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# Herald Sun

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## Editorial

### Drunks at the desal project

- by: Editorial
- From: Herald Sun
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**A SCRIPTWRITER who came up with a plot involving \$200,000 a year workers being paid to sober up would be laughed out of the director's office.**

But just to prove that fact is often stranger than fiction, that's exactly the deal workers at Victoria's troubled Wonthaggi desalination plant have won.

As the *Herald Sun* reveals today, desal workers who turn up with a blood alcohol level of .02 can sleep off the grog on full pay before starting their shift.

This perk is just one of the many that a desperate Brumby government was prepared to grant unions as it struggled to persuade Victorians it could "drought-proof" the state.

The Baillieu Government is now stuck with that desal deal, which will cost taxpayers \$24 billion over 28 years.

Nobody minds workers getting a fair day's pay for a fair day's work.

But there is increasing and alarming evidence that some at the desal plant are actively slowing their work rate to extend the life of their lucrative pay deal, including by waiting in toilets for hours and taking far too many smoko breaks.

This from workers who are already getting \$50 an hour more than workers doing similar jobs at other major projects and perks that most Victorian workers would consider both excessive and unnecessary, such as tax-free living away from home allowances of up to \$750 a week and 26 rostered days off a year.

Which is why Premier Ted Baillieu is to be praised for his recent decision to declare war on greedy unions.

His plan to overhaul the state's industrial relations policy comes too late to change the overly generous desal deal the previous government saddled us with.

But hopefully it will break the unions' monopoly over the supply of labour and lead to future major projects being delivered on time and on budget.

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