



THE FSU REPS NEWS AGENDA



This newsletter is aimed at keeping FSU Reps informed of union activities to assist you to carry out the critical role you play in the workplace. Please take this publication to work with you and display it prominently for everyone's information. The Agenda can be accessed electronically by visiting the FSU website at www.fsunion.org.au/News-Views/Publications.

Bargaining back on the agenda

A message from the National Secretary

The successful fight against Workchoices and continuing pressure placed on finance sector employers to collectively bargain is finally starting to pay off, with significant movement from some of our largest employers. With the Fair Work Act, taking effect from 1st July, 2009, bargaining new collective agreements is very much back on the agenda.

With enterprise bargaining negotiations occurring at NAB, and negotiations set to commence at ANZ at the end of June, FSU Reps are dusting off their organising skills, refreshing their negotiation skills, and talking to members and prospective members about improving conditions for everyone through collective bargaining.

The signs are promising at CBA and Westpac, and I predict we will be in a position to collectively bargain improved conditions at these major banks in the not too distant future.

With the exception of NAB, the last ten years have not delivered significant opportunities for FSU Reps to promote a positive industrial agenda in banking workplaces. FSU Reps are about to play a vital role in securing better employment conditions for everyone.

In the insurance industry, the stand-out employer is Zurich, who have a union negotiated collective agreement in place. With the introduction of the Federal Government's Fair Work Act, there is mounting pressure for employers to bargain with employees and their representatives collectively, after 1st July, 2009.

Interestingly, two insurance companies are trying to roll-over inferior workplace agreements before 1st July, to avoid negotiating better employment conditions with employees and their unions. Both Suncorp and INGA have notified their staff of their intention to roll-over existing agreements, and FSU Reps at Suncorp are campaigning within their workplaces to gain a substantial vote against the proposal.

With industrial relations changes on the horizon, and bargaining back on the agenda, FSU Reps should consider attending a union training course, so you can make the most of the opportunities that are coming up.

Spreading the word

One of the primary responsibilities of a union rep is to distribute information about the union's achievements and activities throughout the workplace. **One of the easiest ways to do this is to forward your fortnightly edition of our e-newsletter, FSU Online,** to other members and prospective members at your place of work. If you don't receive it, I encourage you to add your email address to the subscription list, which you can do via the FSU website.

The software FSU uses to distribute FSU Online enables us to track the number of recipients who open the email, click on one of the stories, or forward it on to others. This enables us to understand which articles are of interest or of value to members, and allows us to measure the effectiveness of the communications we distribute. Only a handful of recipients are actually forwarding this e-newsletter on to colleagues.

I can't stress strongly enough the importance of Reps undertaking this simple task and spreading the word of your union.

Membership Fees

The FSU National Executive has determined that membership fees will need to increase by 3.5% from 1 July 2009 to keep pace with increasing costs.

The Executive noted that the union has increased activities in all areas, including workplace visits, individual and collective representation, having recovered some \$6,696,386 in entitlements for members in the 08/09 financial year to March.

While the Executive would prefer not to increase member fees and understands the concerns that are sometimes raised by members and potential members, it is important that Reps are able to explain to colleagues the value of union membership and the benefits that membership provides.

Being a union member means you have access to professional advice, services and assistance, the union works for you and is on your side should something go wrong. The union also makes sure that member's rights and entitlements are respected in the workplace. Working together, in the union, we are able to get better pay and conditions. The union is a member based, not for profit organisation.

And don't forget, membership fees are fully tax deductible.

Bankwest

Bankwest reps responded rapidly when news of 400 jobs being slashed broke, attending urgently convened meetings in big numbers, organising members to endorse a series of demands to put on the bank, and ensuring good attendance numbers at a lunchtime rally in Perth.

The vigorous campaign by Bankwest reps achieved:

No Further Job Cuts:

As a result of our public campaign Bankwest has made a commitment to no further jobs losses. We will need to remain vigilant to ensure they stick to this commitment.

Additional payments:

Level 3 and 4 employees who are retrenched will receive an additional \$800 in compensation if they do not receive their September salary review increase. Employees who are within 10 weeks of becoming eligible for pro rata Long Service Leave (LSL) will receive the payment of pro rata LSL.

Commitment to Reasonable Workloads:

Bankwest has made a commitment to ensure that any reduction in staffing levels because of the job cuts will not result in unreasonable workloads for remaining staff. Managers will be responsible for ensuring that the expected work can reasonably be completed within normal work hours.

Political Support:

As a result of representations by the FSU: the WA Premier committed to pursue Bankwest about a better deal for employees; and the Federal Treasurer's office has been in touch with Commonwealth Bank (CBA) and reiterated the importance of maximising redeployment options for Bankwest employees.

Redeployment to CBA:

Bankwest "doesn't expect" that staff taking voluntary redeployment to CBA will be paid less. The FSU will continue to liaise with Bankwest and CBA to ensure that staff redeploying to CBA are not disadvantaged.



"If it wasn't for our strong Reps network we wouldn't have had the strong turnout at our Reps meeting and at the rally, especially given the short time frame that we were working under due to the Bank's timelines"

Kathy Green, FSU Bankwest Rep, Perth (pictured opposite)



www.fsunion.org.au

ANZ EB is coming

In the weeks leading up to 17 June 2009, FSU Reps at ANZ are holding workplace meetings and one-on-one discussions with members, seeking feedback on the union's proposed claim for a new ANZ Enterprise Agreement.

The claim was developed using information about staffing and workload concerns identified during FSU's Audit of ANZ branches and conversations with members during workplace meetings. As well as seeking feedback, Reps are asking members to endorse the main points of the claim:

- Across the board pay rises that match or better cost of living increases: performance pay only in addition to this.
- Increases to employer superannuation contributions.
- Better redeployment practices and increased retrenchment payments.
- Offshoring protocols jointly agreed between FSU and ANZ.
- Skills fund for employees affected by offshoring.
- Fair and transparent performance review processes.
- Better rights to negotiate/dispute targets.
- Measures to guarantee adequate staffing.
- Workloads that are achievable in rostered working hours.
- Protection of existing minimum and maximum work hours, penalty rates and overtime; and mutual agreement to roster changes.
- Enhanced paid parental leave, in addition to the Federal Government's Paid Parental Leave Scheme.

- Pay Equity audit during the life of the Agreement.
- Enhanced personal/carers' leave provisions and flexibilities around long service leave.
- Access to training, career and skills development.
- Transfer relevant existing conditions contained in the current Award and Agreement into a new, enforceable Agreement.
- An independent umpire to resolve workplace disputes.

As it has been over a decade since enterprise bargaining has taken place at ANZ, the FSU is offering training to ANZ Reps to assist them through the claim endorsement, bargaining, and ballot process. Enrol now to bring your skills up to date! Contact your local FSU office to enrol.

"It's really important that everyone reads the information and provides feedback so we make sure the important issues are taken to the bargaining table. FSU Reps at ANZ need to encourage the new, younger workforce to get involved, because I'm sure they'll all have really good ideas about things that are relevant to them. Keep talking about the need for a new ANZ EB in your workplace to raise awareness."



Penny McWhirter,
ANZ Rep and Qld LEC member

Rep Toolbox

One thing that increases the attraction of union membership is the savings FSU members make on an array of goods and services.

FSU has recently updated the Member Services booklet, which is an easy to read guide to accessing the range of savings and services available to members.

When Reps are talking to prospective members in the workplace, it's a good idea to highlight the many ways union membership can save members money.



Make sure you have the most up to date information available, by downloading the Member Services workplace flyer from the FSU website <http://www.fsunion.org.au/Member-Services/Member-Services-Guide.aspx> or call the FSU Member Rights Centre on 1300 366 378 to order booklets for your workplace.

Invest in Australia @ CBA

As part of the process of enterprise bargaining with CBA, FSU Organisers and Reps are conducting meetings to discuss pay, job security and other EBA issues. Meetings have been occurring in NSW, and are happening in other states in the first two weeks of June.

CBA Reps who wish to hold their own meeting are advised to download the information sheet that provides tips and step by step instructions for Reps, from the FSU website at <http://www.fsunion.org.au/Campaigns/Invest-in-Australia.aspx>. If you have any queries, please contact your FSU Organiser, who will be able to assist you.

Feedback from these meetings needs to be returned to FSU by 16th June.

What's your vision for insurance?

The FSU has produced a 5-point vision for the insurance industry, based on the conversations the union has had with insurance workers over time. The union does not consider this list of 5 points to be finite, but rather, we want to hear back from people working in the insurance industry which of these points are most important to them, and whether there are things missing from the list that insurance workers consider important.

FSU insurance reps will find a copy of the FSU's vision for insurance with this edition of The Agenda. We want to know what you and your colleagues think about it. Feel free to discuss it with colleagues, or alternatively, invite your FSU Organiser to visit the workplace to meet with you and your workmates to talk about your vision for insurance and how we can work together to realise your vision.

National FSU Reps Training Dates for 2009

Visit <http://www.fsunion.org.au/Workplace-Representatives/Reps-Courses-2009.aspx> for more information and registration forms.

VIC/TAS

Reps interested in the courses should either speak to their organiser or Lyndon Dalton directly on 9261 5422.

Metro dates for Introductory

Wednesday 15th & Thursday 16th **July**
Tuesday 22nd & Wednesday 23rd **September**

Metro dates for Advanced

Tuesday 17th & Wednesday 18th **November**

QLD

Finance Sector Union Queensland will be conducting two-day Reps Training Courses in Brisbane during 2009:

Wednesday 22th & Thursday 23th **July**
Thursday 22nd & Friday 23rd **October**

NSW/ACT

The course runs for 2 days and aims to develop skills needed to deal effectively with resolving members' concerns at the workplace level.

2009 Course Dates

(Lunch and course materials provided)
N.B. Courses start at 9am sharp & finish by 5pm on all days.

Tuesday 11th & Wednesday 12th **August**
Wednesday 16th & Thursday 17th **September**
Monday 26th & Tuesday 27th **October**
Tuesday 17th & Wednesday 18th **November**
Wednesday 9th & Thursday 10th **December**

SA/NT

Intro Reps - 2 Day Course
Wednesday 5th & Thursday 6th **August**

Advanced - 1 Day Course
Wednesday 16th **September**

Website resources for Reps

www.fsunion.org.au

Check out our Workplace Representatives dedicated web pages on the FSU website for:

- **Resources to assist in recruitment**
- **Awards and Agreements - Know your Award**
- **Useful tips and workplace wins**
- **Rep discussion forum - Share your experiences and tips for being a Workplace Rep with others**
- **Rep Courses in 2009**, and much more!



N.B. This section of the website is for member access only. Enter your FSU membership number where it asks for User Name and your surname in lower case letters where it asks for Password.

E-Newsletter

Make sure you don't miss any important information by subscribing to **FSU Online!**

To do so, simply provide your email address and those of your colleagues by visiting the FSU website at www.fsunion.org.au and clicking on 'Subscribe to FSU Online' or email to fsuinfo@fsunion.org.au and ask for your details to be updated.

Next issue of The Agenda

Due at the end of August 2009
Do you have a story to tell? Could other reps learn from the activities reps have undertaken in your workplace?

Contact Leanne in Communications (email: leanne.shingles@fsunion.org.au) to be featured in the next edition of The Agenda.