

Great airline
Great staff
we deserve a great agreement



A Win for ASU members ...but the devil is in the detail

For many months the ASU has fought hard to ensure that Virgin meets its obligations and pays shift workers the correct annual leave loading entitlements under your Agreement and we are pleased to report that the company is about to correct errors from the past 6 years for many employees.

What do we know?

Under the current agreement and according to past agreements, when shift workers go on annual leave they are entitled to receive a loading on annual leave of 17 1/2 % or the average of the shift penalties that they had been earning over the proceeding period whichever is the greater.

What we have learned is that Virgin has been paying all shift workers at the Contact Centre and all part time guest services staff at airports 17 1/2% loading regardless of whether the average shift penalties worked had been higher. Full time staff at airports though had been receiving approximately 33% loading on annual leave payments, again regardless of whether this was their average penalties over the proceeding period.

What this means is some people will have been underpaid and potentially some people may have been overpaid annual leave loading. Each person's situation will be different depending on where you work, if you are full time or part time or have been both over the last 6 years. Also important is what sort of shift patterns you have worked before taking annual leave, if you worked lots of shifts attracting the highest penalties then your average penalties for the calculation will be higher.

Virgin management says that this Friday 2nd August (subject to Finance sign off...whatever that means) they are going to send each staff member covered by the current agreement a letter advising you what they say you are owed by the company and they will transfer any money they say they owe to you. If Virgin says a staff member owes the company money they will not be asking for repayment nor will they be seeking to offset underpayments for an individual against any overpayment to the same staff member for another annual leave payment.

We suspect the errors for leave loading go back beyond 6 years but as this is all the company is legally obliged to pay that is all they are going to pay! What they morally owe to long serving staff is another matter of course and you might want to make that point to your manager.

Management says that the calculations for future annual leave loading and for annual leave loading paid between March and August 2013 will be fixed in about mid-August 2013, but we urge all our members to check your pay slips carefully at the time you get them because errors can and do happen.

How will you be able to tell if you are paid what is owed?

The only way to be absolutely certain about what is owed to you is to insist that you get all the calculations and records that Virgin payroll has used for your individual calculations. If the company has made such significant errors for so long who could be sure they are correct now? We urge all ASU members to make this request. Then check the information yourself first and then ASU members can also request assistance from our trained industrial organisers who can also help you determine if Virgin payroll has got it right. We can only assist members.

What can you be certain of?

The only thing that you can be certain of is that it pays to belong to the ASU - we are the only union to take this issue up for our members as soon as we established that the problem was occurring. If you want to guarantee that you are paid what is owed now more than ever it is time to join the ASU, you can join online <https://www.asu.asn.au/asujoin> or by using the membership on the back of this bulletin.

Need more information?

For more information please contact your local Organisers.

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