

NTPS FIRE-FIGHTERS' BULLETIN 14

Update on Negotiations

On 7 July 2014, I received correspondence from United Voice advising that members were willing to accept the following package in order to settle negotiations:

- 3% salary increase per annum;
- back pay from 1 November 2013 and an agreement with a nominal expiry date of 7 November 2016; and
- no changes to the current Enterprise Agreement.

Bargaining parameters

I acknowledge that this is a significant movement on the Union's previous position and welcome this development in the process. However, as previously advised, I cannot agree to matters that are outside the NTPS wages policy bargaining parameters, including back-pay.

Proposed Concessions

Benefits and concessions contained in my May 2014 proposal included:

- **3 year agreement** – commencing from the date of Fair Work Commission approval;
- **3% annual pay increases (with two increases before the end of this year)** - the first 3% from in principle agreement, the second 3% increase in November 2014, and further 3% increases in November 2015 and 2016;
- **new allowances** for Community Fire Safety Command Officers and Senior Duty Officers;
- **retention of training and career path document** as an attachment to the Agreement;
- **implementation of operational changes to the existing recreation leave roster** to provide greater flexibility, including population of the roster on a 6 monthly basis.

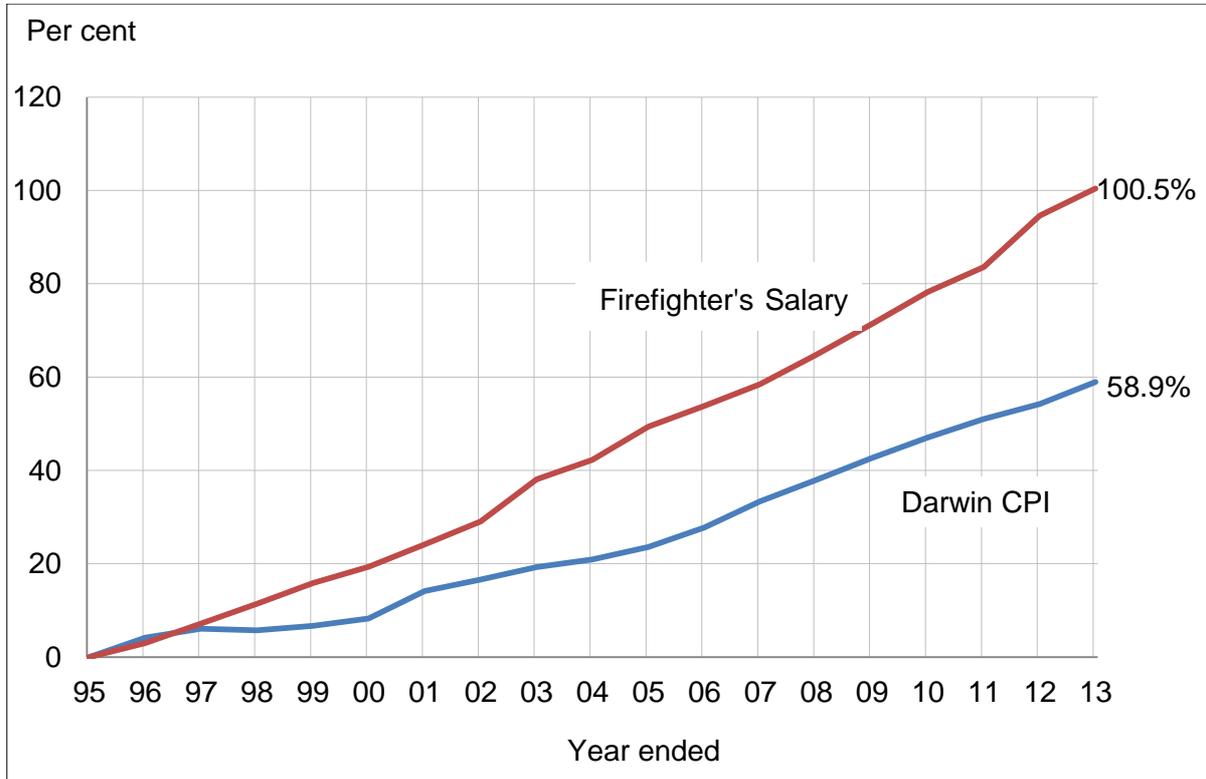
In addition to these benefits, I have advised the union that I am now willing to retain clause 51 in the agreement (with some change to compulsory transfer within centre provisions, but no change to compulsory transfer between centre provisions), instead of removing it.

Fair and Reasonable

Here are key reasons to support why my proposed revised offer is fair and reasonable in the general economic environment:

- the 3% annual wage increases on offer exceed forecasted CPI over the proposed term of the agreement;

- the employer superannuation guarantee levy will be paid in addition to the 3% annual wage increases (unlike other jurisdictions where they have been included in the annual increases);
- the majority of other jurisdictions wages policy is set at 2.5% per annum;
- the graph below shows fire fighter's wage outcomes compared against CPI increases since 1995: wage outcomes have historically far exceeded CPI.



Summary

I reiterate, in principle agreement on this new proposal will see employees receive a 12% pay increase over a three year term, along with minimal change to existing terms and conditions, and acceptance of various union claims.

United Voice have advised they will canvass members to see whether this proposal is acceptable.

Any queries or comments in the meantime can be directed to my Office via the Enterprise Bargaining Feedback form located on the OCPE website:

<http://www.enterpriseagreements.nt.gov.au/feedback/>

CRAIG ALLEN
 Commissioner for Public Employment
 11 July 2014