

# Australia Post workers to CEPU: Show us the agreement!

Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee  
23 July 2021

The Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee (PWRFC) demands that the Communications Electrical Plumbers Union (CEPU) release in full the proposed enterprise bargaining agreement (EBA) and “terms of reference” to its members and give Australia Post workers at least seven days to read and discuss the details before being asked to vote.

Postal workers must not be asked to vote on a document they have not seen. Mass online meetings must be held in which all workers are permitted to speak, ask questions and raise differences with the proposed EBA.

The union claims it has reached “in-principle” agreement. The reality is, Australia Post workers have agreed to nothing. The proposed deal has been hammered out between management and the union and—based on the vague information provided—offers no real gains for workers.

The CEPU claims that a 3 percent per annum pay rise is a win because it is “double the Australian average.” The PWRFC does not accept this phoney attempt to justify a wage “increase” that will not keep up with the rising cost of living. Postal workers take no comfort in the knowledge that other members of the working class have been subjected to even worse deals.

Under conditions of an ongoing global pandemic, why does the union make no mention of workers’ health and safety? Australia Post workers risk exposure to COVID-19 every day, yet the CEPU has not mentioned let alone issued a demand to management that vaccinations must be provided as a matter of urgency.

The union lists seven “joint reviews” as “key outcomes” of the proposed EBA. How can workers be asked to agree in advance to the outcomes of backroom union-management talks to be conducted at an

unspecified time in the future?

Postal workers have not forgotten that, 12 months ago, the CEPU went behind our backs to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with management, locking us in to the Alternative Delivery Model (ADM), banning us from taking industrial action, and preventing us from receiving a wage rise.

Now, the CEPU is trying to use workers’ hatred of the ADM to blind us to the coming assault, telling us there will be a “roll-back.” Even if this were true—and the union is well aware that it is not—there were no “good old days” to return to.

Since long before the ADM, Australia Post management, with the full collaboration of the union, has subjected workers to stagnant wages, thousands of job cuts, and growing casualisation and contracting out of work. The CEPU states that “all existing EBA9 conditions” will be preserved under the new agreement. In other words, the proposed EBA will not address any of these longstanding issues, entrenched in the last agreement, EBA9.

While the CEPU has provided even less information about the “terms of reference” (TOR) than the EBA, it is clear that the new delivery model being prepared is far from a win for workers. The associated “local working groups” are an anti-democratic means for management to carry out a major restructuring of Australia Post, while claiming that the resulting attacks on the workforce have the “blessing” of rank-and-file workers in these management-union groups.

The CEPU has clearly stated that its interests lie with management: “The sustainability of CEPU members’ job security, pay and conditions across the entire organisation is critically dependent on Australia Post providing a quality of service that keeps your customers coming back—not one that forces them to

seek out your competitors.”

The PWRFC rejects the conception that workers’ jobs and conditions are bound up with the continued profits of Australia Post, and the attempt to pit workers against one another. Postal workers are not in competition with other delivery workers, or any other section of the working class.

We urge our fellow workers to join the rank-and-file committee, which is completely independent of the CEPU, to advance the demands needed to defend the jobs and basic rights of postal workers. These demands include:

- All Australia Post workers must be provided with a full copy of the proposed EBA and TOR and allowed seven days to read and discuss them prior to any vote.

- Vaccinations must immediately be made available to all postal workers, on company time and with no loss of income or sick leave if time is needed to recover from any side effects. No worker should be forced to work without having received at least one vaccine shot. Postal workers must be issued with medical-grade personal protection equipment while in depots and doing deliveries.

- Rank-and-file committees must be elected, independent of management and the unions, to organise and fight for the protection of workers’ health and safety. These committees will give regular reports to the workers and make the necessary recommendations.

- Workers whose health has been affected must be paid their full wage, including overtime, until they make a full recovery and can carry out their regular duties, with no management harassment.

- 10 percent wage increases per year, with absolutely NO trade-offs. Postal workers must receive a living wage to meet the escalating cost of living.

- All fixed-term contract workers and casuals must be given full-time positions.

- Increase full-time staff to deal with extra parcels and reduce the workload on existing staff.

- One beat, one postie. Recast beats on the basis of finishing within rostered hours. Rank-and-file committees must be established to plan and control the organisation of beats and other aspects of production.

- Increase annual leave by two weeks. Return the Authorised Holiday to the Christmas period, as previously established.

- These measures have to be financed by

expropriating the profits extracted from Australia Post workers.

- Australia Post must be transformed into a genuine public utility, under real public ownership and the democratic control of the working class, to meet the needs of society, including the basic social right to a secure and affordable postal service.

Postal workers and contractors, as well as all other delivery workers, are invited to contact the PWRFC to discuss this perspective.



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](https://wsws.org/contact)**