



SITREP 15/14

Retained award update #16

As reported in SITREP 12/2014, there remain four outstanding issues in the Retained Award:

1. The consultation arrangements around "organisational change" at Clause 27, where the Union is seeking to insert a new provision that requires the Department to consult with the Union before any changes are made that may reduce any brigade's working hours (eg time penalties or restricted calling), and for the IRC to determine the outcome if it remains in dispute.
2. The revised disciplinary provisions and protections being proposed by the Union at Clause 22 in response to the soon to be implemented changes to the Regulation.
3. The Union's proposed new Service Allowance, as per the Permanent Award; and
4. The Union's claim for overtime to be paid for all time worked by retained members on Easter Sunday and any additional (non-standard) public holidays, as per the granting of consolidated leave for such days under the Permanent Award.

The Department had always opposed points 1 and 2, but it was only late in the discussions that it became clear that points 3 and 4 had also been rejected by the Government's "Wages Policy Taskforce" that is responsible for oversighting all public sector wage negotiations. The Union, in the face of the Government's rejection and the unlikelihood of the IRC awarding it, reluctantly withdrew its claim for a Service Allowance and similarly the Department withdrew its claim for a response allowance funded by the abolition of all kilometre payments. Withdrawing the claim for the Service Allowance has changed the capping of kilometres proposal for the better, with capping occurring at 14km, rather than at 7km, and kilometre payments for authorised duties will no longer be abolished. The Union will pursue the Service Allowance for Retained members in future negotiations.

On items 1, 2 and 4 Justice Walton recommended the following:

- That the Department should be required to consult with the Union on changes likely to reduce retained members' working hours and that organisational change should not proceed for at least 14 days in the event of a dispute before the IRC;
- That the disciplinary clause should remain unchanged;
- That overtime rates should be paid to retained members who work on additional public holidays, including Easter Sunday, with the additional cost to be offset by a cap of 14 return kilometres on payments for kilometres to attend the station when responding to incidents.

The Union has said it will accept the recommendation, but the Department has not, requesting until the 29 April to give its response.

In Brief:

- Following preliminary discussions, the Permanent and the Death and Disability Awards will return to the IRC next week.
- The May Day March and celebrations will be held on Sunday 4 May with members meeting at Parliament House, Macquarie Street at 1130 hours.

Jim Casey
State Secretary

Thursday, 24 April 2014