But even if this matter is resolved, Serco's reluctance to give offer our members a fair deal is quickly becoming apparent even before money is being discussed.

Reluctantly we will be commencing an application for a Protected Action Ballot Order this week. Stay tuned for details.

Now more than ever is a time to stand united together. And the time for Serco's disrespect of its workers to end is now.

