

AUSTRALIAN FEDERATED UNION OF LOCOMOTIVE EMPLOYEES



Circular: 57/24
Ref: QR EA
07/06/2024

Queensland Rail Agreement In Principle Reached! Removal of All Current Protected Industrial Actions.

Dear members,

Today your AFULE bargaining reached an Agreement In Principle (AIP) with Queensland Rail on the terms of your new Enterprise Agreement!

Late last night meetings took place with Government Officials and again with Commissioner Durham which culminated in the final deal being reached this morning.

Key aspects of the deal include;

Wage increases.

- Year 1 – A 10% increase to the full flat rate, backdated to 1 March 2024, plus a 3% once off Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) payment. The back wages and COLA are payable in the first fortnight after (and if) the Agreement is certified.
- Year 2 – A 5.5% increase to the full flat rate from 1 March 2025.
- Year 3 – A 3.5% increase to the full flat rate from 1 March 2026, plus the implementation of the 152-hour cycle by no later than 26 December 2026 (the reduction in hours for the same pay is the equivalent to a 5.25% increase).
- Year 4 – A 3.0% increase to the full flat rate from 1 March 2027.

Years 2, 3 & 4 also have a COLA allowance of up to 3% in the event the Brisbane CPI rate for the March quarter of that year is higher than the scheduled wage increases. * The COLA allowance is a once off payment made, not a compounding wage increase.

In addition, the following conditions have been negotiated and will be implemented upon certification in the event the EA is supported by the workplace.

- Employer Superannuation contributions to be 12.75% of ordinary time earnings – regardless of employee contribution levels.
- The ability to choose your Superannuation fund.

Traincrew representing Traincrew

- Shifts in SEQ Master Rosters may be altered by a maximum of one hour earlier or one hour later from your master rostered shift. Shifts must be finished no later than 30 minutes after the posted master rostered shift, shift lengths cannot be longer than the master roster shift length. This condition is for all shifts, including those for sector drivers and during SCAS closures.
- A maximum of 25% AFD at out depots and a maximum of 30% AFD at Mayne. Additionally, splitting AFD's into AFA 1, 2, 3 and AFP 1, 2, 3.
- The posting of the 82-hour roster moving to 106 hours.
- Words introduced ensuring the operational requirement of RTC's within the CRR tunnels. A working party established to define operational changes to the RTD & RTG role for underground stations.
- Meals breaks reconfigured to 1 x 40-minute meal for shifts up to 7.5 hours in length and 2 x 30-minute meals for shifts greater than 7.5 hours in length.
- A commitment to continue training sectorised RTD's.
- An increase of \$10 to meal allowance payments.
- The publication of the seniority list within 6 months of EA certification.
- A clearer transfer process.
- An upgraded In Cab surveillance clause ensuring more protection for Traincrew.
- An increase of \$100 to Regional Retention and Productivity allowance (and now indexed with wage increases).
- Regional weekend payments for shifts worked in excess of 26 Saturdays and 26 Sundays.
- Regional shift extensions to be paid at the relevant rate, stand alone, in the fortnight in the event shifts are extended due to planned and foreseeable prior to the shift commencing.
- For the life of this agreement only, 50% of Regional Recruitment may be through external recruits.
- BLP's to be paid at 175% of the Full Flat Rate for Traincrew on a Flexible Working Arrangement (FWA)
- The creation of a FWA working group
- The ability to offer permanent Part Time positions to cover excess workings that cannot be covered by Full Time workers.

Traincrew representing Traincrew

- Additional sign on locations will be investigated at:

Ipswich - Wulkuraka, Caboolture – Elimbah, Nambour – Woombye, Shorncliffe – Banyo and any other location by agreement between the parties. Prior to dual sign on coming in effect, consultation must take place at individual depots to ascertain whether standing up the new location/ splitting the depot is a viable option. Where it is viable to stand up the alternate location, dual sign on will not come into effect.

- Seniority based temporary transfers where vacancies exist in a depot for a period of 6 weeks or greater.
- SEQ Weekend shift lengths may be rostered between 6 to 9 hours however, RTD's & RTG's will not be required to work more than 26 Saturdays and 18 Sundays.
- Any SEQ revenue services commencing after 1700hrs Mon-Thurs will be a maximum of 7.5 hours.
- The addition of “emergency leave” to be used in a scenario that restricts the ability of an employee to attend work (in addition to Natural Disaster Leave).
- Compulsory book off to remain at 32 hours however may not include a calendar day.
- Plus additional agreed smaller claims. e.g. Clear Jury service leave provisions, enhanced consultation structures.

Delayed implementation condition.

- By no later than 31 December 2026, a 9-day fortnight/ 152 hour cycle is to be implemented. The 9-day fortnight will provide an additional shift off a month for the loss of no pay. Upon implementation, your hourly Full Flat Rate will increase to incorporate the 8 hours no longer required to work per cycle.

This condition has a negotiated delayed implementation due to the requirement to recruit additional crews to enable the commencement. The delayed implementation also allowed movement on other up front wage and condition improvements.

What now?

From here your Industrial Officers and a smaller bargaining team will commence drafting the changes to your proposed Enterprise Agreement. Once this is complete, full copies of the proposed EA will be made available for all Traincrew and meetings both in person and via video link will be completed to explain the document and any changes.

Once this is complete, Traincrew will then be required to vote YES/NO to accepting the terms of the new EA.

Protected Industrial Action (PIA)

Now that an Agreement In Principle has been reached, all PIA has been lifted. Therefore, the planned BLP/ SLP ban scheduled to commence 0001 Monday 10 June 2024 is cancelled. The successful ballot and tactical use of the actions have been pivotal to ensuring the above deal could be negotiated. I congratulate you all on the ballot response and the commitment to active bans and planned bans we had in place.

*You will need to notify the Roster if you are once again available to accept out depot workings.

Do we believe this is a good deal?

The AFULE is supportive of the deal on offer. There are considerable wage increases that have been negotiated, coinciding with immediate condition improvements and a delayed “super condition” of a reduced hour month for no reduction in pay. This in consideration with what the business has achieved through this process (minimal) and what is being negotiated more broadly across the current Australian industrial landscape, we believe the offer is worthy of consideration and support.

What if there is a NO Vote?

If the membership vote NO to the proposed agreement, we will immediately return to the bargaining table after we receive an understanding of the issues that have led to the NO vote and what changes are sought. We will attempt to find an alternative, however there is no guarantee of a better overall outcome.

Thankyou

I wish to thank all AFULE members for their conduct throughout this process.

Additionally, workplace reps are the backbone of the union movement and we are blessed to have some fantastic AFULE representatives from all across the state that have been assisting in the background and attending meetings during this negotiation. We thank you!

Finally, thank you to the AFULE bargain team of Anthony Woodward, Glen McGaw, Paul Carmody, Anthony Chalker, Brad St. Ledger and Andrew Jeffs. Assistance was also received from Brian Goddard and Rod Smith throughout the process. Your insight, knowledge, persistence and hard work/ long days has led to a proposal I believe all members should be proud of.

If you have any questions or you would like more details on the above, please contact your state office on 3844 9163, email traincrew@afule.org.au or contact your local AFULE representative.

In Solidarity,

Traincrew representing Traincrew

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mick McKittrick', is positioned above a solid horizontal line.

Mick McKittrick,
State Secretary