

Back to the Commission we go

At our meeting on Thursday 7 April 2016, Maurice Blackburn confirmed that they will not be releasing the bonus information to us that we have requested on terms we can agree to. We have no alternative but to relist the application to get this case back before the Fair Work Commission. The matter is relisted for 18th April 2016.

The bonus distribution from the past years is a missing part of the information we need to pursue our claim for a fair and transparent bonus scheme.

State of play

At our last meeting we talked about the following claims & clauses:

- Access to family violence leave
- Swap leave for pay
- Breast feeding facilities
- Transition to retirement
- Fixed term employees
- IT rostering and on call rates

The company is considering our proposals.

Since the meeting we have received their response to our union rights clause which is extremely disappointing as the firm is requiring your delegates seek permission from the General Manager of Human Resources before communicating with employees who are not members of the ASU. This seems inconsistent with a firm with such significant ties to the trade union movement.

Refusing to bargain

The firm is currently refusing to bargain on a number of claims including:

- A fair disciplinary investigation process
- Consistent gym membership policy for all employees
- Car parking and lunch rooms
- A fair and transparent system for the allocation of bonuses

The firm is maintaining its pay increase offer which is an effective freezing of the minimum rates for Lawyers. The firm is introducing a new bonus scheme but they are refusing to discuss it with us now.

The current low end pay rise offer for support staff is a concern as well as you have told us.

Given the recent focus in The Australian about the equity owning partners taking \$16 million in dividends in the 2014-2015 financial year, we thought it would be interesting to see what dividends had been paid in the years before the last return. In 2013-2014 financial year, the dividends were

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\$2.589million and in 2012-13 financial year the dividends were \$7.2million.

In light of these dividends, we know many of you don't think our claims for a decent pay rise are unreasonable given the obvious success of the firm.

What next?

We have a commission hearing on 18th April and then a further EBA meeting on 19th April.

We will keep you posted on what happens next.

Got questions?

If you have queries contact your local ASU delegate/NNT member or organisers.

Now more than ever it is time to join the ASU – you can join the ASU on line at www.asu.asn.au/asujoin.

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