

Kiran gets retrospective email policy withdrawn!



Staff vote no to unfair agreement



FSU Bites



April

Newsletter of the Finance Sector Union of Australia, NSW/ACT Branch

More endorsement for jobs policy

FSU Workplace Reps at the St George Customer Contact Centre at Parramatta are the latest to endorse the “Invest In Australia” policy aimed at protecting jobs in our industry.

The Reps at Parramatta were the next group to endorse the policy following IAG members in Wollongong last month and other endorsement meetings are taking place over the coming weeks and months across the industry.

The goal now will be to seek wider endorsement team by team at the centre so every staff member has the opportunity to see, understand and endorse the policy themselves.

FSU Rep Linda Blackmore is urging all staff to get behind the policy...

“In the current climate job protection is more important than ever and we all need to get behind Invest in Australia to protect not only our jobs, but our industry as a whole”, she said.

The policy consists of a 5 point plan...

1. No more offshoring
2. No reduction in staff without a reduction in workloads
3. No forced retrenchments
4. A new skills fund
5. Better severance payments

The process of endorsement will continue over the coming weeks and months with the final aim being to generate enough support to convince our employers to adopt the 5 point plan, *Invest in Australia*, in formal enforceable agreements.



St George Parramatta Customer Contact Centre FSU Reps Debbie Gallagher, Jason Katipa, Linda Blackmore and Sascha Prasad

Offshoring Scoreboard

Players	Score
ANZ	2178
NAB	1162
Westpac	415
AXA	400
St George	271
CitiGroup / Diners	232
Macquarie	100

TOTAL

up by 103 to

4758



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Jobs to date offshored from the Australian Finance Industry

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Secretary's Report

Geoff Derrick - State Secretary

A Safety Message to our Leaders



There's nothing more important at work than safety. Today our industry shows alarming signs of higher levels of workplace stress, workload-overload and bullying as many of our employers try to achieve more with less.

When Kevin Rudd's Labor Party was elected in 2007, they promised to harmonise occupational health and safety (OHS) laws around the country. Each State and Territory has its own laws as does the Commonwealth – making nine different sets of OHS laws that must be complied with. Business saw this as “red tape” and enthusiastically supported a promise to bring them into line. Many of the same business leaders supported the unfair Work Choices laws that ripped off so many working Australians.

How does a government harmonise nine different sets of laws without the reduction in standards that accompanied Work Choices? Deputy PM Julia Gillard promised in the official ALP policy for the 2007 election that, “Federal Labor's plan to harmonise OHS regulations and workers compensation schemes will uphold existing safety standards”. This can only be done by bringing everyone up to the top standard.

In NSW we have the top OHS standards in the country and better compliance regimes than any other jurisdiction. This means that we have seen real benefits through;

- 80% fewer armed hold-ups in the last 5 years

- Significant investment injury prevention strategies
- Fewer work related injuries and less time lost as a result

Our union, through workplace inspections and training and support for elected workplace OHS reps has pushed hard for these improvements, but now this is all at stake with a new report calling for Ms Gillard to scrap Union inspection and prosecution rights and reduce employer obligations, all in the name of reducing “red tape”.

This “red tape” is the practical protection from injury and illness at work for many working Australians. If the latest recommendations are accepted then the growing OHS issues in our industry of workplace stress, workload-overload and bullying will not be held in check.

With this month's hard copy edition of *FSUBites* we have included a postcard that we ask you to sign and send to Deputy PM Julia Gillard asking her to keep her election promise and uphold existing standards when she sits down to draft the new laws later this month. Don't delay, send your signed postcard today. More postcards are available from the Union office in Sydney.

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The NSW/ACT Executive is made up of finance industry workers and is the governing body of FSU in NSW & the ACT.



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Staff Vote NO to Unfair Agreement



Staff at Fiserv Solutions around the country have overwhelmingly voted down a non union agreement management put forward with a 65% no vote.

Even before Fiserv went ahead with their non-union proposal a clear majority of staff signed a petition asking for the new agreement to be a Union negotiated collective agreement. Despite the weight of the petition, Fiserv wrote to FSU saying they were not prepared to negotiate a Union agreement.

“Along with the petition, we held a sticker day where we all wore stickers that said ‘Make Fair Pay the Fiserv Way’ and attended meetings because we were very concerned about what was being proposed”, said FSU Lead Organiser Amanda Graupner.

Fiserv went ahead anyway and released its own draft agreement, despite knowing the firm views of staff.

The draft agreement did not contain across the board pay increases and linked all pay outcomes to an unfair performance appraisal system that would operate outside the agreement.

Problems around the protection of current conditions including hours and rosters were also a concern as was access to representation by FSU and settlement of disputes.

In the end and despite members reporting pressure to vote for the agreement, staff overwhelmingly voted it down.



FSU Lead Organiser Amanda Graupner

The company must now start genuine negotiations with FSU for a fairer agreement that protects current conditions of employment, provides across the board pay increases and includes a fair and transparent performance appraisal system as is the wish of the overwhelming majority of its staff.

4 Pillars Protects Australian Banks

The 4 pillars policy, put into place roughly 20 years ago and maintained by successive Federal Governments, prevents takeovers and mergers of Australia’s big four banks, ANZ, Westpac, NAB and CBA. As noted recently by former Reserve Bank Governor Ian McFarlane, the policy has actually protected Australian Banks from the worst of the global financial crises, despite calls for it to be dismantled by bank CEO’s over the years.

Mr Macfarlane said the four pillars system protected Australian banks from the worst of the global financial crisis by allowing them to price risk effectively and pursue less risky strategies in the knowledge they were not allowed to be taken over by their peers.

He said: “It’s hard to avoid the conclusion that the difference was there was no competition for corporate control in Australia, which saved us from the worst excess that characterised banking systems overseas.”

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission chief Graeme Samuel added that if any two of the big four banks - ANZ, National Australia Bank, Commonwealth Bank and Westpac - sought clearance for a merger, he would “have to tell them they were dreaming.”

Protected from themselves

Bank CEO’s have consistently called for the abolition of the four pillars policy with former Westpac CEO Dr David Morgan saying in an article published on ninemsn.com.au on 26 July 2007, “Set against banking consolidation worldwide and the globalisation of services, the policy is

an anachronism, a woolly mammoth dug from the Siberian tundra and shipped still frozen to Australia as a structure for banking.”

In an article published in The Age on 30 June 2006 Dr Morgan was quoted as saying the policy was a “pointless retardant” of growth and labeled the policy “regulatory nostalgia”.

Former NAB CEO John Stewart said in an article published in the Australian on 6 November 2006 he couldn’t see the policy continuing, “...I can’t see (the policy) surviving for another decade with globalisation”.

FSU consistently over that time has been a staunch advocate of retaining 4 pillars because even without a global financial crisis, the impact on jobs, competition and people of a merger of any two of the big four would be catastrophic.

“FSU always believed the four pillars policy was the correct policy for the Australian banking system”, said FSU NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Geoff Derrick.

“It is now abundantly clear to all that the big 4 while completely focused on bottom lines and ever increasing profits needed the policy in place almost to protect them from themselves”, said Geoff.

“How glad are we all now that their calls for the dismantling of the policy went unanswered given the turmoil in those overseas markets where banks have either gone under or been largely nationalised by governments trying to keep the system afloat”, he said.

Kiran gets retrospective email policy withdrawn!

In a great win for NAB Direct staff, FSU Rep Kiran Shukla has been successful in getting management to retract a new email policy that said anyone who was found to forward a non work related email would automatically get a formal warning placed on their personnel file, and that the new policy would be retrospective for twelve months!

"I was a bit surprised when I heard about the new policy and thought it was a quite unfair. When management were going to make it retrospective for twelve months I thought that was right over the top," said Kiran.

"Even if you forwarded an email to your private email account to read later on that could lead to a formal written warning", he said.

"The policy at that stage had the potential to impact people quite badly because as we know a formal written warning on your personnel file isn't something to be taken lightly", he said.

"Once the news of the new policy was broken to us by management I went straight to NAB's existing internal communications policy which seemed to contradict local management on all accounts".

Kiran thought then he had a good case to take to management and with some assistance from his FSU Organiser Elizabeth El Sayer, was able to get the policy retracted.



FSU Rep Kiran Shukla

"I contacted my Organiser Elizabeth who provided me with some information and help on how to approach management which gave me the confidence I needed to go forward", said Kiran.

"The end result was management sent an email to all staff at our workplace reaffirming the NAB's internal communications policy and retracting the new policy", he said.

This is a good result from Kiran and goes to show what can be achieved when a workplace Union rep steps up to challenge unfair management decisions.

ESU Bites April

Authorised by Geoff Derrick, Secretary, NSW/ACT Branch

Gossip!

Lost a loved one? Let us sell you something

A member sent FSU through a copy of a new customer profile form staff are expected to fill out to make it easier to sell to customers. Staff have to tick boxes that relate to the customer's personal situation which include buying a car or travelling to getting married, having a baby, getting divorced or coping with the loss of a loved one...

"Tag!"

A now ex employee of a large bank was constantly pressured by her manager to increase home loan referrals by constant "pep talks" and singling out at meetings. When the staff member wasn't able to increase referrals, the manager sat her near her desk and would poke her with a stick and shout "tag" each time she thought the member should be speaking to a customer about home loans.

If in Doubt, Make it Up

An employer announced a big restructure, cutting many jobs, created some others. Staff wanted to know more and were directed to a HR info service via email. Info service confidently starts responding to enquiries;

Q1: Is the new job comparable to my old job?

A: Sure it is! – WRONG.

Q2: I'll be away, can I get my preference form in early?

A: Sure you can! – WRONG...

The new jobs haven't been graded and the preference form doesn't exist yet!

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