

## YOUR NATIONAL ENTERPRISE COUNCIL IS LOOKING OUT FOR YOU

Photographer: Ollie Winter-Irving



Delegates from the Westpac NEC met in Melbourne on 30 March 2007 to undertake planning for the coming year. Pictured L-R: Mel Pottier (QLD), Linda Schofield-Olsen (NSW/ACT) Fiona Jordan (NEC President, VIC/TAS) and Bernadette Finnerty (SA/NT). Not pictured: Diana Kinnear (WA).

Last year the FSU reached an important milestone in the structure of the Union with the establishment of member councils that represent various parts of the industry. The new Councils are crucial in ensuring that the FSU is a democratic organisation, and that it accurately represents the views of a diverse cross section of the Union's members.

There are seven state based Local Enterprise Councils (LEC's) representing members in banks, insurance and other financial institutions. Each LEC nominates a President who then represents the LEC at a National level. These delegates are called National Enterprise Councils (NEC's).

Before embarking on the first National Planning cycles for the FSU, NEC delegates met in Melbourne on 30 March for a Planning Day.

Delegates were given an overview of FSU's policy position on offshoring, pay equity and superannuation before breaking into Enterprise groups to discuss plans for the next 12 months.

The Westpac NEC resolved to build power through growth in membership and member activity.

The key issues identified by the Westpac NEC were:

- ❖ The introduction of Pay for performance for all employees.
- ❖ Unachievable targets and objectives.
- ❖ Lack adequate staffing and relief and excessive workloads.
- ❖ The threat of offshoring and outsourcing.

### STAFF SHORTAGES IN WESTPAC

Photo provided by FSU



FSU member laneta Hadfield is one of many workers impacted by staff shortages at Westpac.

A staff shortage in Queensland over recent months is the cause of significant concern in many Westpac workplaces.

After visiting 60 workplaces, FSU compiled a report on staffing and relief problems in the Bank. The report was sent to senior management who

has engaged in discussions with FSU's Westpac Council delegates about the problems and ways to overcome them. A number of steps have been taken to try to address members' concerns, and FSU organisers are busy in Westpac workplaces trying to assess what progress has been made.

Part of the problem has been unpaid overtime. In five workplaces, FSU worked with members to ensure that all extra hours worked were properly recorded. Members made sure that any extra hours were paid as overtime, or better still, that ways were found to eliminate the need for these extra hours.

“ *It's important that the Bank is currently reviewing ongoing staffing level issues and that they acknowledge the hours being worked by staff by paying overtime.* ”

FSU member, laneta Hadfield.

There are ways that we can overcome staffing and workload problems, but you can't do it alone. We need to work together to fix this issue in your workplace, in your area, in your enterprise.

## YOUR PAY, YOUR SAY AT WESTPAC

### What's the story?

Westpac has announced that all employees will join packaged M Level members and Specialists and will have their pay based solely on performance and linked to the 'market'. Members on performance pay, such as packaged managed, have consistently reported that their pay has fallen behind the cost of living.

The new system will be a radical change from the previous system of negotiated across the board increases where O and A graded employees received across the board pay increases of 4% per annum with performance pay on top.

This year, the Bank announced plans to replace across the board increases with a performance pay grid where salary would be governed by a combination of Westpac's classified market data and individual annual performance appraisal ratings.

### Targets and objectives

Current experience shows that members are disadvantaged when they are assessed on factors beyond their control. FSU members identified performance targets, objectives and assessment of subjective behaviours as the main issue of concern.

### Members say:

*"There is a lack of genuine consultation when targets are introduced"*

*"Staffing levels are not considered when targets are set and assessed"*

*"Approved absences are not considered when targets are assessed"*

*"Market conditions and available opportunities are not factored in when targets are set and assessed"*

*"Assessment of behaviours by Managers/Team Leaders is subjective"*

### Staffing and resources

Other major issues obstructing members from meeting performance targets and objectives are inadequate staffing, lack of adequate relief, excessive monitoring and complicated, time consuming systems. These difficulties can lead to excessive workloads, unpaid overtime, inability to make sales targets and poor team performance outcomes.

### Appraisals and budgets

Appraising performance is another bone of

contention for members. Members report the following problems with appraisals:

- ❖ Lack of transparency
- ❖ Subjective in assessing behaviours
- ❖ Dependent on relationship with reviewer
- ❖ Difficult to challenge successfully

Where performance pay does exist, such as with M employees and Capability and Pay Frameworks, members report that budget control becomes the priority and managers are pressured to meet performance bell curve objectives.

### Pay as a part of EDA negotiations has surpassed Cost of Living or CPI

- ❖ Annual CPI measured at September 2002 to 2006 increased 15%.
- ❖ Westpac across the board increases paid at October 2002 to 2006 increased 20%.

A fair system should include the following:

- ❖ Agreed rate for the job that recognises the skills, experience required and protects living standards
- ❖ Pay equity for work of equal value done by women and men
- ❖ Training and development opportunities
- ❖ Fair & agreed targets / workloads, achievable during ordinary work hours
- ❖ Regular and transparent performance feedback with access to an independent umpire for all pay related disputes.

## WE DESERVE A FAIR PAY SYSTEM



Photo supplied by the FSU

FSU Rep Marcia Byrnes says that she and the members she works with will be giving their feedback directly to the Bank. Her challenge to Westpac is to prove that they are listening by making

the necessary changes to their pay model. "Westpac says that every generation should live better than the last and for us this means that Westpac staff should have a fair pay system. What they have announced so far isn't fair," says Marcia.

She continues: "The new proposals have given rise to serious concerns among the members. Until now Westpac has always paid an increase to everyone based on the need to stay ahead of the cost of living. Now, an appraisal system that many of us think is unfair will decide whether we get any increase at all."