



## How do you solve a genuine safety issue at Australia Post? Tuesday February 28, 2018 By spying on posties, of course

Since their introduction, the Union has been advocating for the implementation of a safety shutoff for the Honda NBC motorcycle.

As most posties would be aware, if the CT110 motorcycle was dropped to its side, usually indicating an accident, the motorcycle would stall. This was due to the design of the carburettor – but was good for safety. However, the NBC motorcycle, being fuel injected, doesn't suffer the same fate should a rider fall. Instead, the motorcycle will continue to run – and if in gear at the time, the rear wheel will continue to spin. This presents a serious safety issue for our members and the surrounding public should a fall occur.

Post seem to have finally taken our points on board, but want to go a step, or few, further with the introduction of a motorcycle computer known as “Telematics”. Telematics would detect a fall and cut off the motor should one occur and notify a nominated management representative of the location of the accident — tick. But it also performs a range of other functions including GPS data logging of the postie's entire trip.



National Secretary Greg Rayner said management were using a legitimate safety matter as an excuse to introduce Big Brother to posties.

“We have repeatedly requested, what should have been, a minor modification to ensure the safety of our members and the general public — management have purposely used this as an excuse to spy on posties,” said Greg. “As a result, we will see super-sleuth managers and supervisors sitting in offices pouring over the GPS reports of the posties they dislike the most.

“This will inevitably lead to warning counsellings dished out to those posties for taking too long in the bathroom or for talking too much to a customer at a delivery point. They're just not fair dinkum when it comes to safety. It's just not genuine – it's despicable and deplorable.”

Post say they are still in the process of developing governance protocols around the use of the data and have yet to commence the consultation process to begin trials in Heathwood, QLD and Newcastle, NSW.

We have massive concerns with the data local managers and supervisors will have access to and will be strongly opposing the inevitable abuse of that data for surveillance purposes.

## Reasonable overtime

Members call their Union office on a daily basis for a wide variety of reasons. However, some of the most frequently discussed topics members are contacting their officials for are those relating to overtime. Specifically, excessive overtime.

Whether it relates to automation and technology failures in our processing centres, or the massive increase in small packet volumes received by delivery centres, overtime across our workplaces are at a considerably high level, and have been for some time now.

Members are required to make themselves available to undertake reasonable levels of overtime. But the question often asked by members is “*what is reasonable?*”.

Because each workplace, the work performed there and the dynamics and personal circumstances of the individuals who work there vary widely from workplace to workplace, there is no definitive answer to this question that will remain true for each and every worker and workplace scenario.

There are, however, explicit factors that must be taken into account when determining whether overtime (or additional hours) are reasonable or unreasonable. These include:

- Any risk to employee health and safety
- The employee’s personal circumstances, including family responsibilities
- The needs of the workplace
- The notice, if any, given by management to work the additional time
- Any notice given by the employee of his or her intention to refuse to work additional hours
- The usual patterns of work in your workplace
- The nature of the employee’s role and the employee’s level of responsibility
- Any other relevant matter

Remember, you have a right to refuse to engage in unreasonable overtime and if you require any assistance with the individual circumstances affecting your workplace you should contact your State Branch Official for assistance.



## Delivery fixed-termers across the country celebrate permanency win

Unreasonable overtime levels are often exacerbated by a prevalent management culture determined to plug holes in staffing establishments with the use of temporary labour, most often in the form of fixed-term employees.

This abysmal approach to resource management is failing the fixed-term employees who are exploited by non-secure employment arrangements, it is failing the rest of the employees who are

## Delivery fixed-termers across the country celebrate permanency win (cont)

left to pick up the slack and it is failing Australia Post's customers who are fuelling the media's relentless attack on the company's service standards.

The only motivating factor behind this culture is purely greed and it is simply a rort.

And it's just like a grazed knee – you can keep changing band-aids, but without proper attention to the wound, you'll likely end up with an infection that becomes worse and worse that no band-aid can cure. Not to mention, the long-term use of fixed-term employees is prohibited by our EBA in all but four very explicit scenarios:

- Recruitment for a specific project or task to provide special skills which are not encompassed by current operational roles;
- Filling temporary resource needs resulting from specific employee circumstances (ie. Long service leave, workers compensation, career break leave without pay etc);
- Facilitating workforce adjustment/transition strategies for implementation of change or acceptance of new business opportunities which are the subject of consultation; and
- Other circumstances agreed between Australia Post and the Union.

Specifically, the fixed term employment category is not to be used to fill permanent vacancies, to artificially extend the three-month probationary period or to relieve pressures on a workplace that is simply under-staffed! Any instance of this use of fixed-term employment is an abuse of Post's obligations under the EBA.



At a recent meeting with Delivery management at the executive level, National Secretary Greg Rayner made it abundantly clear that we are continuing to uncover examples of this rort and that it will not be tolerated.

Pleasingly, following this meeting, Post have have indicated they will be rectifying the issue. In a letter to Mr Rayner, Group Executive eCommerce Deliveries Peter Bass confirmed the following:

*“At this meeting we also discussed that we will be undertaking a review of our fixed term employees. I can confirm where we have PDO Delivery Staff who are approaching 12 months service or have been held against a vacant round above 3 months (subject to satisfactory performance/behaviour) we are now taking steps to permanently appoint these employees.”*

However, although this matter has been most prevalent in Delivery, it is not limited to that workgroup. But we can only react to those instances where we are made aware of them occurring.

## Delivery fixed-termers across the country celebrate permanency win (cont)

Therefore, if you are a fixed-term employee and suspect you are concerned about your employment arrangements, then you should contact your State Branch Official as soon as possible for a confidential discussion around your circumstances.

Similarly, if you are a permanent employee but are concerned about the validity of the use of fixed-term employees in your workplace, you should also contact your State Branch Official as soon as possible.

## Accessing long service leave

Another topic that is frequently discussed by members with their Officials is access to Long Service Leave.

And the reason for most of the confusion over availing of Long Service Leave is due to misinformation originating from management who attempt to make up the rules as they go along.



An application for Long Service Leave must be approved when the employee has given reasonable notice.

This period of reasonable notice has long been established to be six weeks – and management are well aware of this. The only exception to this is during periods of unusual operating requirements (ie. peak period). Therefore, ignore the management try-ons that usually rear their heads at this time of the year.

If they can find temporary labour to plug the gaps they cause, while breaching the EBA, six weeks is more than long enough to find temporary labour to plug the gap caused by your right to access your long service leave.

If you have given reasonable notice of your intentions to take long service leave and your application has been denied, contact your State Branch Official for assistance as soon as possible.

## Wet Weather Gear – the saga continues

While we're on the theme of hot topics – who could leave out wet weather gear.

Appropriate wet weather gear keeps our members dry in inclement weather. Being exposed to the elements without appropriate protective clothing poses serious health and safety risks to our members and also pedestrians and road users in the community and is simply unacceptable.

Like all of you, we take this matter extremely seriously.

## NDMT gathering momentum (cont)

We are well aware of our members' preferred solution – bring back Gore-Tex! In fact, if we had \$1 for every time a postie has asked us to fight for a return to Gore-Tex, we'd probably be able to buy you all each a harbour-side mansion bigger than Malcolm Turnbull's.



After long and drawn out lobbying by your Union, Australia Post have finally agreed to investigate a return to W.L Gore as the provider of the wet weather gear with the Gore-Tex fabric. Discussions with Post are continuing on this matter.

However, in the meantime, delivery members should be following this important advice very carefully:

1. Ensure you are using the provided wet weather gear correctly as per the manufacturer's recommendations;
2. If you experience leaking in your wet weather gear, promptly return to your delivery centre;
3. Upon arriving at the delivery centre, complete a P400 incident report form advising that your health and safety had been put at risk due to failing wet weather gear;
4. When submitting this P400, also provide a copy to your State Branch Official;
5. Make yourself available for alternative reasonable duties at the delivery centre until the completion of your rostered hours – this does not mean vacuuming the floor or cleaning the toilets.

By following this advice, you are acting in accordance with, and are protected by, the law.

Should you encounter any inappropriate management reactions for following this advice, it is extremely important that you report this to your State Branch Official as soon as possible.

## eCommerce Delivery 2018 uniform ordering now open

While on the topic of uniform related matters, ordering for operational uniforms across eCommerce Delivery (Delivery, mails, parcels, transport etc), have recently open.

Members can order using a desktop or kiosk computer at their workplace or can use their personal mobile phone or tablet to place their order.

Some of the improvements being touted by Australia Post include:

- Alignment to the “One Team, One Brand” business direction – featuring only the red Australia Post branding and embroidered logos
- Much more modern style, cut and sizes
- The introduction of elastane stretch material on as many of the lowers as possible – providing superior stretchability
- Segmented reflective tape on all polo tops to provide increased breathability and comfort
- Specially made men's and women's measuring tape to reduce incorrect sizing

## eCommerce Delivery 2018 uniform ordering now open

- Navy sleeve lowers on long sleeved tops to reduce soiling in normal use
- Expansion of the use of high visibility tops for improved safety

Orders will close on 12 March and delivery of the new uniforms will commence in September.



## Centricity program – Retail members are not cleaners

The "Scrapa", is necessary and staff need to use caution. **Definitely do not carry this item in your pocket.** They are sharp and can cut if used improperly. These should be used to push away from yourself to clear off tape residue and hard to remove gunk. The "Scrapa" can be used on slatwall, counter units, counter fronts etc, but with caution.

Other cleaning agents would include glass cleaner, gumption (great for cleaning painted wall stains and grime) and sugar soap. Staff will also require a bucket.

The best process to date with cleaning has been warm "sugar soapy" water to clean slatwall and acrylics, using sabco wipes (or similar) and using a screwdriver, ruler or gift card wrapped in a wipe, to clean the grooves of the slatwall on walls and floor furniture.

Australia Post recently consulted with your Union over the intentions of the Customer Centricity program, the principles of which are fully supported. However, they seem to have left out the part where all Retail employees were required to become free deep-cleaning labourers for Australia Post.

In an email addressed to Area Managers and obtained by the CEPU, a senior manager, who is now known as "Mr Gumption" around the Union office, made some pretty outrageously inappropriate demands of staff working in Retail outlets participating in the Centricity program.

After rattling off a Bunnings shopping list of cleaning products he requires employees to purchase, Mr Gumption gives pretty specific directions for what he emphasises" as "essential" to occur prior to your first Centricity visit.

Amongst dismantling furniture and wall shelving, Mr Gumption directs employees to undertake

## Road rage and altercations with the public – it just isn't worth it

tasks such as using a paint scraper to remove gunk from walls and counters, and to use a screwdriver to tediously clean between slat-wall grooves.

And just in-case you couldn't stomach reading to the end, he attaches a photo of some of his favourite Bunnings cleaning products required to undertake these tasks to ensure you get the point. Putting aside the fact that the directions on their own are highly inappropriate, where does Mr Gumption think Retail employees are going to find the time to engage in such tasks? Must be some of that unpaid overtime "custom and practice" rife throughout the minds and expectations of senior Retail management across the country.

When questioned on his outrageous directions, Mr Gumption's initial response was one along the lines of, "You'd have to agree that some of these post offices need this clean-up." Yes, we do agree.

Members complain to us almost daily about the grotty state of some outlets, like the months-worth of cockroach and rodent droppings we recently had to demand management finally clean and remove from Annandale post office in inner-western Sydney. **So go and hire a cleaner to clean it.**

Despite commitments that these directions would be withdrawn, we are still receiving word from retail members who are being asked to undertake these cleaning duties. Australia Post claims that there is no need to worry – they're now only "asking" and no longer "directing."

Let us be extremely clear – these are not reasonable directions, or even requests. Australia Post are not within their rights to ask that you engage in such inappropriate duties and you should not feel obligated, or "guilt-tripped", into doing so.

If you are asked to participate, make sure you seek urgent assistance from your State Branch Official.

## Headcount reduction project underway

Australia Post has written to your Union advising its intentions to proceed with their Reform program and projects up to 195 positions across processing facilities nationwide.

The proposed changes and the final effected numbers will be subject to consultation with State Branches.



Any positions affected by this exercise will be subject to EBA9's RRR process, but also the Reform Accord which was secured for extension under EBA9. The Reform Accord prevents forced redundancies for positions impacted by reform.

Local consultation may have already commenced with local workgroups and AURs. If you have any concerns about the process in your workplace, please contact your State Branch Official.

## Technical workforce already under-staffed

### Electrical/ Mechanical Maintenance Technicians

**Job no:** 53251960

**Work type:** Permanent full time

**Location:** NSW - Metro

**Categories:** Engineering, Manufacturing, Transport & Logistics, Trades & Services

Apply now

We're on the hunt for dual trade Maintenance Technicians and Mechanical Fitters at our Sydney Parcels Facility in Chullora.

Ten technical positions have been identified as potentially affected by Post's headcount reduction project. Honestly, the audacity.

Overtime in tech areas, especially at the Sydney Parcel Facility where management have totally blundered the implementation of new machines, is through the roof. Literally, through the roof. Some of the overtime levels sighted by the Union have blown us away as totally unbelievable – in fact some of us didn't believe it until management were forced to deck their resourcing for the past year and we saw it with our own eyes.

The understaffing at this facility is so bad, technical management are leaking information to us about production staff being directed to undertake technical duties on the maintenance platform.

This doesn't do anybody any favours. Production staff are not qualified to perform many of the duties associated with the technical workforce – limiting their capability on the platform to begin with. This puts our production members and others around them at considerable risk.

To be told that there are potentially ten positions within the technical workgroup that are surplus to requirements is just astounding and is not in any way genuine. To add to the confusion – an advertisement seeking applications for techs was recently spotted on Post's website.

We'll be dealing with this mess through the consultation process. Watch this space closely.

### How long should you have to wait for an accurate group certificate?

Seven months, apparently.

After his tax accountant noticed an error on his group certificate – a payment for a non-taxable allowance included as part of ordinary salary – a South Australian member raised the matter with Shared Services. And did so again, and again, and again. On each occasion his request fell on deaf ears.



Fed up, he contacted SA/NT Branch Secretary Nick Townsend for assistance. When approaching SA's local HR, Nick was told it "wasn't a Union matter". This attitude is just gobsmacking.

Every employment matter is a Union matter – particularly when a member has attempted to have the matter rectified for SEVEN MONTHS. We would also rather not be dealing with such simple matters which could have, and should have, been fixed on the spot. So next time, Post, just fix it.

## How long should you have to wait for an accurate group certificate?

Following Mr Townsend's representations, Post have finally corrected the error corrected and the member is now looking forward to finally correcting his tax return lodgement.

Incredible...

This should be a reminder to members to ensure you check your group certificates closely at tax time and to contact your State Branch Official immediately if you are experiencing difficulties in having issues of a kind rectified directly with Shared Services.

## Malcolm Turnbull has banned the Eureka Flag

New building laws introduced by Malcolm Turnbull's Coalition government - and supported by One Nation - mean that workers at any company that wants government construction work can't display any union stickers, symbols, logos or mottos — including the Eureka Flag!

The Eureka Flag is a cherished symbol of democracy and collective action for Australians everywhere. Its banning at work is unAustralian.

[Sign the petition to reverse Malcolm Turnbull's ban on the Eureka Flag!](#)

<https://www.megaphone.org.au/petitions/reverse-the-1np-ban-on-the-eureka-flag>

The new code bans "images generally attributed to, or associated with an organisation, such as the iconic symbol of the five white stars on the Eureka Stockade Flag." It also bans "mottos" and Union names, symbols, "signs, markings or indications."

For more information visit: <http://www.smh.com.au/comment/ban-on-the-most-australian-symbol-of-them-all-an-outrage-20180205-h0tu14.html>

We know that if the Turnbull Coalition government gets away with this ban for construction sites it will move to other industries as well and the freedom of Australians to fully participate in their Union will be taken away.

This fight isn't just an attack on workers but an attack on freedom of speech as well. Please [support the petition](#) and forward this email to anyone who cares about our Australian democracy.



## We want to hear from you

We are currently undergoing changes with our post e-bulletin and would like input from our members. If you have any topics that you would like to see please send your recommendations through to [nick.townsend@cwu-sant.asn.au](mailto:nick.townsend@cwu-sant.asn.au).



Download our CWU phone app



Members are encouraged to share their views with their Union on these important matters. You can send us your feedback by sending an email to: [nick.townsend@cwu-sant.asn.au](mailto:nick.townsend@cwu-sant.asn.au).

Yours faithfully,



**NICK TOWNSEND**  
**BRANCH SECRETARY**