

Special Signal

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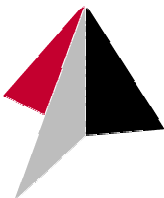
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THE CEPU's EBA IN TELSTRA

Telstra has refused and is continuing to refuse to bargain in good faith, for a new EBA for Telstra employees.

Why? Because they no longer want the standard EBA we have come to expect. They want an EBA which will cut employee pay, conditions and workplace rights in the short and the long term, and they want a non-union deal to make it easier to cut your pay, conditions and rights. That is why they are pushing a non-union EBA based on Part A and Part B.

The CEPU has tried just about everything to get this mob back to the bargaining table. We have:

- had to push them to start talks in the first place
- we've taken the matter up with Government and at the highest levels in Telstra
- we've tried to convince them that it is in the best long term interests of the company to bargain in good faith and to secure a good management to union environment
- we've tried to push them, in the Australian Industrial Relations Commission, to give employees a vote on whether employees want a union negotiated agreement or not
- we successfully opposed and exposed their shenanigans in the Federal Court in the hope they would see sense
- we are still trying, even now at the highest levels to get a change of direction

However, Telstra is now playing an even more nasty little game of “punishing” everyone because for the third time in twelve months, groups of employees have rejected their non-negotiated, non-union, third rate Part A/Part B Collective Employee Agreement (CEA).

To punish everyone on the EBA, they are now playing a waiting game and refusing to pay any wage increase, (the last pay increase for EBA staff was September 2007), until (they hope) that employees feel desperate enough to pick up their third rate agreement to get a pay increase, even the inadequate pay increase being offered by Telstra.

They are trying to justify their inadequate pay increase offer on the basis that it is more than the 2.5% per annum paid in the current EBA – more Telstra double talk.

The 2.5% paid in the current EBA, which was negotiated in 2005, was in the economic circumstances of a 2% cost of living increase per annum and low inflation. Today we are seeing the cost of living increasing by 5.7% and growing. It's like comparing chalk and cheese.

So, Telstra Management and particularly Telstra's HR department, are driving the company down the road of an inevitable industrial dispute unless there is a major change of direction.

TELSTRA WORKERS TO CONSIDER INDUSTRIAL ACTION

The CEPU has started gearing up for industrial action to help reach a new union collective agreement with the company.

The union's Communications Divisional Executive gave the green light to consult members about the timing and staging of protected and prolonged industrial action.

Despite the best efforts of the CEPU, CPSU and APESMA to genuinely reach a collective agreement with Telstra, the company has consistently rejected requests to negotiate.

Even though Telstra workers are wanting to negotiate a collective union agreement, Telstra wants to squeeze everything it can out of John Howard's unpopular Work-Choices laws.

Telstra management believe they can ignore the outcome of the last election, a string of failed ballots for non-union agreements and public opinion polling, telling Telstra that they should talk to unions about a new agreement.

Our members have been patient and wanted to bargain in good faith – but they have mortgages and rising living costs to deal with.

They want a union agreement with a decent pay rise tied to it - and they are telling us they're prepared to take industrial action to secure this.

Member and delegate briefings have been held in Queensland, NSW, Victoria and Tasmania. Future meetings will be held in the coming weeks to continue the planning for industrial action in SA and WA.

CEPU NEW MEMBER SIGN UP DAY

The unions (and other Telstra employees), have done just about all they can do to get Telstra back to the bargaining table and to have them bargain in good faith for a new union EBA.

So far this has been to no avail and Telstra continues to show contempt for its employees (our members). Therefore it is now likely that the CEPU will apply to the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC), to have an industrial action/strike action ballot of CEPU members,

to authorise an industrial/strike campaign to win a good EBA.

For employees to vote in such a ballot and to take part in the legal, protected industrial action, they must be a union member. Only union members on the EBA and union members on expired AWAs can legally take part in the ballot and the action.

We are calling on all non-members to join and help us secure a good EBA and an acceptable pay increase. The real cost of living increase for 2007/08 was 5.7% and rising.

To this end we have called a NEW Member Mass Sign Up Day for Thursday 16th October 2008.

If you become a union member on this day, or any time between now and then, you will:

- * **get a discount start-up union rate for the first half of a year's membership, (and remember, everyone's union dues are fully tax deductible).**
- * **go into a draw in the run-up to Christmas for a new flat screen TV, and second draw of an outdoor table top heater (ideal for BBQs etc).**

The current union rates are based on a percentage of salary as follows:

CATEGORY A - \$19.80 per fort. Based on salary equal to or greater than \$64,798

CATEGORY B - \$18.00 per fort. Equal to or greater than \$52,522, less than \$64,798

CATEGORY C - \$14.40 per fort. Equal to or greater than \$37,147, less than \$52,522

CATEGORY D - \$7.20 per fort. Less than \$37,147

Your discount startup rate would be \$7.20 per fortnight, Category D for two quarters, and then you move to the actual rate based on your salary as above.

If you pay annually you receive a 10% discount on your annual dues. This is a discount available to all members.

Sign up with the union and be part of the campaign to win an EBA which will benefit us all.

For current members, if they help sign up a new member they will go into the drawer for another Flat Screen TV and they will get 2 free movie tickets for every new member they help sign up.

Start now and build and strengthen our membership to secure a good EBA.

CEPU's EBA IN TELSTRA MEETINGS for members and other staff

* **CBD METRO**

TUESDAY 14 OCTOBER 2008 - 12.15PM to 12.45PM; 12.45PM to 1.15PM; 1.15PM to 1.45PM
SCOTS CHURCH HALL, 90 Russell St, (Rear of Church)

THURSDAY 16 OCTOBER 2008 -12 Noon to 2PM
COOPERS INN 282 Exhibition St. (Corner Little Lonsdale St)

* **OUTER METRO**

SOUTH EAST:
7PM WEDNESDAY 14 OCTOBER
CLAYTON - 47 HENDERSON ROAD

WEST:
7PM WEDNESDAY 15 OCTOBER:
WERRIBEE COMMUNITY CENTRE,
4 Synnot Street ext, Werribee

NORTH:
7PM THURSDAY 16 OCTOBER:
PRESTON MASONIC HALL
382 Bell Street

Please use these opportunities to be involved in your EBA, which is vital to your conditions at work and your living standards

COUNTRY MEMBERS EBA PHONE HOOK-UP TUESDAY 21 OCTOBER 7PM

Dial in: 1800 333 803

Pin: 3218#

LEN COOPER
Branch Secretary