



EQUAL pay day



Aim for pay equity now!

Many people in Australia believe women won equal pay in the 1970s, but they are wrong.

It's almost 40 years since women were officially granted equal pay for equal work by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission. Yet, a significant gender pay gap in Australia persists.

- Women in full-time paid work still earn 17 per cent less than men or one million dollars less over a lifetime;
- While women are now more likely to have a tertiary qualification than men, women graduates will earn \$2,000 less than male graduates and \$7,400 less by the fifth year after graduation;
- Fewer than two per cent of ASX 200 companies have a female chief executive officer and only one in 12 board directors are women; and
- Women retire with less than half the amount of savings in their superannuation accounts compared with men.

Our labour market and social structures continue to discriminate against women in employment. On one hand, women have access to unprecedented levels of education and employment. On the other, women continue to shoulder most of the unpaid housework, care of children and care of other dependents with a critical lack of access to childcare services and flexible work arrangements, to enable them to balance those two roles.

A lack of access to flexible work arrangements also

presents a barrier for men to take on a greater share of caring responsibilities. This maintains the status quo of women being disproportionately responsible for caring responsibilities and consequently disadvantaged in the workplace.

We believe this inequity is not acceptable in modern Australia.

September 1 was Equal Pay Day. On average, it takes women 14 months to earn the same amount that men earn in 12 months. Starting from the new financial year on July 1, Equal Pay Day commemorates the day when women's earnings "catch up" to men's.

With members support, we pledge to work towards the eradication of unequal pay through the provision of genuine choices and opportunities for women.

We look forward to your support in highlighting the continuing battle for Equal Pay with employers and the community to achieve reforms so female ASU members don't need to work an extra two months to earn as much as their male counterparts.

If you have any questions or require further support or information sheets, please contact ASU Women's Officer, Maria Kaplanis, via email on mkaplanis@asuvic.com or phone 9342 3410.

BUSINESS EQUIPMENT (IT)

Canon

The ASU has been attempting to negotiate a national enterprise agreement for several months, with the employer going out of its way to avoid making an agreement with the ASU. Canon attempted to get a non-union agreement voted up prior to the introduction of the Fair Work Act, with its requirements of good faith bargaining. Through the hard work of ASU representatives, the agreement was voted down. The ASU has written to Canon under the auspices of the new legislation and is now hoping for a more fruitful set of negotiations.

NCR

The ASU has also been negotiation a new national EBA at NCR. Negotiations are continuing.

CFA District Mechanical Officers

Formal negotiations for the DMO's enterprise agreement with the Country Fire Authority are about to commence. A claim was developed by the ASU and its representatives, largely focussed on the need to tackle the considerable gap between the wages of CFA mechanics and rates being achieved outside of the CFA. This claim was circulated among members and has now been endorsed by both unions as the claim to be put to the CFA.

Negotiations have been delayed while the CFA awaits budget approval from the State Government, but formal negotiations are expected to commence within the next two weeks.

ENERGY

TRUenergy Services

There are currently two disputes at this company:

1 Sick Leave Entitlements

As it tried to do in 2008, TRUenergy wants to change the sick leave entitlement from the EBA/Award entitlement, where you get 12 or 15 days on your anniversary date to a sick leave accrual system. When we were about to go to Arbitration in the AIRC last October, the company decided to back out and not change the sick leave anniversary clause. Now we are back in Fair Work Australia (FWA, which has replaced the old AIRC) on September 8, 2009, to again defend the current EBA/Award provisions.

2 New EBA

This is the last company in the Energy industry not to have a new Agreement with the ASU. We have been battling it out for over two years and it all came to a head in June 2009, when the company put to employees a non-union Agreement which employees wisely voted down. Under the new Fair Work Act, the ASU has applied for a majority support determination. This is a ballot of the employees conducted by the AEC to determine whether the employees want a collective agreement with the company or not. If successful, the FWA makes an Order that the company must bargain with the ASU but it doesn't have to agree with the union. We are expecting a ballot in September.

New Jemena (Alinta/UE) EBA

These negotiations have been dragging on since October 2008 and since the start of 2009, it is clear the company wants to have the power of compulsory redundancies under the guise of the Agreement being compliant with the Federal Government's Building Compliance Code. Members had approved a secret ballot for industrial action before the new Fair Work Act commenced on July 1, 2009 and then approved another secret ballot recently under the new Act, imposing a range of bans in conjunction with APESMA. Bans were in full force at the time of writing.

WATER

Yarra Valley Water & City West Water EBAs

Following a lengthy period of bargaining at Yarra Valley Water (YVW) & City West Water (CWW), we have finally reached agreement in principle with both employers.

As is now becoming custom at the State-owned water utilities, we were not able to reach agreement before members were forced to engage in successful ballots to take Industrial Action at both employers. In a real demonstration of the power of collective action, it was not until members voted to take action that management at both employers started to bargain seriously.

The in-principle agreement at YVW is 3.25 per cent, 3.5 per cent and four per cent with no loss of conditions and the inclusion of formally prohibited content. The agreement at CWW is 3.25 per cent and 3.5 per cent with the same outcome on conditions as YVW.

The ASU would like to thank the delegates Josie Ackerman, Jo Lytton and Des Horton at YVW & CWW, who stood strong in the face of some very hard bargaining. Importantly, these delegates also recruited new members and identified other members who were keen to become contacts and delegates.

Melbourne Water

Following the introduction of a major restructure without proper consultation with staff at the River Health Team, the ASU brought Melbourne Water to Fair Work Australia. We did this following a series of meetings with members. Our aim was to get Melbourne Water to live by the obligations they have under their Enterprise Agreement.

Our members were concerned that management were introducing changes in a way that eroded trust in the workplace, including damaged prospects for career development and no addressing of any real customer service needs. It was a foretaste of a

bigger restructure and that management had done this without any staff consultation as they are required to under Introduction of Change of their agreement. The ASU stopped this process until proper consultation with the affected staff could take place.

Consultation is more than just management notifying staff that changes will happen. The ASU makes sure that members are given a say when changes are proposed so as to limit the negative effects that might come from management's proposed changes.

TRANSPORT

VicRoads

We are currently in dispute with VicRoads regarding the application of the On-Call and Continuously Available provisions of the EBA. VicRoads' position is that the allowance compensates members for answering the initial call and then taking a follow up action (e.g. making another call). Our position is that the allowance only covers the member being available and once they take a call it should be counted as time worked and paid in accordance with the agreement.

We have been to conciliation at Fair Work Australia on this matter. We are currently in discussions with management to attempt to resolve the dispute.

Reminder!

**ASU State Conference 2009
Register now**

**Delegates are invited to attend this
years State Conference to be held:**

**14 & 15 October
at Rydges on Swanston,
701 Swanston Street Carlton
9.00am - 4.30pm**

**Register online to ensure your place
www.asuVIC.asn.au**