Progress in Negotiations; Bombshell from Aurizon!

Delegates and officials from Rail Unions have been bargaining in earnest for the last few weeks in the latest round for talks with Aurizon, but management had a surprise in store for everyone. They now propose to put their wish list proposed agreements out to a ballot.

Following reaching agreement in principal on the scope and number of agreements the groups met to try to get closer to agreement.

The Union side had thought we were making reasonable progress. It’s a tough negotiation, but certainly there was cause for hope.

Unions also took that view on the back of comments from operational managers in the talks who said they also thought the negotiations were encouraging and that good progress had been made.

In fact, management had indicated during the course of the first week that, if there wasn’t sufficient progress they wouldn’t agree to a second week. The fact they agreed says that at least some in management thought there would be progress.

Management drop a bombshell

At the commencement of the last day management spoke with the combined delegates and officials group. They said that they thought that not enough progress had been made and that we were poles apart on key issues. They said that they now intended to take their negotiating documents and turn them into employer wish list draft Agreements, putting them to a vote of employees.

Rail Unions think this move is premature. There are still many issues to negotiate and some of the ‘key issues’ they complained we are poles apart on hadn’t even been discussed in the last fortnight – they didn’t raise them!

Good prospects for agreement

We believe that there is still good prospects for reaching an agreement – and the only way to do that is to keep meeting.

Aurizon should know better than to think their workforce will be conned into voting for these sub-standard backwards documents.

There will be lots more to say about the detail of the proposals in the coming weeks but this much is clear: Aurizon don’t have to do this – they are a profitable company with good prospects – and that’s right from the CEO himself – identified in today’s Courier Mail as the second highest paid CEO in Australia. They don’t need to make people worse off.

Members will see management road shows and lots of glossy brochures. You’ll also get a vote and it will be vital. Our feedback is that people don’t support these proposals. If you want to send Aurizon a message to get real then make sure you vote NO. Not voting is like voting yes.

Send a message to Aurizon that they should get real, and start talking about a fair deal.