



September 6, 2024

QUBE BARGAINING UPDATE

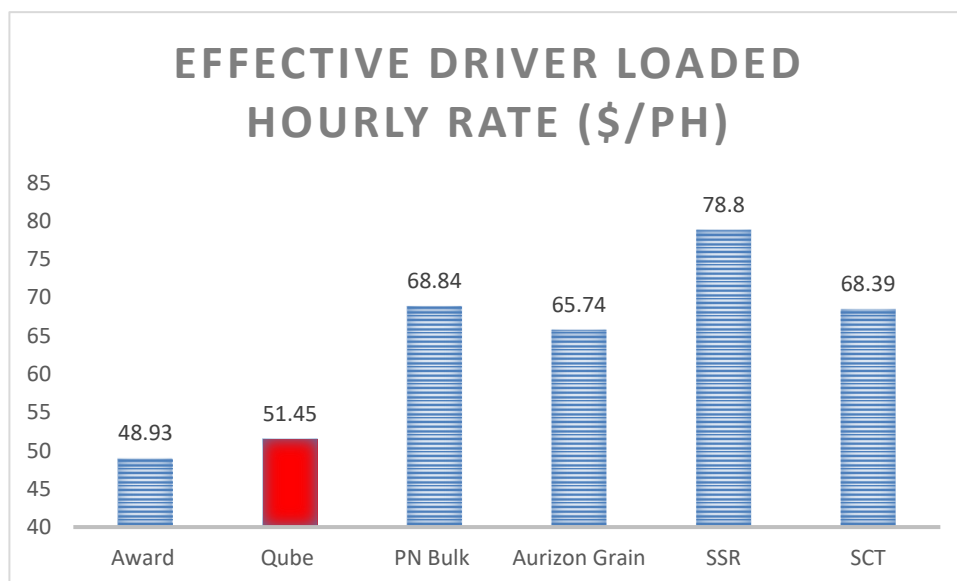
Late last week, Qube employees received a proposed enterprise agreement from Qube and notification that a ballot will be held next week to approve that agreement. The agreement sent out is not endorsed by the RTBU and all members should **vote early and vote "NO"**.

The RTBU does not support the proposal, for the following reasons:

- Below inflation pay rises
- Not catching up with Industry Standards
- No Penalty Rates

Current Rates are *really* low

Qube's pay offer comes off a low base. The \$51.45 final rate for Drivers (which Qube maintains is a loaded rate) is currently the lowest in the industry. It is even below recent labour hire agreements. In fact, it is so low that some people who are at level 3 are likely being paid less than what they would have earned working under the Award - **this is why the Union's case for penalty rates is so important!**



AUTHORISED: F Campbell Locomotive Divisional Secretary

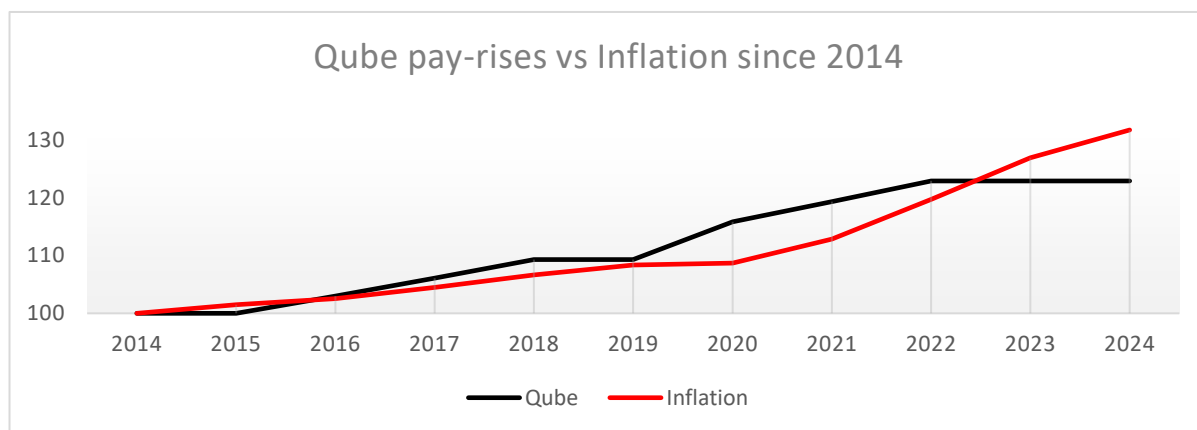
Level 4, 321 Pitt St Sydney. NSW 2000



History of below inflation

Since inception, Qube’s pay rises have fallen behind inflation. In Qube’s first Enterprise Agreement covering Drivers in NSW (the Qube 2015 Agreement) the relevant Drivers rate was \$41.60. That was a figure that Qube picked from one of the rail companies it took over and was first set in 2014. Adjusted for inflation since 2014, that rate would be \$55.19 today if it had kept up.

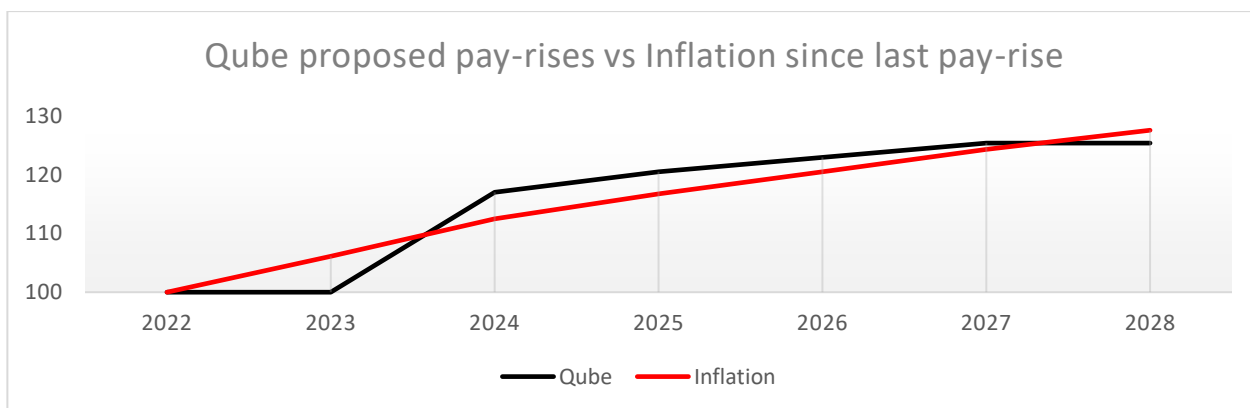
That means the first 7% of pay rises will just get you back to where you were in 2014.



Below inflation moving forward

In the context of a low starting rate and a history of not keeping up with inflation, it is disappointing that Qube has **once again** offered pay increases that won’t keep up with inflation moving forward.

Qube is proposing to increase rates of pay by 24% for the 6-year period that covers the period from your last pay rise on 1 April 2022 to the end of 2028 when the proposed agreement expires. Current RBA forecasts (which are constantly being revised upwards) imply over 26% inflation over the same period. Qube’s 24% offer is not acceptable, especially when you’re being asked to give up penalty rates to achieve it.



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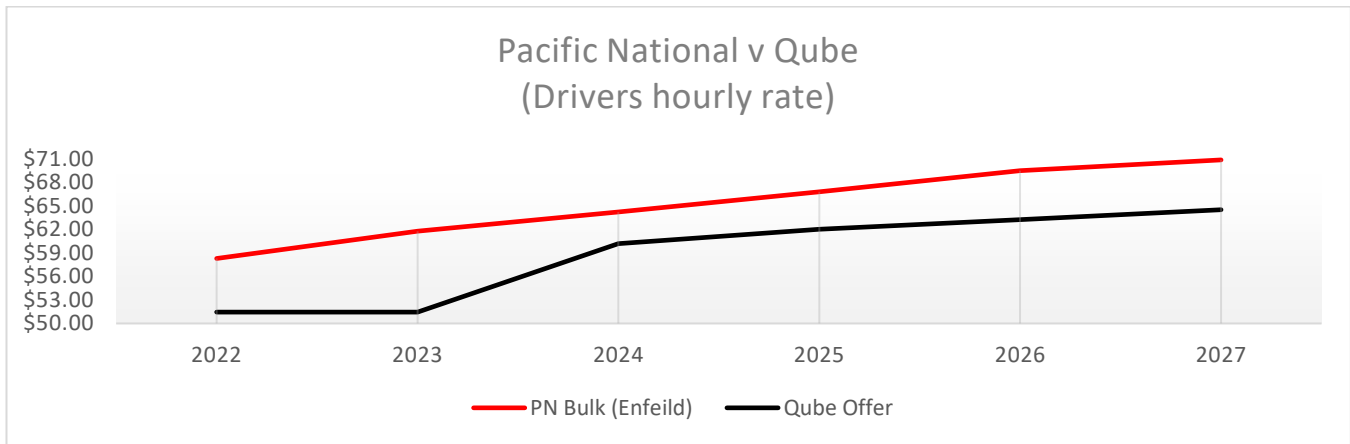
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Compare it with Industry Standards

Looking at the big picture, Qube’s offer has a long way to go before its offer has any meaningful impact in catching up with the rest of the industry.

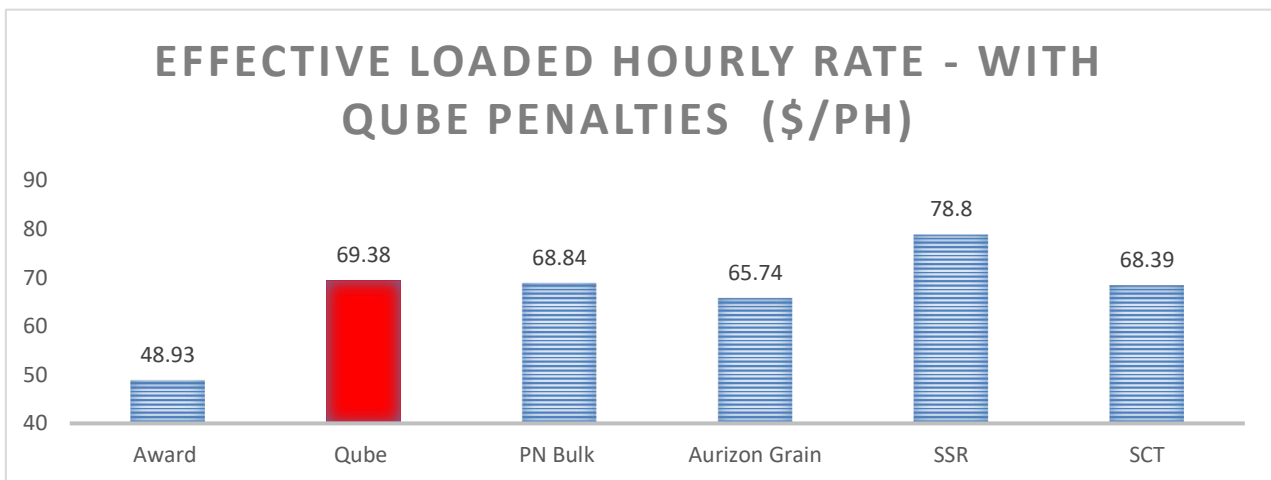
Qube’s closest competitor, Pacific National Bulk, pays Drivers **at least** \$6ph more for the same work, in the same locations, for the same clients. Despite needing to close this gap urgently and Qube needing to change the enterprise agreement to get rid of penalty rates, the gap between Qube and the **lowest paid PN Bulk Driver depot** hardly changes from \$6.84ph in 2022 to \$6.35ph in 2027. In the depots that attract a higher APM at Pacific National, those PN Drivers are \$11.43ph ahead of Qube Drivers by 2027.



What happened to penalty rates?

Finally, Qube’s proposed enterprise agreement will get rid of penalty rates. So far, the Union has defeated every challenge by Qube to our claim for penalty rates. Qube will need a lot of luck to win from this point.

However, if we accept penalty rates are payable, it would put Qube right back into line with other comparable operators. Below is the first chart produced in this newsflash, but Qube’s \$51.45 rate has been adjusted in accordance with the penalty rates and allowances that would have been paid over a monthly period. This figure reflects an actual roster for an actual Qube level 4 employee in 2023.



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This newsflash only deals with Qube's pay offer – a separate newsflash will deal with the other issues with Qube's proposed enterprise agreement.

Members need to remember there will be no better time than now to close the pay-gap with the rest of the industry – this pay offer is not good enough – especially when you're being asked to give away a solid legal claim for penalty rates.

Remember to vote early and Vote "NO"

Where to next in the underpayment claim? – Early October 2024 Qube will have to front up to the Federal Court and explain why the RTBU underpayment claim should not proceed immediately.

Where to next in bargaining? – After this vote, if the agreement is voted down, we expect the matter will be declared intractable.

Not a Member, Join Today



If you have any questions about joining, please contact the RTBU Head Office on (02) 9264 2511