



QUEENSLAND BRANCH

Bus Newsletter

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Newsletter No: 182/2016
Date: 10 November 2016

Dear Member,

Bus E-News: EBA Bargaining Update

Some Preliminary Issues

Bargaining commenced a few weeks ago in Brisbane City Council. In the time since, all unions have been seeking confirmation of their log of claims and finalising arrangements with their members.

Midway through the time since the last meeting we were shocked by the tragedy of Manmeet Sharma being slain in the course of work. It's a matter which continues to be a source of great pain for workers across Council. While we continue to grieve his loss, we are compelled to act in his memory.

Unsurprisingly driver safety is a major issue which will be critical to the negotiations as we move forward. To that end we were proud to participate in the national day for Driver Safety yesterday. A day where we encourage the community to show their respect for drivers and for us to focus on safety in public transport.

Today we continued to deal with the logistics of bargaining. We were appalled that Council tried to dictate to some unions as to who their representatives would be. It was an attempt at unreasonable interference in the legitimate operation of independent unions. Of concern was the fact that some unions have experienced difficulties accessing their membership.

We acknowledge that the opportunity to discuss important bargaining related business was provided but support the view it should be fair. This is an ongoing issue which must be resolved as we progress.

It was also important that we saw Council back down on its view that they could interfere in the representation from each union. We arrived at a sensible position.

BCC Log of Claims

The BCC presented its log of claims. Strangely enough they said they wanted a quick agreement with minimal change. It's strange because the items listed had all the hallmarks of potentially difficult and contentious changes.

We know from long experience that when an employer says they want to simplify arrangements and make conditions more flexible, the proposal comes at the cost of our members.

There were also strong signals from Council that they intend offering a minimal low ball wage offer. They pointed to increasing unemployment and low inflation along with important capital works programmes they have to fund. Some people read that to mean they want to give you a low ball offer so they can pay for the Brisbane Metro off the back of it.

There was the standard request for even more flexibility and control in rostering. This generally means being able to dictate rosters and exercise more control over the process.

Rail, Tram & Bus Union (Qld Branch)

Overall the BCC log of claims is designed to look friendly and non-threatening but we know from experience that the weasel words are what cause us all the problems. There is a long way to go in this process, so watch this space for more information on Council's claims.

There is another meeting scheduled next Tuesday for management to further detail their log of claims and the specifics they are seeking. We will forward more information to you as it emerges.

As always, your local workplace delegate is the best source of information about bargaining.

Unity is Strength

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Brown', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tom Brown

Secretary, Tram and Bus Division