

TAFE support staff enterprise bargaining bulletin 2

The PSA, along with other unions, met with TAFE on 1 and 2 July to continue to negotiate the conditions contained in your next enterprise agreement. Your union had previously lobbied for TAFE to provide a guarantee that a 2.5% pay increase awarded to other workers in the government sector would be extended to TAFE staff retrospectively and back-dated to July 2015.

TAFE's response this week was to inform us that the 2.5% would only be backdated if the unions agreed to TAFE's proposals within 8-9 weeks, including a new classification system and a consolidation of employment conditions.

In order to finalise the new classification system, TAFE and the PSA would need to negotiate on the standards against which every TAFE employee's job would be evaluated, the translation from the current system to the new system, the implementation processes and the flow on impacts this would have. All this and more is proposed by TAFE to be negotiated and voted on by 16 September. The PSA expects that in order for this to be done effectively and with proper consideration by our members, it would take 4-6 months to finalise.

The PSA strongly objected to the short timeframe and advocated for TAFE to take an alternative position to the NSW Government Wages Policy Task Force. The PSA asked for:

- A 2.5% pay rise for TAFE staff to be paid from 1 July, with the current agreement

being extended by 6-12 months; OR

- A 2.5% pay rise from the next earliest pay date (likely to be 1 August 2015) with the current agreement being extended for 6 months.

Both of these proposals would allow the new classification system to be negotiated fairly.

This reasonable proposal was rejected by TAFE, as they refused to return to the NSW Wages Policy Task Force with an alternative request. By the end of the second day of negotiations, TAFE amended their refusal and indicated they might consider our request at the next meeting.

A new classification system, and the consolidation of a large, diverse range of related employment conditions, should not be rushed even for a small pay rise over a couple of months.

In addition to a rushed classification system in 8 weeks, TAFE is proposing the following consolidation of employment conditions:

- 80% of TAFE staff currently working 35 hours per week to work ***an extra 2 hours per week, for no extra pay***
- Extend the span of hours for all staff to 6am to 9pm, 7 days a week
- Introduce broken shift work, which can be used ***for all staff*** (e.g. 2 hours on duty in the morning, 5 hours break, 3 hours on duty in the evening).
- Cut shift penalties, cut overtime rates, cut

allowances, cut rostered days off.

- Drastically restrict and limit access to flexible working arrangements – must get supervisor's approval for all additional time worked, every single day.
- Automatic loss of accrued hours, even if a supervisor refuses to give you time off for "operational requirements".

There is a wide range of other proposals being made by TAFE, which drastically slash wages and conditions, and threaten all staff to be covered by this agreement. Over the next few weeks, the PSA will be going through all the details, and will let you know exactly how much of your working conditions are proposed to be slashed. We are concerned that TAFE's proposal will drive wages, conditions and entitlements to below the minimum standard allowed under Fair Work Australia.

Under the current conditions being proposed by TAFE, the PSA expects that within 6-12 months, the majority of staff will:

- Potentially have their salaries slashed transitioning to a rushed and untested classification system
- Work longer hours, for less pay
- Have no ability to review or participate in how the new classification system works
- Be pressured into doing more and more "flexitime" with no extra pay, no time off, and accrued hours being lost forever

The PSA is calling upon members to:

- ***Reject the initial insulting offer made by TAFE***
- ***Reject slashed salaries***

Join the PSA membership.psa.asn.au/join

- ***Reject slashed conditions***

Over the last 2 years TAFE have already embarked on restructure after restructure, cutting 1000s of jobs. They now want to step up the attack on the staff that remains.

The PSA will be arranging a number of member meetings in the coming weeks to update staff on these developments.

In order for your union to continue to strongly defend your conditions of employment, it is vital you encourage your colleagues who may not yet be a member of the PSA to join.

Not a member? Join the PSA today to fight for improvements instead of slashed wages and conditions at www.psa.asn.au.

Members should pass this message on to interested potential PSA members.

Your PSA(CPSU) Bargaining Representatives

PSA Delegates

Leon Parissi

Margaret Bamford

Christopher Hobbins

Glenda Pryor

Andrew Ruddell

Brad Cowie

Brook Down

Gary Hodgkinson

PSA Staff

Phoebe Dangerfield

Blake Stephens

