

Bulk Products Campaign News

Bulletin for RTBU Members in Bulk Products Division



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Negotiations Underway

The RTBU negotiating team for the Pacific National Bulk Products Union Collective Agreement, met with management representatives in Parkes over two days last week.

The negotiations followed surveys of members and feedback, as well as a workshop of the Campaign Committee to identify a number of key issues.

It has been decided that the Bulk Products agreement would incorporate the previous Grain and Industrial areas of the business, and be negotiated separately from other business areas (Intermodal and Coal).

It has also been agreed with the company that the common core conditions for all of the agreements will be as before negotiated nationally and then inserted into each of the business group agreements.

The negotiations with management focused on the 'non-core' areas of the proposed agreement, and discussed areas such as classifications, rostering arrangements and shift intervals.

While significant progress was made on many of the areas under negotiation, the union and management representatives have agreed to take the draft outcomes of these meetings away for refinement and review, and to meet again in a few weeks to continue discussion around areas of disagreement or concern.

Campaign Co-ordinator
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Union Collective Agreement Common Clauses

The RTBU has advised Pacific National that the range of clauses common to all business groups of Coal, Intermodal and Bulk Products will be negotiated nationally and once agreed, inserted into each agreement.

The common clauses have been compiled from existing agreements, and minor variations have been identified to form one set of common clauses. These include clauses covering matters such as Health and Safety, Contract of Employment, General Rostering Provisions, Leave, Termination of Employment, and Dispute Procedures (a full list of the proposed common clauses is provided in the *National Newsflash No. 3* available from the RTBU National Office or on www.rtbu-nat.asn.au).

It is expected that this approach will allow negotiations to focus on the specific Business Group issues, and provide a more streamlined process of inserting the same common clauses into all final agreements. Once a final draft of the common clauses has been developed and agreed nationally, the NSW Branch of the RTBU will recommence negotiations on the specific business group clauses.

A Few Sticking Points

While many items raised at the recent negotiations in Parkes were progressed to a reasonable point, a number of contentious issues remain up in the air. In particular, the union has concerns about proposals to change shift lengths, intervals between shifts and lift up and lay back provisions. We also expect that some of the common clauses will meet with resistance. These will be considered in detail by the campaign committee and we will be seeking members input and feedback on the appropriate responses to these proposals.

We will also be seeking feedback on the items discussed to date, before any further negotiations are conducted.

Regular bulletins will be sent out to keep members informed of the developments in the campaign

Authorised by Alex Claassens, Divisional Secretary

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