

# E-BULLETIN Postal

#18. Friday, 10th October 2014



1. **Regions fearful of postal cutbacks**
2. **Job losses from small and large parcel delivery deep sort**
3. **CWU wants health monitoring at new/expanded parcel facilities**
4. **Post's 'Safety Kaizen' really a time and motion exercise with safety banged on the end of it**
5. **Australia Post computer systems in an extensive cyber attack**
6. **Will we ever close the gap?**
7. **Bear at door: Canadian postman has fair excuse for failing to deliver parcel**
8. **StarTrack Courier allegedly lays off pregnant employee about to go on maternity leave**
9. **Women of Influence award a reminder of issues Australian women still face at work**

## 1. Regions fearful of postal cutbacks

The long-term viability of Mackay Mail Centre could be affected by Australia Post's plans to reduce the frequency and quality of its mail service.

The long-term viability of private operators who run small licensed post offices (LPOs) is also threatened by Post's rationalisation plans in Queensland's regional areas.

A group of Queensland LNP Senators has called for the Federal Government to commission an independent audit.

Communication Workers Union National Assistant Secretary, Martin O'Nea, met with Federal Member for Dawson, George Christensen, this week about the issue and recent Senate recommendations from the inquiry into Australia Post.

Mr. O'Nea said Australia Post was profitable but being taken in the wrong direction. He said it was not consulting in any meaningful form, with stakeholders.

If mail processing frequency was reduced it would allow Australia Post to downgrade and potentially shut down regional mail centres, he said.

Mr. Christensen said the term rationalisation always set off alarm bells and he had concerns about Mackay Mail Centre.

"I hope we can head off anything if there is any proposal to cut back services in this region," he said.

"We make no apologies for publicising this issue," said Mr. O'Nea. "Mail services and jobs are very important, especially in regional and rural areas where Post fulfils a social service as well as a commercial one and fewer jobs are available," he said.

## **2. Job losses from small and large parcel delivery deep sort**

Following CWU National Office demands for information on the impact on jobs from deeper sort breaks Australia Post has come clean about plans to cut 99 jobs from large and small letter parcel delivery.

More than half of the job cuts are in Qld, WA and SA/NT. The remainder of the job cuts will be in Vic/Tas and NSW (even split). These job cuts are separate from the 900 job cuts recently announced by Post.

The new sorting equipment at Melbourne Parcel Facility and Sydney Parcel Facility will enable additional large parcel interstate breaks for Qld, WA and SA/NT. While the new Multi Product Sorter at Sydney Gateway Facility will enable interstate resort plans for small parcels to postcode level in Qld, WA and SA/NT.

The CWU national office view is that savings from these extra breaks should be used to reduce the amount of contractor indoor work before cutting postal workers jobs.

Post is now briefing CWU State secretaries on the proposed cuts.

## **3. CWU wants health monitoring at new/expanded parcel facilities**

CWU National Office has requested consultation on health monitoring for workers at MPF and SPF.

We are concerned that there is a real risk of chronic injuries on new work tasks, particularly in black spots such as the bullring , manual induction, singulation take-off and loose loading and unloading.

We believe that there are issues that have not been properly considered, such as the age of workers with many over 45 years of age and a number have had shoulder and back injuries.

But Post Future Parcels Network managers have hand-balled the request for monitoring workers' health to the National Enterprise Safety manager. They have done their bit, saying safety has been considered in the design of the new equipment and the new work stations are assessed as safe. Their focus is on start up day and achieving productivity targets set for new equipment.

Why is it that productivity monitoring is far more intensive than monitoring workers health? Every second of a postal worker's day (whether it is in Parcels, Mails, Delivery or Retail) is monitored. But when it comes to safety once they have ticked the box that's the end of it. Workers can fill in incident or hazard reports they say. But what then happens is a bit of a mystery.

## **4. Post's 'Safety Kaizen' really a time and motion exercise with safety banged on the end of it**

The CWU National Office has notified a dispute in the Fair Work Commission following Australia Post's refusal to consult on the introduction in its Business Hubs of a process improvement program, referred to as 'Safety Kaizen'.

'Kaizen' is a productivity efficiency tool. Its aim is productivity improvement through work intensification. It is liked by logistics companies. Basically, Post's 'Safety Kaizen' is really a time and motion exercise with safety banged on the end of it.

Just how Post intend to use it with its van and truck drivers is unclear. Hence the dispute.

Some drivers have been asked for their views and suggestions on process improvements to improve workplace safety. Other drivers have participated in training to observe other workers and record their safety slip-ups. Post says this training is not 'Safety Kaizen' but another safety program! Maybe drivers will get a few tips on safety out of these programs. But that's about it. More likely drivers will be coded for not following directions exactly once the process improvements are determined.

Meanwhile, Comcare has issued a damning report identifying actual risks associated with loading and unloading vans in Post Business Hubs. In brief, Comcare has found that Post's van risk assessment is poor, the Code of Practice for manual handling is not properly considered and delivery runs are poorly designed. Basically Post has got a set of instructions and a trolley! Oh and some rubber matting maybe inside the van.

Across the country there are a lot of injuries in Post from manual handling in vans and trucks. So why is Post not addressing the manual handling hazards identified in the Comcare report? Are they really interested in safety?

Forget 'Safety Kaizen'. If you have a safety issue raise it with your HSR and/or CWU delegate or CWU organiser

Click [here](#) to read the Fair Work Commission recommendation.

## 5. Australia Post computer systems in an extensive cyber attack

Another Australia Post computer glitch has exposed customers to an extensive cyber attack from a computer virus known as crypto-ransomware.

The hacking uses fake emails containing a link which downloads malicious software. The fake emails sent to customers advise that a "courier" has been unable to deliver a parcel to their address. The email then requests the customer to open attachments which provide information about their package and asks them to go to their local post office to collect the package.

Crypto-ransomware is a pervasive type of virus that aims to collect personal and financial information or install a malicious virus which can "take over" a PC. It is used to extort money from victims by preventing access to their computer or files.



**Screen shot of fake emails posing as parcel delivery notification. The malicious emails contain crypto-ransomware.**

Recovery of infected systems is virtually impossible without clean backups.

This latest computer glitch comes after other glitches that forced Post to shut down its online parcel tracking system that exposed the details of thousands of customers a year ago.

Australia Post has warned customers to delete the fake emails.  
(Source: ABC news)

## 6. Will we ever close the gap?

This year's gender pay gap figures as reported by the Australian Bureau of Statistics shows the gap between average male and female earnings has grown.

The gender pay gap (GPG) which had hovered around 17.5% for a decade has blown out to 18.2% - meaning that across the economy, women earned an average of 18.2% less than men.

In March this year, the average weekly ordinary time earnings of women working full-time were \$1270 per week, compared to men who earned an average weekly wage of \$1532.80 per week.

Of course, this is due to a number of factors such as women's work trapped in low paid industries, breaks due to parenting and caring responsibilities and discrimination against women. For example, upon graduation women across most professions start out earning a median salary \$3,400 less than men. This widens over a lifetime.

No surprises that the GPG is higher in the private sector (20.2%) than the public (13.1%). Or that those on collective agreements (16.9%) fare better than those on individual contracts (20.6%). Unions are more active in the public sector than private and organise collectively to tackle unfairness on pay.

## 7. Bear at door: Canadian postman has fair excuse for failing to deliver parcel

Sometimes, the postman has a valid excuse for failing to deliver your parcel.

That's particularly the case in Canada, where a postman has to dodge all manner of wild fauna to reach the front door — moose, deer, and apparently, even the occasional bear.

Matthew Fane, who lives in the Vancouver area, found a note from the postman in his letter box recently. His package hadn't been delivered because, as the note said, there was a bear in the way.



**The bear hanging out in Mr Fane's driveway.**

Mr. Fane shared a photo of the note on Twitter, because he thought it was funny. Canada Post, which seems to take customer service rather seriously, replied to him, offering to investigate the failed delivery. He didn't think that was necessary.

Now another photo has emerged - one supposedly taken by the postman itself. It shows the bear in question hanging out in Mr. Fane's driveway.

In case you're wondering, Mr. Fane's letterbox is "up the street" from his front door, so the postman didn't have to dodge any claws while leaving the note.

(Source: News.com.au)

## 8. StarTrack Courier allegedly lays off pregnant employee about to go on maternity leave

StarTrack Courier (the rebranded Messenger Post and StarTrack and a wholly owned subsidiary of AP), has certain implied obligations to its employees, such as treating them with respect and courtesy. It is so obvious that it goes without saying.

And, even though Post says it wants to keep the employment arrangements between Messenger Post and StarTrack separate how does Post justify StarTrack Courier lay off of a permanent full-time employee who is just about to go on maternity leave as part of the restructure in its WA facility. The employee in question was allegedly told she no longer had a job and to pack her things and go.

Post and StarTrack ought to beware. Pregnancy discrimination tops the Fair Work Ombudsman's list. There are penalties for breaching the Fair Work Act and anti-discrimination laws.

## 9. Women of Influence award a reminder of issues Australian women still face at work

ACTU President Ged Kearney has been announced as a winner in *The Australian Financial Review* and Westpac 100 Women of Influence Awards for 2014.

Ms Kearney has been recognised in the public policy category for her contribution to workplace relations and her relentless campaigning for social justice and workers' rights.

"The awards give us a chance to get people talking about the issues Australian women face at work and the action required to stop discrimination and close the gender pay gap," Ms Kearney said.

"As a 2014 Australian Woman of Influence, I am urging the Abbott Government to stop its attack on the living standards of all Australians with its cruel budget measures and new laws such as the Fair Work Amendment Bill that will strip away the rights and conditions of Australian workers," said Ms Kearney.

**We welcome your comments and contributions –  
send us an email and let us know what you think via [cwu@cwu.org.au](mailto:cwu@cwu.org.au)  
Check out our webpage at [www.cwu.org.au](http://www.cwu.org.au)**



Download our CWU phone app




---

Level 9, 365 Queen Street, Melbourne Vic 3000 (Australia)

[cwu.org.au](http://cwu.org.au)

**P** (03) 9001 9920

**F** (03) 9642 0333

**E** [cwu@cwu.org.au](mailto:cwu@cwu.org.au)

ABN 22 401 014 998 A Division of CEPU

**Dan Dwyer** Divisional Secretary

**Martin O'Nea** Divisional Assistant Secretary (Postal)