



Save the Dragon

KEEP THE DRAGON HAPPY STOP THE TAKEOVER!

How you can help *Save the Dragon*

www.savethedragon.org.au

Why We Say No Takeover

The information sheet contained in this kit outlines our key arguments. Use it when talking to colleagues or refer to it when writing a letter.

Write a letter to your local Member of Parliament

The final decision for the takeover will be made by the Treasurer, Wayne Swan. Use the sample letter in this kit or write your own.

If you write to your local MP, make sure you ask them to pass on your views to the Treasurer. You can also write directly to Wayne Swan, Treasurer, c/o Parliament House Canberra, ACT, 2600.

Meet with your local Member of Parliament

Face to face meetings make a lasting impression. It shows you really care. Talk to colleagues and then your FSU organizer. We can help arrange a delegation to you local Member of Parliament.

Write a letter to the Editor

Use the tip sheet in this kit to write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper.

Call talk back radio

Don't be shy, call your favourite talkback radio show. Use the info sheet to prompt you when you call.

Have Your Say Online

Go to the FSU Website and have your say in the No Takeover online forum www.fsunion.org.au and check out the campaign website: www.savethedragon.org.au

Get involved- join the No Takeover Group

Send an email to 'notakeover@fsunion.org.au' and remember to specify your name and state so you can get the correct information for your state.

Sign the 'Stop the Takeover' petition

Sign the petition to the Treasurer, Wayne Swan and ask your friends and family to do the same.

Increase Union Membership

We need to demonstrate to the banks that we represent the vast majority of staff. Take time to ask a colleague to join the Union and help contribute to the campaign.



Why we say *No Takeover*

The FSU and the majority of St George staff and customers are opposed to the takeover of the Happy Dragon by Westpac because it will mean the end of an iconic brand in the Australian financial market, massive staff cuts and the loss of conditions for those who manage to hold onto a job.

What's at stake?

Jobs – if the takeover goes ahead the new group would have 30,000 employees. Industry analysts predict that 5,000 of these jobs could be cut. Indeed Westpac is flaunting that one of the benefits of the takeover would be the removal of duplicate infrastructure and the development of common processing and support systems.

The first to be affected will be back office functions – call centre, processing and support jobs. The propaganda from Westpac says that they will keep St George branches, however the history of similar takeovers indicate that eventually the St George brand will be phased out.

This will first happen in the regional areas where there is a Westpac and St George branch in the same town.

Over time it won't make any sense to have a Westpac and St George branch in the same suburb and the bigger brand will prevail. It happened to Bank of Melbourne, despite what Westpac said at the time, and it will happen to St George.

People Friendly Culture – St George has always prided itself on being different to the other banks. And the “good with people” tag has been reflected in practice. St George staff enjoy an industry leading Enterprise Agreement and a number of innovative employment policies and staff benefits. On the other hand Westpac has refused to renegotiate their Enterprise Agreement since 2004.

Loss of conditions – St George staff have a much better Enterprise Agreement than Westpac. St George staff stand to lose guaranteed salary increases, rest breaks, allowances and other entitlements that FSU members have successfully campaigned for over the years.

Competition – The consumer advocate CHOICE says that the takeover has the potential to significantly reduce competition in the banking sector. Consumers need more competition, not less, in order to drive down fees. Australia needs more banks not fewer. The more the finance sector concentrates under fewer participants the less competition and the less choice for consumers.

“there are promises that are being made, but as history shows, these seem to be forgotten down the track. branches will close and staff will lose their jobs. stg is going to lose their reputation as a “customer friendly” bank.”

Member comment

FSU 'No Takeover' online forum

“Clearly for staff, this is not the time to achieve poor results, have any sick days, need family time, or not agree with management. The finance industry is so competitive already, and it is so sad that now we will all be watching our backs and wondering where the next attack will come from.”

Member comment

FSU ‘No Takeover’ online forum

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Sample Letter to **Your Federal MP**

Your name
& address

Name
& Address
of your Federal Member of Parliament.

Proposed Westpac takeover of St George Bank

Dear (insert name),

I am writing to ask you to support the campaign by staff and customers to stop the takeover of St George by Westpac. I believe that the takeover will result in significant job losses and reduced competition.

Westpac has stated that if the proposed takeover goes ahead they will remove duplicate support infrastructure and develop common processing systems. The Finance Sector Union and other industry observers estimate 5,000 jobs would be shed from the merged entity.

Westpac’s claim that it will maintain the St George and Bank SA brands and that there will be no net reduction in the number of branches is not convincing, particularly since it has reneged on similar commitments in the past, most notably with its takeover of the Bank of Melbourne.

I do not believe that Westpac will maintain dual branches operating side by side in numerous country towns and suburban shopping centres throughout Australia. This will result in fewer banking services, initially in regional areas and eventually throughout Australia.

The proposed takeover will mean the removal of two important regional banks – St George and BankSA. Regional banks such as St George and BankSA provide consumers with greater choice and support genuine competition.

Fewer participants in the banking sector will mean less competition, increasing the likelihood of higher bank fees and reducing the choices available to consumers.

I urge you to pass on my concerns to the Federal Treasurer, Wayne Swan.

Yours sincerely,

Writing a letter to the Editor

Writing a letter to the editor

Letters to the editor must include your full name, home address and daytime contact number. This is so you can be contacted to have your identity verified if they choose to publish your letter.

How to get your letter published

Letters that are short, to the point and are humorous are more likely to be published, letters that are identical (form letters) are not.

What to write?

1. Make a statement

"I find it hard to understand. . ."

"I am concerned about. . ."

2. Keep it personal

"I recently found out that Westpac. . ."

"I worry that. . ."

3. Ask a question

"when will people come to their senses?"

"No branch closures?"

4. Respond to a recent event

"The decision by Westpac to. . ."

"St George staff are concerned"

Editing the letter

Once you have completed your letter in the set limit (100-200 words) edit it so that your letter is now 80-150 words.

If your letter is too long the editor will edit it if it is to be published. It is always better to edit your own work so you get the point across that you intend to. If it is too long it may not be considered at all.

Newspaper Contact details

New South Wales

Sydney Morning Herald

- Email: letters@smh.com.au
- Fax: 02 9282 3492
- Postal: GPO Box 3771, Sydney 2001

Daily Telegraph

- Email: letters@dailytelegraph.com.au
- Fax: (02) 9288-2300
- Postal: 2 Holt Street, Surry Hills 2010

West Australia

West Australian

- Email: letters@wanews.com.au
- Fax: 08 9482 3830
- Postal: PO Box D162, Perth, 6001

Queensland

Courier Mail

- Email: cmlletters@qnp.newsltd.com.au
- Fax: 07 3666 6690
- Postal: GPO Box 130, Brisbane 4001

Victoria

The Age

- Email: letters@theage.com.au
(no attachments please)
- Fax: 03 9601 2414
- Postal: 250 Spencer St, Melbourne 3000

Herald Sun

- Email: hsletters@heraldsun.com.au
- Fax: 03 9292 2944
- Postal: PO Box 14631, Melbourne 8001

Tasmania

Mercury

- Email: mercuryedletter@dbl.newsltd.com.au
- Fax: 03 6230 0711
- Postal: 93 Macquarie St, Hobart 7000

South Australia

Adelaide Advertiser

- Email: advedit@adv.newsltd.com.au
- Fax: 08 8206 3446
- Postal: GPO Box 339, Adelaide 5001

Sunday Mail

- Email: mailedit@adv.newsltd.com.au
- Fax: 08 8206 3446
- Postal: GPO Box 339, Adelaide 5001

National

The Australian

- Email: letters@theaustralian.com.au
- Fax: 02 9288 3077
- Postal: GPO 4162, Sydney 2001

St George Enterprise Agreement **Under Threat**

Under the Workplace Relations Act if Westpac takes over St George the new employer is only bound by the St George Enterprise Agreement (EA) 2007, for a period of 12 months.

St George employees (who still have a job) are likely to lose some important entitlements.

If the takeover goes ahead...

- » Jobs will be lost, particularly in back / head office areas.
- » St George EA entitlements can be stripped back to Westpac standards after 12 months.
- » St George's community customer service focus will be consumed by the Big Bank culture.

Help the Union Save St George

- » **If you are not in the Union, join:**
We need to be a united front, with a strong, united voice.
- » **Get involved :**
Help us lobby the Federal Government and build community opposition to the takeover.

Together We Can Save the Happy Dragon!

Visit the campaign website:
www.savethedragon.org.au



Here's a summary of the legal entitlements that could be lost if the takeover goes through.

Provision	St George Enterprise Agreement 2007	Westpac Enterprise Development Agreement 2002
Salary increases	4% pay increase in October 2008 and 4% increase in October 2009	No guaranteed pay increases
Disputes	Allows for AIRC to make binding arbitrated decision to settle disputes.	No provision for arbitration of disputes.
Performance objectives	Must be mutually agreed	No requirement for mutual agreement.
Long Service Leave	2 months after 10 years service and pro-rata on termination* after 5 years * Except for serious and wilful misconduct	13 weeks after 15 years service and pro-rata on termination* after 10 years. * Except for serious and wilful misconduct
Paid parental leave	13 weeks	6 weeks
Rest breaks	2 paid breaks per day	No paid rest breaks
Relief staff	\$50 allowance per person for relief staff	No relief allowance
Severance payments	E.g. 10 years service – minimum 43 weeks severance	E.g. 10 years service – minimum 34 weeks severance
Information sharing	Bank to provide Union with quarterly reports on staffing	No commitment re staffing information
Offshoring	Offshoring Guidelines provide additional entitlements for staff whose positions are made redundant due to offshoring	No extra entitlements for staff whose jobs are made redundant due to offshoring.
Pay equity	Commitment to conduct Pay Equity Audit	No commitment to Pay Equity Audit
Expiry date	1 October 2010	Expired on 30 June 2004



For more information contact:

FSU Members Rights Centre on **1300 366 378** or go to www.fsunion.org.au
Authorised by FSU National Secretary Leon Carter

