

Optus Employment Partnership Agreement 2015

Bargaining Bulletin #2

31 August 2015

The CWU met with Optus on Friday 28 August for the third meeting in the current round of bargaining for a new Employment Partnership Agreement.

The Agreement and the modern Award.

The meeting addressed changes to the current agreement that need to be made to bring it into line with the new Optus modern award.

In the award modernisation process, the CWU was successful in negotiating some changes to the existing award which gave more certainty around certain working conditions.

Optus and the CWU agree that these changes should be picked up in the agreement but we are still considering some details of the wording around some issues i.e. hours of work and health and safety representative training.

Hours of work.

The new award limits the number of ordinary hours that can be worked in any one day to 10, with exemptions relating to shift arrangements and individual flexibility agreements.

We are discussing how to ensure that this provision does not limit existing shift arrangements where shifts of greater than ten hours but less than 12 hours are in operation. 12 hour shifts are already catered for and regulated in both the award and draft agreement.

HSR training.

In the case of health and safety representative (HSR) training, the CWU wants to ensure that

the wording in the agreement properly reflects the provisions of the Work Health and Safety Act.

The Act essentially gives health and safety representatives the right to choose which training course they attend, provided it is approved by the regulator.

CWU claims discussed.

We also began discussion of items contained in the CWU's log of claims, including an increase in the amount of leave available for emergency duty and the provision of a domestic violence leave entitlement.

The union is optimistic about getting a positive result in both these areas, though discussion is continuing as to whether or not to provide a specific amount of domestic violence leave.

Future meetings will address the claims that the CWU has tabled on pay, redundancy entitlements and redundancy procedures. Members can refer to Optus Bargaining Bulletin #1 for more details of these claims.

It will also consider a further matter raised by the CWU about the grading level at which certain entitlements (overtime payments, start and finish times, on-call provisions) cease to apply.

Members have told the CWU they believe the current exemption structure is unfair and also acts as a disincentive to their seeking promotion to higher levels.

The next bargaining meeting is scheduled for Thursday 3 September.