

## Employees to vote on proposed EA

### Long overdue benefits secured

Following years of Optus stonewalling their retail employees, members ran a successful campaign to drag the telco back to the bargaining table to negotiate a new Enterprise Agreement (EA) to replace the current EA, which expired in 2016.

So far, negotiations have delivered some outstanding wins for Optus CWU members, including an improved span of hours and associated penalty payments, a lift to the minimum wage rates payable under the EA, and a further wage increase, equal to no less than CPI, for the majority of Optus Retail consultants and specialist consultants, in July each year.

For those eligible members employed on the EA's base rate, this means a first-year wage increase of up to 8%.

Paid Parental Leave will also increase to 14 weeks for primary carers with superannuation to be paid against further unpaid parental leave for a period of up to 38 weeks. Importantly, negotiations have secured a top-up payment for injured workers receiving workers' compensation payments – ensuring there is no gap between their compensation payments and their actual pre-injury salary.

These outcomes are significant for Retail members, who have been treated as second-class at the telco for far too long. However, a number of matters of contention remain outstanding, which preclude the Union from being able to support the EA in its current form, including:

- Optus refuses to guarantee a pay rise for all employees. Whilst the wage rises we have secured will assist the majority of members in meeting the ever-rising cost of living, they will only be applied to the minimum rates in the

EA and therefore only protect employees from falling below the minimum. For those paid even just \$1 higher, yearly wage outcomes will be paid

- entirely at management's discretion, under an undocumented performance review that lacks transparency and oversight;
- The wage increase will take up to six weeks after the EA's approval to become effective;
- Higher duties can be demanded of you in many instances without any appropriate additional payments; and
- Permanent part-time employees can be required to work additional hours at ordinary rates, without a paid meal allowance.

### Where to from here?

Despite these matters remaining unresolved, Optus intends to ask employees to vote on the proposed EA in its current form in a ballot which will run from 17 April to 26 April.

It was a hard fought-road for members to drag Optus this far into the process. We believe there isn't much left to tidy up to make this Agreement one which Optus Retail CWU members truly deserve. Should employees vote no and reject the Agreement, the Union is committed to continue its bargaining campaign in pursuit of a resolution to these outstanding fundamental matters.

But we can't do it without you. To deliver the outcomes you truly deserve, we need to build our density and strength in Optus Retail.

For those employees who are not yet CWU members, **now is the time to join**. You can do so by visiting our website at [www.cwu.org.au](http://www.cwu.org.au).

Authorised by Greg Rayner, CWU National Secretary.