

# E-BULLETIN Postal

Friday, 23 September 2016

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## 1. EBA9: Authorised Holiday under attack... Again!

Just over three years ago, during EBA8 negotiations, Australia Post laid out its proposal to remove the Authorised Holiday (Union Picnic Day) and afford employees with an additional ARL day instead.

The proposal didn't go very far. Members reacted immediately and with incredible volume to this ridiculous proposal and suffice to say, your Union formally opposed the proposal resulting in an EBA8 that protected the Authorised Holiday without any change.

Now, it's not déjà vu, it's not another *Back to the Future* sequel and we promise you it's not a joke — they've seriously just tried it on again.

Though the amazing thing here is; formal negotiations for a new EBA9 haven't even commenced yet!

Management have dropped it on your National Officials during discussions earlier this month without warning.

We couldn't wait to tell you — and to ask for your reaction and thoughts. But first, let's recap on what we told you last time.

This extra day off during the festive season is for two reasons:

1. It is an acknowledgement of the additional effort employees across the Corporation contribute over the festive season to ensure the public's Christmas cards and gifts are delivered in a timely and proper manner.
2. There is a blanket ban on the availing of annual leave entitlements in operational areas during this period, which leaves many members in a position of not being able to enjoy this special time of the year with their friends and families.



Your Union still feels that any change to the entitlement to the Authorised Holiday during the festive season would, over time, diminish the reason for it. And we still feel that it potentially could be lost forever in future EBAs as management slowly forget that an “Authorised Holiday” or “Picnic Day” ever existed.

Further, a number of members who have already completed their EBA9 survey have highlighted approval of annual leave and long service leave entitlements due to insufficient staffing levels as a significant issue.

Adding 30,000 additional annual leave days into the mix will not make members’ plight for approved leave any easier.

Literally thousands of members have reacted strongly in opposition already. In fairness — we have received one email from a member who actually supports the move.

If you’d still like to have your say you can do so by emailing us at [eba@cwuwa.org](mailto:eba@cwuwa.org).

## 2.EBA9: Attack on Authorised Holiday — what you said



We have been overwhelmed by response of members across the country who have contacted us in vocal opposition to this ludicrous proposal. We’d love to publish absolutely every one of them (trust us – we really would!), but here are just a few of our favourites:

“I think it’s \*\*\*\*\* how Australia Post management continually come up with new ways to undermine hard working posties. I say nay to the idea of losing our Authorised Holiday. It’s un-Australian. \*\*\*\* that.”

**“The majority of my family work for Post and as we aren’t allowed time off before Xmas, the Authorised Day allows us to spend at least some time with the kids.”**

“No – I cannot agree with Post’s attack on our Authorised Day. It’s our day and it should stay that way!”

**“We all deserve the extra day over Xmas and I’m pretty sure that most of the public would agree.”**

“Tell management to keep their grubby hands off the Authorised day off. The people that are trying to get rid of it take leave at Christmas – unlike the rest of us that do ALL the heavy lifting at that time of the year. I know that we work until our shifts end on rostered Christmas Eves, unlike management that nick off early.”

**“They should leave the Authorised holiday alone and concentrate on fair wages for the new poor – the ‘fluro collared workers’. Maybe they should start on something easy like breaking up the boy’s club and giving women jobs in management like they promised. Let’s face it: we couldn’t screw it up any more than it is now.”**

“As for the Authorised day – LEAVE IT ALONE. My wife and I both work hard before Xmas and with me, at Post, having to go on a roster for my holidays we have to have our leave apart. But her work closes between Xmas and New Year, so I know that we get some time together, even if it is only two lots of four days. Don’t change it”

**“Christmas time Authorised day is exactly how you describe it – long live our ‘thank you for working your arse off while everyone else is enjoying Christmas’ day off to spend with our friends and family.”**

“Absolutely outright reject Post’s offer to give us an extra day ARL in giving up our Authorised day. Apart from the hypocrisy from management who take this period off themselves to spend

with their families, it's totally disgraceful and outrageous that they would even try to raise this issue once again."

"We can't take holidays with our families in December. Most retail staff do additional time here and there over the xmas period that is unpaid. The Authorised day is acknowledgement and a thank you to staff for this."

"Tell them to PISS OFF!"

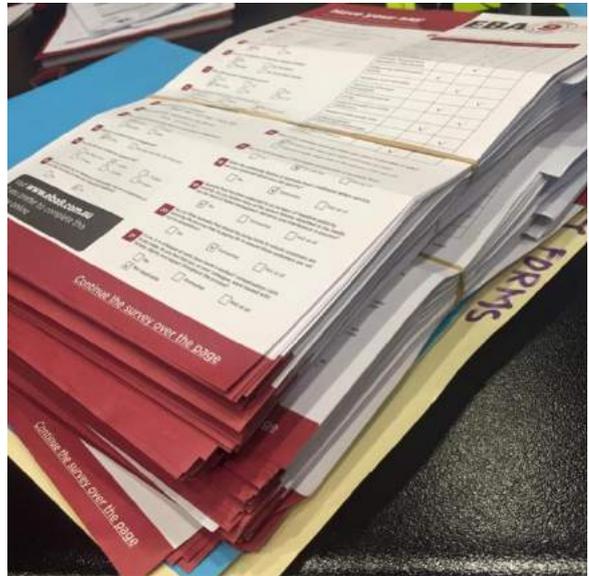
### 3. EBA9: Membership survey extended to 30 September

Thank you to the over-2000 members who have already submitted their EBA9 membership survey.

The response has been massive so far, but due to printing delays at the front-end of the process, some members may have experienced a delay in receiving surveys to their home address.

To allow as many members as possible to have their say, we've extended the return date for the surveys to September 30.

Your workplace would also have recently received a pack containing additional copies. However, if you have misplaced your survey you can download a copy or even complete it online right now at [www.eba9.com.au](http://www.eba9.com.au).



### 4. EBA9: Stronger together – building strength

**A strong Union will ensure the best possible EBA9 outcome — and our strength is in numbers.**

That's why now is a better time than ever to ask your workmates to join your Union.

And we've launched a special promotion to assist you.

#### **For new members**

Each new member that joins the Union during the promotional period will receive a free movie ticket instantly — and will receive an entry in to the draw to win a brand new Apple iPad Air.

#### **For existing members**

Current members don't miss out — for each new member that you successfully sign-up, you will also receive a movie ticket and an entry in to the draw to win another brand new Apple iPad Air. Make sure to write your name in the "referred by" or "asked to join by" or "referred by" field on the new member's application form.

The more members you sign-up, the more movie tickets and entries into the iPad draw you will receive.

There is an unlimited amount of movie tickets to give away, and two iPads for each state Branch.

**So hurry and get involved today — this promotion ends on November 30.**

For full terms, conditions and to download a form, [click here](#).



## 5. Abuse of employment arrangements — it's just not on

It's important that members understand that there are very specific circumstances around when Australia Post can actually invoke the use of traditionally insecure employment arrangements such as casual and fixed-term contracts.

The Union assists members unclear about their employment arrangements almost daily, but a recent case in Queensland stood out as clear abuse of the provisions afforded to employees under EBA8.

The mail officer was initially employed casually from 2012 to 2014, then subsequently employed on five sequential fixed-term contracts until August 2016. It was in early September, when presented with a new casual employment contract, that she decided to seek advice from her Union to ensure everything was in order.

It certainly wasn't. Following representations on behalf of the member, she is now permanently employed and has had all her previous employment with Post recognised for the purposes of long service leave accrual.

It's important that members seek assistance if they find themselves in similar circumstances.

When it comes to your job security; no question is a stupid question.

If you are concerned about your employment arrangements, please contact your state Branch Official for immediate assistance.



## 6. Post's greedy attack on take-home pay and fifth-week leave for shift-workers

Members have had their take-home pay and fifth week leave entitlement unilaterally reduced in an unprecedented and purely greed-driven attack by management at Sydney Parcel Facility (SPF).

Despite warnings from Officials and members about the limitations associated with their new multi-million-dollar automation investment, management's own failings to address the issues associated with its implementation at SPF, Australia's largest parcel facility, resulted in a series of significant delays and missorts followed by an absolute savaging of Australia Post in the media and by the public earlier this year.



A NSW Branch spokesperson said members worked constructively with management to assist in ensuring the parcel operation got back on its feet.

"Members understood the importance of delivering a quality service to their customers, and recognised that this couldn't be achieved without significant change to their duties and rosters."

It was further explained that local Union nominated representatives formed working groups with management to make resourcing recommendations crucial to meeting the customer demands of not only today, but well into the future — maximising the operations' capabilities.

“Although members would have preferred to continue on in their comfort zones in terms of their duties at work and their shift commencement times, they accepted the challenge. They played ball.

“They cooperated with management to find a win-win solution that everybody could live with.

“And what did they receive in return? A kick in the mouth.”

The spokesperson also said the unprecedented move by management to reduce members’ take-home pay and their fifth week leave entitlement by refusing to compromise on Sunday duties was ‘disgraceful’.

“These unprecedented changes significantly affect our members who are already finding it difficult to make ends meet in one of Australia’s most expensive cities.

“It’s an absolute disgrace”.

It was further explained that throughout the lengthy and thorough consultation process, not once were the Union, members nor the local working groups ever advised that the impacts of these changes could possibly result in the outcome members are now forced to live with.

“This is Parcels, Australia Post’s supposed ‘booming’ business.

“Members have worked cooperatively with management to pull them out of the chaotic mess their arrogance had created in the first place —ensuring it continued to boom.

“Further, the Parcels business isn’t shy of a quid and they’re preparing to increase the cost of parcels to the public again from next month.

“This decision has been motivated purely by the most disgusting form of corporate greed we’ve ever seen dished out by this out-of-touch management group,” he said.

The NSW Branch said they feared that members at SPF were only the first of many to come in this out-right attack on shift-workers’ traditional conditions and entitlements.

“We’ve now formally placed the matter in dispute and we will fight this one to the end through whatever forum necessary to ensure that our members don’t suffer the consequences of management’s own shortcomings and failures.”

## **7. Parcel prices set to increase again, drawing public anger and criticism**

Australia Post is preparing to further increase the cost of parcels at a time when they’re openly attacking the pay and conditions of the workers processing those parcels.

National Secretary Greg Rayner said the public have just about had it with the chaos caused by management’s failures to address simple issues associated with one of the biggest automation investments they’ve ever made in the Parcels business.

He said he sympathised with the public’s outrage.



“It’s just a tough pill to swallow.

“With one hand, they’re slapping the public across their left cheek in dishing out a lousy service due to the mess management have created with their automation obsessions.

“With the other hand, they’re coming back for another one right across the other cheek by slugging them with a price increase.

“Then, to top it all off, they’re coming at our members with a kick directly in the mouth, attacking their take-home pay and fifth week leave entitlements.

“The thought process is absolutely dumbfounding.”

Mr Rayner explained that it is becoming increasingly difficult for the Union to support a business model that continues to damage the Corporation’s credibility with the public.

“A sustainable Australia Post means sustainable jobs for our members, so of course we’re supportive of the Corporation’s journey back to profitability.

“And our members, led by their Union, have been incredibly accommodating with some pretty out-there ideas along the way — all in the interest of achieving sustainability.

“But the journey so far is leaving head-on collisions all along that road — filled with journalists looking for blood and leading angry customers to competing service providers.

“You can’t achieve sustainability by slugging the loyal customers, who continue to stand by Post, with additional costs to off-set the customers leaving in droves looking for a better deal.

“It’s just doesn’t work that way,” Mr Rayner said.

Angus Kidman, Editor-in-Chief at finder.com.au — an online consumer advocacy service, put it simply, and actually quite respectfully in his most recent column.

His attempt at correlating a link in the price rise to increasing the cost of consumers’ Christmas shopping by opening his column with the words *Australia Post’s delivery sucks* in its first sentence.

He concluded his thoughts with this:

*“A 25-cent price rise isn’t going to cause anyone too much stress, but when it’s applied to a product that so many of us already don’t find reliable, it’s not a good look. And while I appreciate that the shrinking amount of money Australia Post makes from letters makes it harder to deliver a reliable service, as a consumer I’d just like my stuff to show up when it’s supposed to.”*

If only Angus knew that the lousy service he and his colleagues have experienced were not due to the “shrinking amount of money Australia Post makes from letters”, but rather; management’s arrogance, short-sightedness and absolute obsession with reducing labour costs through automation and the use of underpaid delivery contractors.

Here’s one of the more civil of many recent posts by customers on Australia Post’s Facebook page in reaction to the price hike:

*“Dear Aus Post,*

*I understand you need to increase the cost of your satchels and all again with the cost of inflation, but if you could review your service possibly?*

*Last year parcels were "slow" taking 2-3 weeks from west to east and bias (sic) versa in red bags and 2-4 days in yellow (out of express zones)... We're not even in the silly season yet and it's taking 3-4 weeks for red bags I'm having to pay extra to upgrade to express just to assure they arrive on time and even then it's still taking up to a week! Just some feedback as I know I'm not alone in feeling a little disheartened.*

*I'm finding it shocking when my supplies from overseas in the US are passing through customs and arriving a week earlier than a parcel sent from NSW 🙄📦*

*Regards a customer who spends lots of money on postage both sending and receiving and doesn't want to have to look for other postage options to assure her customers get their items on time!"*

## 8. Management “had rocks in their head” on sick leave, says senior Qld Official

Management at Queensland’s Underwood Parcel Facility (UPF )were recently caught out attempting to unilaterally change the goalposts (and the many case-law examples) on medical certification following an absence.

They recently held briefings with staff to advise members of a blanket ban on the use of back-dated medical certificates to certify the availing of sick leave entitlements following an injury or illness.



“They had rocks in their head.” Acting Queensland Branch Secretary Cameron Bird said.

There are many examples, documented to the extent of decisions by the Fair Work Commission and its predecessor, the Australian Industrial Relations Commission, dealing with matters where workers have had no choice but to present a back-dated medical certificate to authorise the availing of sick leave entitlements.

Mr Bird explained how he found it “astonishing” that this would be tried on at UPF, given this workplace was home to the majority of staff who fit the criteria like a glove in terms of workers who would be entitled to availing of sick leave certified by a back-dated medical certificate.

“Let’s take our 7pm shift at UPF, for example,

“It would be reasonable to expect that many of our members with a 7pm shift commencement time would not rise from their rest until 6pm.

“After getting out of bed, discovering their symptoms of illness and notifying their workplace of their absence, it would be borderline-madness to expect that these workers would have access to an after-hours, or even a 24-hour, GP at their disposal to certify their runny nose and tickly throat.”

In circumstances like this, it would be more than reasonable to expect that the likelihood of being able to find a GP service open at that time of the evening would be slim at best, and that the first available opportunity for that worker to present themselves at a GP for certification would most likely be the next morning.

“Under such an interpretation by management, our members in the bush would be left hopeless at ever availing of their sick leave entitlements,” Mr Bird continued.

“I’d like to see management try to get in to see a GP on the first, second, third, fourth or even fifth day of an injury or illness in regional towns with only one part-time GP — regardless of what time of the day it was.”

Thankfully, following state-level representations to HR, sanity prevailed. It was accepted that a blanket ban was inappropriate and that the acceptance of back-dated medical certifications would be considered on its merits on a case-by-case basis — as it has been in Australia Post all along.

If you've experienced a similar situation in your workplace, contact your state Branch Official immediately for assistance.

## 9. Management manipulation of Retail transfer list: “they just can’t help themselves” says PSO.

Retail members across the country are ropeable at management’s continued manipulation of the terms of the new transfer process.

One Victorian PSO, who asked for their identity to be withheld for fear of reprisals, said it was nothing but sour grapes.

“For years we’ve been subjected to management favouritism when filling vacancies in Post Offices.

“How is it that I can be good enough to work in a post office on one side of Melbourne, but not in one on the other side?

“For me, it means around \$30 per week difference in my traveling costs and up to two hours per day in travel time — that’s time I could be spending with my kids instead of paying for child care.

“For management, it should make no difference. But, in reality, it means they no longer get to pick and choose who worked the most amount of unpaid overtime, or brown-nosed deep enough, when it comes to deciding who gets to work closer to home, who gets to come off the network relief pool or who gets the next available full-time job.

“It’s all sour grapes. They didn’t want a transfer list from the beginning, they’ve lost all control — that’s why they’re interfering with the process. They just can’t help themselves.”

NSW Branch Official Elly Huttly said that there had been continued push back and internal complaining against the transfer process by a handful of middle-level Retail management representatives since the process was introduced earlier this year.

She explained that members were now suddenly being removed from the transfer list completely, or being required to remain in one job for at least six months, despite an opportunity meeting their first preference becoming available, if they had initially accepted placement at one of their second or subsequent preferences.

“For example, a PSO working at the Sydney GPO who resides in Blacktown (approximate travel time of over one hour) may have nominated Blacktown Westpoint Post Office as their first preference, Seven Hills as their second preference and Parramatta Westfield as their third.

“To speed along the process of eventually getting to work as close as possible to their home, this PSO may accept appointment to a vacant role at their second preference, being Seven Hills Post Office in the interim.”

“Under management’s new unilateral determination, this PSO would be required to sit out at least six months at Seven Hills Post Office before being able to be transferred again under the same, original application.

“This means that during that six month period, if an opportunity at their first preferred location or hours of



engagement (full time/part time) arises — they miss out.

“In some cases, they’ve been removed from the transfer list completely.

“This isn’t what we discussed and agreed to when developing the guiding principles of the process with Australia Post and it’s totally out of order.

Ms Huttly said this was another example of an out-of-touch management group shifting the goalposts half-way through the game. She went on to describe the practice as discriminatory.

“Many of our PSOs are females, and a majority of them are working mothers.

“To disadvantage them from being able to work closer to home and be closer to their children, for no logical benefit to the business is disgraceful and we won’t stand for it,”

She went on to explain that in some instances, members have even been denied access to enquiring where they sit on the transfer queue for their preferred locations or hours of duty request.

“When we were finalising talks on this Agreement, we specifically moved to ensure members had access to enquiring where they sat in the queue based on their preferences.

“That was agreed to, without hesitation, by Australia Post at the time — they even provided a phone number for members to call to obtain this information.

“There’s no reason as to why that should now change.”

Ms Huttly said that the Union has made formal representations to have the matter resolved.

“We’re determined to ensure that management’s manipulation of the transfer process does not continue.”

If you’re experiencing issues with your Retail transfer request, contact your state Branch Official immediately for assistance.

## 10. Box sorters are not second-class workers

During a recent Union workplace visit, a NSW box-sorter was discovered to be employed less than the three hours per day minimum engagement provided for in EBA8.

Box-sorters are not second-class and shouldn’t be treated as such — they’re entitled to the same EBA conditions of employment as every other Award level employee.

State level discussions occurred with the NSW Branch Secretary resulting in a review of every network across NSW and the ACT.



The first network review was finalised in August and reported back to the first of many meetings with management where it was identified that a further five PDO positions did not meet the minimum engagement.

The Branch was successful in having these positions upgraded in accordance with the EBA.

Further meetings are planned in the next few weeks to review the outcomes at the remaining networks.

If you are a Retail PDO, or work in a Post Office where you are aware that PDOs are not engaged at the minimum level of three hours per day, please contact your Branch Official immediately for assistance and resolution.

## **11. It's time to unite – one Communications Union State Branch for NSW/ACT and Victoria.**

To guarantee the best possible future for members of the CEPU Communication Division (CWU), it's time to unify in to one Branch in NSW/ACT and Victoria respectively.

Members may or may not be aware that your Union's Communications Division structure today is the product of the amalgamation of, largely, two predecessor Unions — the Australian Postal and Telecommunications Union (APTU) and the Australian Telecommunications Employees Association/Australian Telephone & Phonogram Officers Association (ATEA/ATPOA).



These two Unions were the result of many amalgamations dating all the way back to 1917 and had different historical and traditional coverage rules for different employee categories across the entire Post Master General's Department — who undertook the work of the day's equivalent of Australia Post, NBN Co and Telstra.

The most distinguishing factors being postal operational, clerical and telephone lines workers — traditionally covered by the APTU and technical and operator workers— traditionally covered by the ATEA/ATPOA.

Members in NSW and Victoria would be likely aware that two autonomous Branches still operate in those states — the Postal & Telecommunications (P&T) Branches (the remnants of the APTU state Branches) and the Telecommunications and Services (T&S) Branches (the remnants of the ATEA/ATPOA state Branches). History is history, and many members and officials who were members of this Union prior to the CEPU amalgamation of 1994 would be proud of both predecessor Unions' histories.

We can all be proud of our history, our heritage and our traditional work.

But the fact is; the CEPU, as an amalgamated Union, has joint coverage over all occupational areas traditionally belonging to the APTU and ATEA/ATPOA. Additionally, most of those traditional occupational areas no longer even exist.

There is no logical sense in continuing operating in this manner.

The structure produces nothing but a duplication of administration costs and overheads, resulting in a waste of Branch resources and members' funds — and we're at a point where the ongoing financial viability of the two Telecommunications & Services Branches is of serious concern and must be addressed.

To ensure that members continue to receive the best possible service from their Union, it's time we came together as one. This has already occurred in Western Australia, South Australia / Northern Territory, Queensland and Tasmania — resulting in significant cost benefits and maximising those Branches' resources to deliver a better service to members.

It is for all these reasons that your Union's Communications Divisional (National) Executive this week took the historic step of passing a resolution to actively encourage a merger of Branches in those states —

directing those Branches, along with your National Officials, to enter into urgent discussions with a view to mergers in the near future.

The resolution adopted at the Executive meeting is reproduced for members' information below:

*“Divisional Executive notes the 2016 full and concise financial statements of the Victorian Telecommunications and Services Branch (Branch) tabled at this meeting. Divisional Executive notes, in particular, the notation by the Branch’s auditors contained in the financial statements as to the Branch being a going concern and the fact that the Branch has reported a nett current asset deficiency of \$293,173.00.*

*It is clear to the Divisional Executive that the ongoing viability of the Branch including its ability to service its members is seriously at risk.*

*It is the view of the Divisional Executive that it is appropriate for urgent discussions to take place concerning the merger of the Branch with the Victorian Postal and Telecommunications Branch. Further, with a view to completing the merger process previously undertaken in Western Australia, Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania, merger discussions should also take place between the New South Wales Telecommunications and Services Branch and the New South Wales Postal and Telecommunications Branch.*

*It is accordingly resolved that urgent merger discussions occur between the four branches concerned and the Divisional Secretary and/or the Divisional President. The parties are directed to report back to the Divisional Executive by the end of November to the outcome of those discussions.”*

The motion was moved by Divisional Secretary Greg Rayner and seconded by Divisional Vice-President Bernie Clarke.

The motion was adopted with votes cast by Divisional Executive members, representing their respective Branches, in the following manner:

<b>Representative of</b>	<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstained</b>
Victoria Postal & Telecommunications Branch		Joan Doyle	
Victoria Telecommunications & Services Branch			John Ellery (Himself and as Proxy for Maureen Parker)
NSW Telecommunications & Services Branch			Alex Jansen James Perkins
NSW Postal & Telecommunications Branch	Jim Metcher		
SA / NT Communications Divisional Branch	Nick Townsend		
WA Communications Divisional Branch	Barry McVee Clinton Thomas (Proxy for John Tredrea)		
Queensland Communications Divisional Branch	Cameron Bird (Proxy for Phil Hughes) Brian Kershaw		
Communications Division (National) Officers	Shane Murphy <i>President</i> Bernie Clarke <i>Vice-President</i> Lisa-Maree Bahls <i>Vice-President (AA)</i>		

	Greg Rayner <i>Secretary</i> Nicole Robinson <i>Assistant Secretary</i> <i>(Postal)</i> John O'Donnell <i>Assistant Secretary</i> <i>(Telecommunications)</i>		
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We look forward to reporting to members the outcomes of these discussions with a view to announcing a merger of the respective Branches in the near future.

## 12. Hold a CUB-free grand final BBQ in support of sacked CEPU members

By now you should have heard that loyal, skilled Australian workers, AMWU and the CEPU Electrical Division (ETU) members were sacked by Carlton & United Brewery (CUB) and offered their jobs back with a 65% pay cut.

Other Australians are showing the company we don't support their un-Australian actions, by boycotting their most popular beers — Carlton and VB.

By standing up to CUB and their multinational owners, we are sending a message to all employers that if they take on working people, they will have to take us all on. It's about teaching them a lesson so they don't go after other workers.



There's only two weeks to go before Grand Final weekend and 6,926 Australians have registered their CUB-free barbecues. Holding a CUB-free BBQ is easy. Whether you're watching the finals with just one close friend, or your entire footy club — filling your esky with worker-friendly beer is a great way to show solidarity.

You can join them. Even better, by registering you can win big. All you have to do is take a photo of your CUB-free BBQ, post it on social media and the sacked workers will award prizes to the best selfies.

1<sup>st</sup> prize is a top-of-the-line BBQ, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize is a team footy jumper of your choice signed by the workers and 3<sup>rd</sup> prize is two cases of non-CUB beer.

So will you join us by registering your CUB-free BBQ for the 1<sup>st</sup> of 2<sup>nd</sup> of October? You'll need to register as soon as possible — registration closes on Sunday, 25 September.

You may also consider donating to the fund to support the workers who have lost their jobs [by clicking here](#).

For more information on the dispute, you can watch a video of the workers explaining what's going on [by clicking here](#).

To download a poster of which CUB products to avoid, [click here](#).

**We welcome your comments and contributions –  
send us an email and let us know what you think via  
[enquiries@cwuwa.org](mailto:enquiries@cwuwa.org).**

**Check out our webpage at [www.cwuwa.org](http://www.cwuwa.org).**

**Yours in Solidarity**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barry McVee', written in a cursive style.

**Barry McVee  
Branch Secretary**