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# FSU Bites



January

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

# “VOLUNTEERS ONLY”

## UNION WINS WEEKEND TEST CASE AT CBA

**The FSU has won a year long test case that protects CBA staff from compulsory weekend rosters and restricts CBA to using volunteers in all its weekend trading branches.**

The decision handed down in the NSW Administrative Decisions Tribunal protects over 1,400 staff including more than 300 employed on AWA's who have worked weekends in CBA's NSW branches in 2008.

As a result of the Tribunal's decision, CBA staff cannot be forced into working weekends.

FSU NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Geoff Derrick who has been involved in the case since inception and gave evidence at the tribunal hearing, said CBA had been caught out trying to force people to work and the decision now affords CBA staff the same protections as their colleagues in other banks.

“During the case we provided evidence of CBA attempting to force both EBA and AWA staff to work weekends against their will, including one example of an area office sending an email that said that people would be rostered to work over the Christmas / New Year weekends regardless of their availability”, said Geoff.

“Despite the bank's denials, we knew they were trying to force staff to work on weekends and under cross examination they were forced to come clean over the email”, he said.

“The decision is a great one for CBA staff and brings the bank into line with Westpac, the NAB and the ANZ, all of whom use volunteers for weekend branches”, said Geoff.

## Interests of staff are in the Public Interest

In handing down the decision, Deputy President Handley from the tribunal said that ensuring weekend work was voluntary was in the public interest and that the welfare of staff, including a work/life balance should be taken into consideration:

“In my view, the interests of such staff extend to their family situations and their place in the wider community”.

“... there is broad public interest in weekend work being voluntary so that individuals can choose to pursue their non work interests, whether

involving family, friends or other activities, including recreation or relaxation.”

## Penalty Rates Preserved

A flow on benefit from the decision is that CBA has been forced to include weekend penalties for staff on AWA's and other individual contracts that match the penalty rates that EBA staff are entitled to. Without these penalties CBA would be unable to attract and retain weekend volunteers.



FSU NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Geoff Derrick... “The decision is a great one for CBA staff...”

For more information or assistance with your situation, call the FSU Member Rights Centre on 1300 366 378.

## Offshoring Scoreboard

Players	Score
ANZ	1975
NAB	1162
Westpac	415
AXA	400
St George	271
CitiGroup / Diners	232
Macquarie	100

**TOTAL**

up by 305 to...

**4555**



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# Members keep thousands in bonuses

With the support of their local workplace union rep Amy Wand and FSU advocate Edmund Fry, a group of Member's Equity mobile lenders have been able to keep their bonuses after being told they would have to pay the money back – totaling thousands of dollars.

The group was told that on commencement, all business written would contribute to their annual targets and bonus in accordance with their letter of offer.

Members' Equity later said that the portion of the bonus earned before the targets were formally set would need to be repaid. This for some lenders totaled almost two thousand dollars.

"We knew that wasn't right and were sure of the earlier commitments we received so as a group spoke to our FSU workplace rep Amy Wand", said FSU member and mobile lender Ramy Elkilany.

"Amy was great and after listening to our concerns, she contacted the FSU Member Rights Centre and ran our case past Union Advocate Edmund Fry", he said.

"Edmund assured us of our rights and we had a case to keep our bonuses given the commitments Members' Equity had made to us. He helped us draft a letter to ME explaining that they should stick by the commitments they had made".



Members Equity FSU Rep Amy Wand with mobile lender Ramy Elkilany

"We were a bit on edge at this stage as we were talking about a fair bit of money but we pressed on with the support of both Amy and Edmund", said Ramy.

"In the end, the company agreed our bonuses were paid in line with the commitments made to us at the commencement of our employment which was a great relief", he said.

"This is a great result for the mobile lenders at Members Equity and goes to show what an effective, trained workplace rep working in conjunction with the Union office can achieve", said NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Geoff Derrick.

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## NSW/ACT Executive

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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# 12% pay increases at Credit Unions

Following successful collective agreement negotiations between FSU and a number of Credit Unions, staff can look forward with certainty now their pay and conditions are secure for the next 3 years – good news in the current financial climate.

Staff at Select, Companion, SGE and Encompass Credit Unions will all receive a minimum of 4% across the board pay increases each year over the next 3 years.

“Our agreement really provides us with as much certainty and security as we can get in the current climate”, said FSU Member Janette Bennett from SGE.

“I know my pay will increase with the cost of living and that’s very important”.

As well as certainty over pay, improvements have been made in the areas of severance pay in case of redundancy as well as sick leave, staff development and training and improved staff benefits such as reductions in interest rates on loans including mortgages.

## An important time.

Around the world, finance is going through enormous change. In Australia there are major changes happening to how pay and conditions are regulated right now. Credit Unions are not immune from the impact of these events.

FSU Lead Organiser Amanda Graupner who has been involved in the negotiation of the collective agreements would like to see more employers negotiating deals such as these as they are not only good for staff but good for employers as well...

“Job security and certainty about pay and conditions have never been more important for Credit Union staff and that’s why FSU will be talking to staff



SGE Credit Union FSU Members... Janette Bennett, Andrew Thorneley and Rachelle Clana

across all Credit Unions about negotiating good collective agreements that provide a secure future”, said Amanda.

“But it also provides security for employers in that they know what to expect as well as giving them the opportunity to retain and attract good staff via superior pay and conditions”, she said.

For more information or to find out how your Credit Union can benefit from a Union negotiated collective agreement, contact Amanda Graupner on 1300 366 378 or email [nswact@fsunion.org.au](mailto:nswact@fsunion.org.au)

## Fair pay at IAG?

A recent Union survey conducted across IAG has seen 82% of respondents say they want annual pay increases in line with the cost of living. Only 22% said they were happy with current pay arrangements. Not surprising given IAG’s pay system is confusing, inconsistent and lacks transparency.

The push for a fairer system is gaining momentum and FSU Rep Carmen Johnson is asking all staff to get involved.

“The key to achieving a fairer pay system is for us all to work together to convince IAG to negotiate a new collective agreement that includes a better pay system and across the board cost of living pay increases”, said Carmen

“FSU members and reps like myself are building a network of staff who want to work together to achieve a fairer pay system at IAG and I hope you’ll join me”, said Carmen.

Staff at IAG are currently paid under secret “market rates” with no cost of living increases.

Companies like IAG subscribe to an annual salary survey which involves a research company collecting annual salary information from different companies.

A condition of access to the information is that IAG must keep it confidential.

This means the data used to determine how staff are paid is secret and staff have no way of knowing whether they are actually being paid the correct market rate, or even if those market rates used to measure salary are accurate.



FSU Rep Carmen Johnson

## The push for fairer pay...

A fairer pay system at IAG must be more consistent and transparent and must include three main elements:

1. Annual across the board pay increases to keep pace with the cost of living.
2. A reward or bonus scheme for staff that are meeting or exceeding expectations.
3. Achievable, agreed targets based on realistic workloads.

To be more involved, contact FSU on 1300 366 378 or email [nswact@fsunion.org.au](mailto:nswact@fsunion.org.au)

# BE A LEADER IN 09



Participants at the November 2008 Reps Training Course held in the Union office, Sydney.

## Workplace Reps' training courses

The course runs for 2 days and is held in the Union office. It aims to develop skills needed for Reps to deal effectively with resolving members' concerns at the workplace level.

This course will enable you to:

- Make the most of your skills and abilities to make our union stronger
- Represent members well in front of management
- Handle individual and collective workplace disputes with support from the Union Office
- Develop strategies to win on key issues for your members
- Work with other union reps in your local area or your building

Workplace Union Reps can attend Union training and in most cases receive paid training leave to attend the course. 2009 courses will be held in February, March, May, June, August, September, October, November and December.

If you're a Rep who hasn't attended the 2 day course, or want to become the rep for your workplace, complete the FSU Rep Training Registration Flyer included with this edition of FSUBites or download a copy at <http://www.fsunion.org.au/FSU-in-your-Region/State-Offices/NSWACT/FSU-Reps-Courses-09.aspx>

## Union Leaders look towards a better industry

Union leaders from 8 FSU Member Councils came together on 29 October for a Union leader's workshop to set the direction for FSU in 2009 and fine tune the Union's agenda for a better finance industry. Key points of that agenda were:

- Better Careers:** Secure employment, safe and healthy workplaces, promoting local jobs and services
- Better pay:** Achievable workloads, de-link targets from base pay increases, equal pay for equal work, 15% employer superannuation contributions
- Better services:** Responsible lending, proper staffing levels, sustainable competitive industry that is prudentially regulated

## Step up to a Member Council

Interested members and Union Reps can take their FSU involvement to the next level and apply to become a member of one of 8 FSU Member Councils. The Councils have responsibility for setting the industrial priorities of the FSU in NSW as well as making recommendations on policy and industry strategy to the NSW/ACT Executive. The Executive is made up of the presidents of each Member Council and the Branch Secretary Geoff Derrick.

If you'd like a hands on say in the direction our Union takes, then a member council position could be for you. To find out more please contact Veronica Black, Director of Organising NSW/ACT via email [veronica.black@fsunion.org.au](mailto:veronica.black@fsunion.org.au) or phone 1300 366 378.

# FSU Bites

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Authorised by Geoff Derrick, Secretary, NSW/ACT Branch



## Gossip!

10 out of 10

Some new bill boards have sprung up around Sydney advertising the fact a particular bank call centre has won an award. The billboard shows a young woman holding a 'ten out of ten' sign standing in her kitchen. However, if you look closely at the bottom left corner of the billboard there's a stack of cook books – Indian cook books. It seems someone with a sense of humour has placed them in the shot to protest against the fact that lots of jobs that were once part of this call centre have been offshored to Banaglore (see photo below).



## No- That's Not Bullying

They say, "Yes – the senior manager threatened her. Yes – he breached the company code of conduct. Yes – his behaviour was a breach of corporate principles. Yes – she was reduced to tears. Yes – he breached discrimination laws, But, no –that's not bullying according to company policy, and, no – she won't get an apology"... We say, "this isn't the end of the matter."