



A•S•U

ASU in Airlines

Australian Services Union Central and Southern Queensland Branch

AUSTRALIAN SERVICES UNION • NATIONAL AIRLINES

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11 March 2009

Aviation Ground Handling Industrial Update

Collective Agreement

The ASU attended a meeting with AGH management on 11 March 2009 to discuss a union collective agreement for employees located at the Gold Coast Airport.

Valda Graham, ASU Team Leader, Jenny Sleba, ASU Organiser and Jennifer Hobson, ASU Industrial Officer attended the meeting with representatives from AGH.

Management informed the ASU that discussions regarding a collective agreement were preliminary in their view, as QAL are currently in the process of discussing suitable industrial agreements overall.

Management expressed their concern of having one collective agreement for AGH employees which could impact on the plans of QAL.

The ASU put forward our view that a collective agreement would offer:

- an incentive for experienced employees to stay with the company rather than moving on to other ground handlers who offer better pay and conditions;
- a level playing field for wages for ground handlers, which would enable the company to not compete with other ground handlers on labour costs;
- job security; and
- job satisfaction.

AGH management did not share the same view as the ASU in regard to the competitive edge that the company has as a result of having an experienced workforce.

AGH also stated that they were unable to increase their costs (including wages) due to the competitive nature of the ground handling industry.

Whilst the ASU disagrees with the company's position (as other ground handlers do pay their employees higher rates of pay), we recognise that the current economic crisis is impacting the travel industry.

A representative from QAL stated that AGH would not be financially supported by QAL in the event that AGH suffered financial hardship.

While this is concerning for ASU members, it was apparent that QAL are in the process of determining industrial instruments to cover all QAL employees, including AGH employees. Management also stated that AGH employees may be required to work anywhere within QAL.

Whilst management did not commit to enter into negotiations with the ASU, management did indicate that they are prepared to continue to have discussions with the ASU once the QAL decision regarding appropriate industrial instruments is finalised. AGH have committed to communicate this decision with the ASU by 25 March 2009.

Back-Pay

During the meeting the ASU raised the issue of ITEAs that have failed the No Disadvantage Test.

Management advised the ASU that they do not believe that the ITEAs should have failed the No Disadvantage Test and that the Workplace Authority were wrong in their decision to fail them.

**All
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United**

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Aviation Ground Handling Industrial Update cont'd

The ASU does not agree with this position based upon comprehensive comparisons of actual rosters worked and the relevant industry award.

Management have made further submissions to the Workplace Authority to have the decision overturned.

AGH were provided a time frame of 37 days from the date that the ITEA failures was communicated to them to vary the ITEAs.

This time period has expired and management have not varied the ITEAs. Therefore, AGH employees should be remunerated under the relevant award and back paid if they have received less under the failed ITEAs than the award.

The ASU is in the process of seeking assistance from the Workplace Ombudsman to obtain back pay for ASU members. The ASU is only representing members' interests in claiming the back pay.

If you have not joined the ASU yet, join today by:

- phoning us on 07 3252 8666 ;
- signing up online at <http://www.qld.asu.net.au/atwone/static/joinonline.html>
- or filling out a membership and returning it to your ASU Organiser, Ms Jenny Sleba.

Modern Award

As you may be aware the Australian Industrial Relations Commission is in the process of modernising awards.

The Modern Awards will govern the employment conditions for employees employed by an incorporated company, in the absence of a collective agreement and will formulate the minimum conditions for employees employed in an organisation without a collective agreement or individual agreements (*however the Modern Awards will be the benchmark for comparison to determine if agreements meet the No Disadvantage Test*).

The Modern Awards will be implemented in January 2010. There will be an Airline Operations Award which will replace the existing Airline Operations Award. **The new Award is anticipated to provide base rates in excess of current rates of pay**

at AGH. However, if you have a current ITEA or collective agreement at that point which pays less, you cannot access the Award rates of pay.

You can view a draft format of the proposed Award and submissions made by employers, employer associations and unions (including the ASU) at:

<http://www.airc.gov.au/awardmod/fullbench/industries/awardmodindustry?award=airline>

Reminder

It is our strong recommendation that you do not sign or vote upon anything put to you until you have had discussions with your ASU Organiser, Ms Jenny Sleba.

If you are provided with new documents to sign or are notified that a vote will be undertaken to determine your employment conditions, you should contact the ASU immediately on 07 3252 8666.

If you have any further enquires please contact Jenny Sleba on 07 3252 8666 (ext 220).

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The Australian Services Union (Clerical and Administrative Branch) represents workers in the clerical, administrative and call centre industries across both the public and private sectors throughout central and southern Queensland.