



RTBU NSW Loco Division NEWSFLASH

September 10, 2024

Watco EA Update

In the latest twist in what has been a very frustrating bargain so far, Watco has been quietly organising Information Sessions with Members this week to presumably discuss their ordinary EA offer.

This is despite:

1. Keeping everyone in the dark as to what that offer actually is
2. Not telling the RTBU or your bargaining representatives what these 'sessions' are about
3. Not providing the RTBU with a draft enterprise agreement
4. Secretly deleting existing clauses
5. Not providing reasons for changes to the EA
6. Providing misleading information about the status of bargaining

Simply put, we have no idea what is in or out of this so-called 'agreement'.

We don't know if Watco are preparing to send out their draft Enterprise Agreement without endorsement after the information sessions. What we do know is this 'agreement' has a long way to go before there is a fair and reasonable offer to put to employees.

At our last meeting with Watco, after reviewing some draft sections of the EA, we advised them of missing clauses from your current EA, which include:

- No extra Claims
- Job Sharing
- No Crew Shift Configurations
- No Salary Sacrifice
- Training in Watco work time
- Annual Relief Lines

Funny how all these clauses that were 'accidentally' deleted will save Watco money if they are not in the next enterprise agreement.

It was also raised that Watco have sent out misleading information to our members stating they had provided a '*drafted copy of the proposed EA with all agreed terms and conditions to date*' in their minutes. That is despite the fact that the parties have not agreed to any drafting yet.

We can also advise that the following of your claims have not been agreed to:

- Training Bond
- Wages
- Public Holidays
- Term of Agreement

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- Working into and out of RDO's without consultation or agreement
- Golden Weekend changes
- Overtime Rate
- Overtime Meal fixed for the life of the EA
- Reduction of rest period from Night Shift without consultation.
- No definition of a Blank Day

We're particularly concerned about Training Bonds. **What is a Training Bond?** A Training Bond is an arrangement where the company directs you to attend training, but if you leave or are terminated within a certain period of that direction, Watco will seek to have you pay back to them tens of thousands of dollars. This will include training for Drivers Cert 4 and may include any future training the company decides that you will require. Another word for it is indentured servitude.

Watco have advised of their latest wage offer and it looks like this:

	Certification	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year
Level 1	1.09%	2%	2%	2%
Level 2	6.01%	3.50%	3.50%	3%
Level 3	4.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3%
Level 4	4.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3%
Level 5	4.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3%

It also includes a cost-of-living bonus on approval of \$1,000.00 pre-tax. The couple of hundred dollars this represents by the time it hits your bank account is insulting and out of touch.

Most other operators are offering in excess of 20% over the life of their EA's, and sign-on bonuses of up to \$15,000, yet Watco thinks 11.5% and couple of hundred bucks is enough.

If you attend one of these Information Sessions, make sure you speak up and tell Watco what you are seeking from your new Enterprise Agreement.

If members have issues or enquiries, please contact Kevin Pryor on 0417105356.

Not a member, then join today (click on link below), or if you have any questions about joining, please contact the RTBU Head Office on (02) 9264 3400.

