



CEPU (Communications) SA-NT POSTAL NEWSLETTER



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Future of Post to remain public says PM

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- 1** Prime Minister Kevin Rudd has made his view very clear that Australia Post will remain a public asset.
- 1** In a recent interview on Australian News about the ownership of public and private assets Prime Minister Rudd said:
- 2** "From the Commonwealth point of view, we believe that there are certain things which are very important to retain in public ownership. For example, we have that in relation to Australia Post; we think that these are important national institutions."
- 2**
- 2** "There is always going to be a debate about what should be in and what should not be. The key thing is to make sure the service is properly delivered to the Australian people, to make sure that it is delivered at a reasonable price to the Australian people, and to make sure that you get all those all balances right."
- 2-3**
- 3** We congratulate the PM for his comments – they're music to the ears of Post employees. The comments will also help Post management save some money surveying "stakeholders" about their views on privatisation – as they did last year and were caught out on in a Senate estimates hearing in February this year.
- 4**

It also puts paid to the ideas of Post management to justify workplace changes, such as Future Delivery Design, on the basis of possible postal services deregulation sometime in the future.



Post red faced over call centre advertisements

The CEPU has asked Post to 'please explain' how call centre positions were advertised recently in Queensland while Post moves to slash the jobs of nearly 300 call centre workers by closing four of the State based call centres.

Embarrassed and red faced management at the Post national level claim to have had no idea that the Queensland State Office had advertised these positions until the matter was raised by the union. Caught out Post says the intent was to fill some temporary fixed term positions in Brisbane even though the original advertisement did not flag the 'temporary' nature of these roles.

Post has now given the CEPU an undertaking that the advertising of any future fixed term vacancies will not be used to undermine the redeployment opportunities of existing employees who will be impacted by the call centre closures. The ad will be posted on our national website, <http://www.cepuconnects.org>

Call Centre dispute lodged in AIRC

Meanwhile the CEPU thinks Post has behaved appallingly on the planned closure of four of its call centres - and the move to cut the jobs of nearly 300 call centre workers.

While wanting to move with lightening speed to shut the centres, Post is dragging its feet responding to serious concerns of the union.

After meeting two weeks ago with Post at a national level, we still don't have the information or answers to our questions. Given this, we lodged a dispute in the Australian Industrial Relations Commission objecting to Post's management of the consultation process, and the way they have limited our ability to put forward ways to change their decision or ease the harsh impacts of this decision on workers and their families.

EBA7 Update

The union thinks talks are dragging on finalising the EBA. After another 6 months of talks Australia Post has moved on some issues, but we think we're hitting major stumbling blocks with senior management failing to understand that we have deep seated concerns with their failure to address our views on arbitration, shift penalties, Future Delivery Design, and the use of facility nominated doctors.

Our concerns about arbitration and job security take greater weight when you consider Post's outrageous actions in cutting the jobs of nearly 300 call centre workers with no warning or consultation.

The CEPU Divisional Executive will be considering a report on the state of play around EBA7 and making an announcement shortly about what the union and its members need to do to secure an agreement that members can be satisfied with.

Future delivery design

Members will recall that as a result of the CEPU taking Australia Post to the Australian Industrial Relations Commission over our objections to the way they were failing to consult with us about Future Delivery Design (FDD), the Commission helped set up processes for the parties to improve the quality of consultation around FDD.

Post and the CEPU have met and worked on setting up clear consultation guidelines - covering national, state and facility level consultation.

These consultation guidelines will spell out in clear terms how management and the union will work together to discuss the planned implementation of FDD related initiatives.

We're close to finalising these guidelines and we think these should be rolled out in the next two weeks.

A special kit has been developed by the CEPU for its delegates and local activists, giving them tips and advice on how to best involve yourself in the consultation process around FDD.

"Working for a better life"—new campaign slogan for unions

The union movement adopted a new slogan for its post-Your Rights At Work campaign at the ACTU Congress last week. The slogan, "working for a better life", is intended to become part of a broader communications strategy to recast the image of unions and tell the story of the movement's past history and future.

In introducing the slogan the ACTU Congress was told that an ACTU research project looked at perceptions of unions in the community and among potential members. It had revealed that:

- The union movement's past achievements are not well understood, particularly by the young and people new to Australia.

“Working for a better life” - new campaign slogan for unions

- Many people do not know what unions are doing now or aspire to achieve.
- There is an enduring stereotype in the community of "old-style unionism" involving militancy.
- To reach out to the new generation of workers, it is important to highlight the diversity of union representation and membership – not just blue-collar workers, but also those in white-collar occupations and the public sector, and people of diverse ages, genders and ethnicity.
- Unions need to promote the wider benefit of unions' efforts beyond the workplace to employees' families.
- 60% of potential members are in workplaces without a union presence, often women under 25 or workers in part-time, lower skilled jobs – so young people, and particularly women, need to be the focus of union recruiting efforts.

The new communication strategy will recast the perception of unions as being proactive in achieving positive outcomes, rather than just responding to problems in the workplace, and focusing on resolving conflict.

The slogan and communication strategy sits within a broader "growth and campaign plan" that is grouped around four key priorities:

- Pursuing further reforms to IR laws and responding to the global financial crisis;
- Campaigning and organising for growth, which includes regular meetings of key organising officials, an organising rights and delegates charter, and a strategic, centrally-funded approach to strategic litigation under the new IR regime;
- Promoting union values; and

Union capacity-building, including a central "clearing house" for research on organising and campaigning and more resources for education and training.

The Congress heard from several unions on their organising successes including CEPU Communications Division Secretary Ed Husic, who said the union would return to bargaining with Telstra following an effective campaign of rolling industrial action since December last year.

Port Augusta Postal workers at the crossroads

CEPU Port Augusta Post Office members are shell shocked at the proposals tabled after a recently conducted review.

Port Augusta, known as the crossroad to the West, North and Eastern States has for many years been the sorting hub for forward mails for many rural and remote areas and locally posted items.

It came as a surprise when Australia Post advised that the forward sorting component of work conducted at Port Augusta for over 40 years, was to be undertaken at the Adelaide Mail Centre.

SA/NT CEPU Branch Secretary Graham Lorrain said, "This proposal has implications for our members and local mail delivery standards."

Australia Post has also indicated that 1.5 – 1.8 FTE's at Port Augusta would have to be withdrawn but at this time the proposal of reducing the hours required is at the expense of 3 Part Time members.

Currently Australia Post has not committed to offer any voluntary redundancy packages to affected members and the only option is the removal of 10 hours per week from the 3 Part Timers. This reduction from 25 hrs to 15 hrs per week for struggling workers on low hours was indicative of the lack of compassion for loyal hard working members and is not supported by this branch. Other full time members are also dismayed at the reduction of income targeted at their work colleagues.

Cyberlock records used to spy on employees

The CEPU NSW P&T Branch has accused Australia Post of alleged unlawful surveillance and monitoring of employees via its Cyberlock system resulting in disciplinary action of incremental penalty and dismissal for several employees at the Alexandra Delivery Facility.

The Cyberlock system was supposedly introduced to provide additional security to depot locations used by Postal Delivery Officers that were identified as being a high risk in terms of theft from depot boxes. However it seems that Cyberlock records have supposedly revealed discrepancies between manually recorded finish times and times depots were accessed at the completion of runs.

While the disciplinary action is the subject of several Board of Reference hearings that have been initiated on members' behalf by the union the Chairman of the Board has expressed concern about the alleged unlawful surveillance and monitoring of employees, requesting that Post and the union meet at the senior level to resolve this issue and that he be advised of the outcome prior to hearing the disciplinary appeals matters.

In light of Post's previous undertakings that Cyberlock records would not be used to spy on employees the CEPU's position is that the proposed disciplinary action is harsh, unfair and unreasonable and will be vigorously contested.

Share this newsletter

Please share this Communications newsletter with fellow CEPU members and workmates by putting a copy up on your workplace Union noticeboard.

If you have any questions on any of the above articles, please contact an official at the Union office on (08) 8232 5999.

Yours faithfully,



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