

Telstra Enterprise Agreement 2015

Bargaining Bulletin #3

19 May 2015

The third Enterprise Agreement meeting between Telstra, the Telstra unions and other bargaining representatives was held on Tuesday 19 May.

Redundancy entitlements.

In response to some queries about the wording of its statement last week, Telstra began the meeting by confirming its commitment to maintaining the current 80+ weeks' redundancy entitlement in the new EA.

This statement should finally put to rest the phantom "threat" to this entitlement and allow both union negotiators and members to focus on the real issues for this round of bargaining.

The meeting then revisited a number of items which had been raised by Telstra at the meeting on 14 May. In most of these cases either no change or minor changes to current EA wording are being proposed by Telstra. In some cases, however, the unions have flagged possible changes.

- **Superannuation.** Although the Coalition government has made legislative changes to the superannuation guarantee, Telstra has confirmed that the last 0.5% employer super payment under the current EA will still be paid **as super** except where employees are already receiving contributions of 10% or above, in which case it will be paid as salary (Fixed Remuneration).

The unions has reserved their position on the question of additional employer superannuation contributions under the new EA.

- **Leave.** Discussion continued over the wording of a new clause relating to domestic violence leave. No final position has been agreed.
- **ETT and Log on/Log off arrangements.** No policy change proposed by Telstra. The CWU has raised the issue of whether the current wording of these clauses is sufficiently clear given changes to working arrangements that may have occurred since they were first drafted. The issue will be considered further.
- **Dispute resolution.** Telstra proposes no change. The unions wish to consider wording that would prevent implementation of workplace changes that are in dispute and are before the Fair Work Commission.

In the second part of the meeting, Telstra introduced a number of further issues in relation to the current clauses covering:

- Group Flexibility and Individual Flexibility Agreements
- Essential Customer Servicing
- Emergency Duty

In general, Telstra is seeking greater flexibility in these areas. The unions raised a number of concerns about proposed changes to current EA provisions but undertook to consider Telstra's proposals.

Workstream Job Descriptions.

Telstra also made a preliminary presentation around the question of Workstream Job Descriptions (JDs).

Telstra's view is that the current JDs, especially in the CFW Workstream, act as a barrier to employees moving into new work areas such as those associated with the NBN roll-out.

It is proposing that the current structure be simplified by reducing the number of JDs across current bands. Telstra says it is not seeking to reduce the number of levels within the current banding structure i.e. it is not seeking the broadbanding that occurs in the Job Family model or seeking to change the way people progress through the workforce.

The CWU and other unions have agreed to consider Telstra's proposal in good faith. The issue will be referred to a working party where it will be looked at in detail.

Union claims.

The CWU tabled an initial list of issues it wants dealt with in this round of negotiations.

These included:

- Performance management, including the use of GPS.
- Availability of RDOs
- Performance pay system
- Job security and outsourcing/offshoring.
- Opportunities for movement between the Workstream and Job Family models.
- Current redeployment and reassignment practices.

The union will formalise its claims after discussions with the other unions involved in the negotiations.

Health and safety.

In our recent consultations, CWU members have also repeatedly raised the question of the state of Telstra exchanges, including the lack of amenities in these buildings and the ongoing problem of the presence of asbestos in them. The management of asbestos in pits has also been raised.

It was agreed these issues would be addressed separately from the main EA negotiations. This does not prevent any agreed approach to them being reflected in the new EA.

The next negotiating meeting will be held on Thursday 21 May.