



More redundancies of Telstra Communication Technicians to be announced this week

Telstra rewards employees' higher productivity with attack on job security

Hundreds to Go

It is expected that Telstra will announce this week the laying off hundreds of customer service technicians. Part of the justification for making such a large number of Communication Technicians (CTs) redundant will be the increased productivity that has been achieved by Telstra's own internal full-time workforce.

At the same time Telstra will attempt to convince the public and its employees that it really cares about its level of customer service.

It is time for Telstra to show a commitment to its employees and customers and not make a bad joke of its alleged values i.e. "treating people with respect."

Telstra refuses to treat redundancy in an intelligent, fair and more humane manner

The CEPU has just spent thousands of dollars in proceedings in the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC) trying to have Telstra adopt a fairer and more humane approach when dealing with employee redundancies.

In today's circumstances there is no need for any Telstra employee to be subjected to forced redundancy – there are plenty of volunteers. There is nothing in the Telstra Redundancy Agreement (TRA) that says Telstra cannot consider volunteer and swaps before compulsory redundancies. It is just that the Telstra management refuses to do so and the TRA agreement cannot enforce sensible, intelligent and humane management practices, especially since "Work Choices" was introduced.

CEPU action

We need to be informed immediately of situations where a member

is being forced to take redundancy and clearly there are volunteers available. It is our intention to hold meetings of members affected by such situations and consider what action can be taken to bring home the point to Telstra that it is not in the company's interest, and there is no need, to undertake forced redundancies.

CEPU is meeting Telstra management this week express our concern with the process. We make no apology for highlighting the cuts in the media and the adverse impact this will have on customers and service standards, let alone the kick in the guts for the employees. CEPU provides expert advice to members who are targeted for redundancy in relation to their rights and entitlements under the Redundancy Agreement. We will be pursuing management about redeployment opportunities to mitigate against the adverse affects of these redundancies.

In addition, the union can arrange for expert advice for those targeted employees who may have Workers Compensation issues. It is vital that you contact your Branch at the earliest opportunity.

Status of Telstra Redundancy Agreement (TRA)

The Howard Government's "Work Choices" legislation has put an end date of the current Telstra Redundancy Agreement (TRA) of the 26th March 2009. (Three years from the operation of "Work Choices" (WC). Prior to WC the TRA was considered as an "old award" and had no expiry date unless the union and its members agreed.)

In the Telstra EBA negotiation in 2008 the CEPU will attempt to

incorporate the TRA and its benefits into the Enterprise Agreement. If we are successful this would continue the TRA beyond March 2009.

Also, if there is a Labor government elected this year we expect major changes to Work Choices through amendments and/or regulations aimed at removing many of the disadvantages of the legislation. The effect on the TRA and similar agreements will not be known until any new legislation is passed through both houses of parliament. Changes to WC may ultimately depend on how successful the Labor Party, the Greens and other anti-WC candidates are in the Senate elections.

In the meantime the CEPU has called upon Telstra to give a guarantee to employees that it will continue to apply the TRA by administrative decision beyond March 2009. To date we have not received a positive response.

Colin Cooper,
DIVISIONAL PRESIDENT

For further information, to provide feedback or to contact the CEPU:

Website: www.cephu.asn.au

E-mail: cwu@cephu.asn.au

Fax: Communications Division
Divisional Office on
(03) 9349 1952

Phone: Queensland SA/NT
Western Australia
Tasmania
NSW T&S Branch
Vic T&S Branch — 1800 102 666

NSW P&T Branch
Vic P&T Branch — 1800 102 360