

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Additional Estimates 2014 - 2015

Cross Portfolio

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ15-000026

Senator Lines asked on 26 February 2015 on proof Hansard page 29

Question

Enterprise bargaining employee productivity proposals

Senator LINES: How long did you spend bargaining before you put the current agreement to staff?

Ms Leon: Four months.

Senator LINES: How many meetings did you have—just approximately, I am not asking you to be exact? You would have had half a dozen meetings, presumably.

Ms Rundle: I think it was around 16. I will confirm that.

Senator LINES: But did you reject all of the propositions?

Ms Rundle: I would have to think about everything that they actually put on the table.

Ms Leon: Some of the things that were put on the table, I think it is fair to say, were not matters that fell within the framework. So when you say did we reject any of them, I think there is a difference between us electing not to put something in an enterprise agreement that staff had proposed as a productivity offset as opposed to staff proposing things that did not actually count as productivity. So we had to just—

Senator LINES: What are the sorts of issues that staff put on the table?

Ms Leon: I just do not know if we would have all of the records of those meetings here.

Senator LINES: Does Ms Rundle recall some?

Ms Rundle: The issues that staff put on the table?

Senator LINES: Yes, that were rejected, that were outside of the framework.

Senator Abetz: The 12½ per cent wage increase from the CPSU, one imagines, would be one.

Ms Leon: I would be reluctant to just go from memory about the nature of the matters that were raised in bargaining and the approach that was taken by the department to all of those.

Senator LINES: I think it is a shame that you made that statement that staff put matters on the table that were outside of the framework but when I asked you to name those matters you could not. It is a little bit unfair to generalise it and not be able to follow it up.

Ms Leon: I am happy to take that on notice. I am happy to take it on notice if you want specific examples of that.

Answer

CPSU representatives presented the *2014 APS-Wide Bargaining Claim – Employment* on the table during bargaining. In addition to wage increases of four per cent per annum, the claim included proposals such as:

- Where work being done in different agencies in the APS is of equivalent value but being paid at different pay rates, employees will be moved to the highest pay rate (this would be in addition to the claimed wage increases)
- Increase existing or provide for new leave entitlements of 20 days paid domestic violence leave, 26 weeks paid parental leave, five days paid cultural leave, and five days paid community service leave per year, and
- back pay to 1 July 2014.

At the table bargaining representatives raised issues such as:

- providing for an additional public holiday on the first working day after ANZAC Day where that day falls on a weekend
- employer superannuation contribution rates to be specified in the enterprise agreement
- Executive Level employees receiving time off in lieu for any time worked over standard hours on an hour for hour basis, and
- employees who have flex credits at the time of ceasing employment receive payment in lieu in their final entitlements.

Staff made a number of suggestions through the pre-bargaining survey and directly to the Department's bargaining team including:

- reducing the cost of travel, accommodation and printing
- reviewing the current travel process and consider booking privately rather than through QBE
- restricting the number of personal leave days that can be used for caring purposes to a maximum of three to five days
- reducing our workforce so that we can afford a more significant pay rise for other employees, and
- increasing working hours to 40 hours per week.