



Bargaining Negotiations Kick Off

On 1 May 2014, the ASU and your employee bargaining representatives met with management to commence negotiations for a new Enterprise Agreement. Management have put a proposed agreement on the negotiating table, with new wages rate and classifications. The Agreement is significantly different from the 2009 Agreement and will change the terms and conditions upon which you are employed over the next few years.

What MaxNetwork management are proposing

Low rates of pay and a new classification structure

The proposed Agreements for Health and Employment and Training staff make significant changes to the pay levels and classification structure. While there are some potential benefits in a more defined career path, there are also some problems with the new structure, including the low wage rates being offered and the vague and undefined performance requirements. The ASU will undertake a detailed analysis of this proposal against the legal instruments and market rates. We will discuss this analysis with ASU members at MaxNetwork to assess whether this offer represents a fair deal.

Proposed wage increases reduced by any superannuation increase

As many employees will be aware, the company's proposed Agreement sets out a future wage increase of 3% per year. However it stipulates that, that will be reduced if the Government increases the Superannuation contribution rate. This could mean a future wage increase of just 1%, because of the proposed superannuation contribution increases.

The ASU believes that any superannuation increase should be in addition to a yearly wage increase.

Some concessions from management

At the meeting, management conceded four points that were raised by the ASU and bargaining representatives as issues. They agreed to:

- Provide the first working day following Christmas as a public holiday for NSW employees to compensate them for the loss of the Bank Holiday.
- Paid Maternity Leave will be paid as a block of 12 weeks, rather than the existing arrangement where it is paid in two 6 week blocks, the second occurring 3 months after the parent has returned to work.
- Extend Bereavement Leave to 3 days, with additional arrangements where a funeral takes place more than 24 hours away.
- 6 weeks notice about Christmas shut down

These are minor concessions but indicate some positive progress. However, there is significant work to be done on the big ticket items such as

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wages and addressing workload pressures.

What the ASU is proposing

Address workload issues

ASU members have told us that they are facing significant workload pressure and have high levels of stress. We are proposing that measures should be introduced in the EBA to address this, such as remunerating overtime, limiting the number of appointments with clients per day to a manageable level and introducing rostered days off.

A decent wage increase and superannuation

ASU members have told us they are concerned that their rate of pay is significantly less than equivalent roles in equivalent organisations. Wages need to be brought up to be consistent with market rates. In addition to that, we believe Superannuation should be increased to 12% so that MaxNetwork employees can adequately save for retirement.

Improve the bonus structure

The Bonus structure needs to be reviewed to ensure targets are realistic. MaxNetwork have said they don't want the bonus structure included in the EBA. The EBA is the best way to ensure any bonus is enforceable and fair.

Improve Health and Safety

MaxNetwork employees need to feel safe in their workplace. We are concerned that the offices are not equipped with adequate Safety

features to protect employees from threatening clients and other risks.

Paid overtime

The ASU is concerned that the proposal to annualise salaries for many employees will mean they lose out on time off in lieu, overtime and penalty rates. This is particularly concerning for those staff who travel long distances for work in their own time. They may lose the ability to claim TOIL for this travel time under the new Agreement.

The ASU is currently consulting members and gaining endorsement for our log of claims. This log will determine the ASU's agenda and priorities for these negotiations. If you would like to have input in to our claim you need to be an ASU member. You can sign up at <https://asujoin.asn.au/>.

The ASU's log of claim will be tabled at the meeting scheduled for the 21st and 22nd of May 2014 in Brisbane.

More information

For more information, please get in touch with the relevant contact below.

Branch	Contact	Phone
VIC PS	Andy Lewis	0409 778 890
QLD(S&NA)	Catherine Laherty	07 3844 5300
WA	Jill Hugo	0412 920 978
QLD CSQ	Jo Justo	1800 177 244
TAS	Kath Ryman	0429 004 237
NSW ACT Services	Sue Kealy	1300 784 278