

# E-BULLETIN Postal

#3. Tuesday, 11 March 2014



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## 1. Hands off Aussie Post

Your union has received messages of support from a number of Community Groups from all over the country.

As previously advised your national office has had created an initial campaign infrastructure online and is continuing to establish on the ground networks. An effective network campaign needs to be visible in the community. State Branches will be organising local efforts with support from your national office.

Support your State Branch campaign efforts and contact them to offer advice and/or assistance. Victoria is planning an event around the "March in March" gathering in Melbourne. Western Australia is arranging events around the WA Senate Election and Queensland is involving the ETU who have had recent experience in community campaigns due to the Newman government.

Go to campaign website at [www.handsoffaussiepost.org.au](http://www.handsoffaussiepost.org.au) or CWU National office website: [www.cwu.org.au](http://www.cwu.org.au) for the latest news and attached social media.

## 2. National business hubs

Your union attended a recent national business hub meeting. Updates were presented on a number of issues. The following were some key facts are:

- Over 45 business hubs nationally now established.
- New marketing initiatives have been successful with others in development.
- The trial in Victoria of Delivery of Stock by Corporate staff to retail offices is being expanded into New South Wales.
- Trial of mobile phone enabled scanners to commence shortly with a view to replacing two way radio.
- Targetted mail volumes are stabilising or growing in some areas.

If you have any questions about the operations of business hubs, then please contact your State Branch.

## 3. Award modernisation

The award modernisation process continues. Australia Post has abandoned their boycott of certain officials. Four national office unions are involved: CWU, CPSU, Professionals Australia and the AMWU. Four awards will be combined into one modern enterprise award.

Your unions have responded to Australia Post's draft modern award.

Australia Post has indicated a willingness to ensure that no worker will be any worse off. We will be paying close attention to the detail.

The process will be overseen by the Fair Work Commission.

#### **4. Inappropriate disciplinary procedures for alleged safety breaches**

Reports have come in from Branches that there has been an increase in disciplinary procedures being initiated regarding alleged safety breaches.

All of us hold safety as the paramount working condition. However, we will not allow OHS to become a weapon in the management disciplinary arsenal. We will not tolerate shifting of blame onto victims.

The “myth of the careless worker” has been debunked on many occasions.

We have written to Australia Post seeking statistics on this issue.

#### **5. Myths and facts surrounding Canada Post that resonate in Australia**

*Source: UNI Japan news at the bottom*

**MYTH #1:** Canada Post service cuts and cost increases are necessary.

**Fact:** On Dec. 11, 2013 Canada Post's management announced, without warning either the public or the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, that home delivery for five million Canadians would be cut, there would be at least 8,000 layoffs, and letter costs would increase from 63 cents to a dollar.

As many have pointed out, Canada Post's reasons for worse service at a higher cost are bogus, based around half-truths and flat out fabrications.

**MYTH #2:** Canada Post says it is no longer profitable.

**Fact:** Since the mid-1990s Canada Post has been profitable every single year -- except in 2011 when the company locked out 50,000 of its workers in an effort to weaken the union and its contract. In that time, Canada Post has fed over a billion dollars into the public purse.

**MYTH #3:** Canada Post has to end home delivery -- there are no other options.

**Fact:** If Canada Post introduced postal banking it could become even more financially sound and offer even better services to the public, especially in rural areas where home delivery often doesn't exist. Many national postal services around the world offer postal banking which helps them stay afloat and even profitable. In fact, postal banking is exactly what the Canadian Union of Postal Workers is proposing for Canada Post.

**MYTH #4:** Service cuts and increased costs are about saving Canada Post.

**Fact:** The service cuts and increased costs are about making the public upset with lack of services. The layoffs are about weakening the union. Cuts and layoffs are about preparing Canada Post's retail network of post offices and outlets -- the largest and most extensive retail network in the country -- and its unparalleled delivery services for privatization.

Canada Post is being prepared for privatization precisely because it is highly profitable.

**MYTH #5:** Community super-boxes, which are to replace door-to-door delivery in urban areas, are safe and accessible.

**Fact:** Community super-boxes are not safe and accessible. A CBC report has revealed that there were 4,880 incidents of vandalism, arson and theft from these super-boxes between 2008 and 2013. There is also no guarantee that these super-boxes will be accessible for thousands who have mobility issues, seniors or the disabled. And Canada Post has no plans to consult us on where the community boxes are placed.

**MYTH #6:** Canada Post must have done consultations before deciding to cut services and raise postage rates.

**Fact:** Canada Post management kept both its workers and the public in the dark. They announced the cuts and service cost increases the day after Parliament retired for the holidays. They have provided no evidence that any real consultations with Canadians were ever attempted.

**MYTH #7:** Seniors are telling Deepak Chopra (the President of Canada Post), that they want more exercise and being forced to pick up mail at community super-boxes in all seasons is good for their health.

**Fact:** Seniors have not expressed that they think being forced to walk to community mailboxes will be good for their health. This is an outrageous lie that the President of Canada Post told to members of Parliament when he was being questioned about the proposed changes at an emergency parliamentary committee meeting. He provided no evidence for his claim. This shameful response highlights just how heartless these service cuts are.

## 6. Abbott continues war on wages despite strong economy

The Abbott government is continuing blame Australian workers' wages for all and any problems facing the Australian economy, whether it be the collapse of the local car industry or the viability of Qantas.

But recently released figures don't support his arguments.

The National Accounts figures released on 5 March confirm that far from strangling economic growth, the wages share of national income actually fell by 1% over the last year. At the same time, economic growth and labour productivity rose, the latter by a strong 1.9%.

The Accounts show that real unit labour costs are close to the lowest on record.

Unions have pointed to the figures as totally disproving the wages break-out story being run by the federal government.

"The Coalition Government's economic story is utterly unsustainable, and based on politics and not on facts," ACTU President Ged Kearney said.

"The Coalition's war on wages is in fact rubbish and must be called for what it is," said Ms Kearney.

## 7. iCheat: how Apple avoids paying taxes

Apple has moved an estimated \$8.9 billion in untaxed profits out of Australia over the last 10 years, according to a report in the *Australian Financial Review*.

An investigation by the *AFR* found that by moving its profits into a tax haven in Ireland, Apple had been able to avoid paying tax on the majority of its Australian earnings.

Last year, for instance, Apple reported pre-tax earnings in Australia of only \$88.5 million after having sent an estimated \$2 billion off to Ireland via Singapore. According to the *AFR*, Apple negotiated a secret tax deal with Singapore in 2009.

While the tax evasion strategies of companies like Apple and Google have received plenty of publicity in recent years, the *AFR* investigation is the first to produce hard numbers about the scale of the tax losses for Australia.

Such practices of course rob the Commonwealth of funds that could be used for social services such as health and education.

The recent G20 meeting in Sydney pledged to address these practices but wide international cooperation will be required to achieve any change.

As long as countries such as Ireland and Singapore find it to be in their interests to do special tax deals with the info-giants, other national economies will continue to be robbed of tax revenues.



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