

### NTPS FIRE-FIGHTERS' BULLETIN 2/2013

#### Update on negotiations

In my last Bulletin I advised that negotiations for a new enterprise agreement would shortly commence, with an initial meeting with United Voice (the Union) scheduled for 6 August 2013.

Following that meeting, on 9 August 2013 the Union provided me with its log of claims and on 15 August 2013 representatives of my Office met with the Union and delegates to seek clarification on and obtain a better understanding of the claims.

#### Offer for a NTPS Fire and Rescue Service Enterprise Agreement

Today I met with the Union and made a without prejudice offer for a new enterprise agreement to replace the NTPS Fire and Rescue Service Enterprise Agreement. The offer has been developed in accordance with the [Wages Policy](#) and takes into account the Union's log of claims received on 9 August 2013, the current budgetary environment locally and nationally, forecasted CPI over the relevant period, competitiveness of current salaries, and improvements made to conditions in previous bargaining.

The purpose of this Bulletin is to provide a summary of the terms of the offer, which comprise a total and interlinked package of improvements and changes to terms and conditions of employment.

#### The offer at a glance

Key elements of the offer include:

- an agreement that will provide employees with stability for the next 4 years;
- salary increases of 3 per cent per annum, subject to achievement of efficiency measures;
- superannuation guarantee increases (as required by Commonwealth legislation) that will be paid for the term of the agreement in addition to the annual 3 per cent increases rather than being included as part of the annual wage increases;
- continuation of remote and regional incentives;
- flexibility for employees to request the cash up of accrued recreation leave in excess of four weeks;
- acceptance of a number of the Union's claims, in whole or in part, including:
  - inclusion of a union delegate clause providing, among other things, for five days' paid union training leave;
  - review of existing training and career paths;
  - adjustment of adjustable allowances to continue in accordance with the existing agreement;
  - development of a procedure with greater detail regarding the timing and nature of refreshments provided to fire-fighters attending fires or other emergency situations;

- inclusion of definitions for the terms “exigencies” and “unforeseen”;
- inclusion of a seven calendar days cooling off period for Station Officers, Senior Station Officers and District Officers who resign from their rank; and
- agreement to various other claims primarily relating to drafting matters;
- introduction of moderate efficiencies, including:
  - removal of policy, procedural and restrictive provisions from the agreement, along with a commitment to review certain existing provisions for currency and place them in policy or procedure documents;
  - development of new leave roster arrangements through negotiation discussions, noting that a number of United Voice’s claims relate to dissatisfaction with the operation of existing leave roster arrangements;
  - review of redeployment and redundancy provisions to, among other things, remove procedural elements, take into account *Fair Work Act* minimum redundancy entitlement provisions, and reduce formal notice periods for redundancy, and
  - review of the agreement to improve clarity, ensure consistency in terminology with the *Fire and Emergency Act*, ensure consistency of common core entitlements across the NTPS, and remove redundant or unnecessary provisions.

The full detail of the offer can be viewed in [Information Sheet No. 1/2013](#).

I believe that in the circumstances, this is a fair package that provides an appropriate balance of maintaining wages and introducing efficiencies for the NTFRS. I look forward to reaching a timely agreement so the new agreement can be implemented. I encourage employees to consider the offer favourably.

### **More Information**

To keep you informed the OCPE has a webpage dedicated to enterprise agreement negotiations under the [Enterprise Agreement Negotiation Updates page](#).

The website will be updated regularly with the latest information on negotiations, including bulletins, information sheets and other material.

### **Feedback**

Should you wish to express a view on the offer or make a suggestion you can provide your feedback to me directly at [www.enterpriseagreements.nt.gov.au/general\\_feedback](http://www.enterpriseagreements.nt.gov.au/general_feedback). All feedback will be treated confidentially.

I look forward to your favourable consideration of the offer.



KEN SIMPSON  
Commissioner for Public Employment

28 August 2013