

THINGS ARE CHANGING AT TELSTRA

BULLETIN 4

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With the change in law, there will be no further AWAs within Telstra. We hope in the coming months all Telstra staff will have a real choice to move off AWAs.

This is a great opportunity for all staff to take the best bits of AWAs, combine them with the strong conditions of the EBA, and work with the company to find a positive way forward.

Unions are working together with all employees to make sure you can take advantage of this opportunity to have your say.

The background

Many Telstra workers are employed on AWA individual contracts.

Often signing an AWA was mandatory if you wanted a job with Telstra. In many cases, payraises, promotions, access to salary sacrificing and other benefits within the company, were limited to employees who agreed to sign.

Many employees had little or no real choice but to sign an AWA.

No more AWAs at Telstra – EA the new safety net

Labor kept its election promise and abolished AWAs soon after forming Government. No new individual contracts are allowed in any workplace in Australia.

Within Telstra, this means the union-negotiated Enterprise Agreement (sometimes called an EA or collective agreement) will be the new safety net for all staff.

The Telstra unions – APESMA, CEPU and the CPSU – joined with the ACTU to begin EA negotiations with Telstra management last month.

The EA will set the benchmark for the pay and conditions for the majority of Telstra employees.

This is great news!

There are some great positives about moving away from AWAs and onto the EA.

For example, it means that your pay and conditions will be clearly set out in a legal agreement.

This is a significant improvement compared with relying on Telstra policy, which can be changed at any time.

Things you like in the AWA can be retained and even improved - like keeping incentives but making performance pay more transparent and accountable so it works for everyone.

Where an AWA was usually offered on a "take it or leave it" basis, you get to join together with fellow staff to have your input into the EA. You can choose to speak up as an individual or as part of a team.

Real choice for AWA employees

The Telstra unions have heard from many workers on AWAs. Taking into account your concerns, we have used the EA discussions to tell management:

- Telstra employees must be able to move off the AWAs without going backwards in pay and conditions.
- Telstra should respect the right of AWA employees who choose to move off their AWA prior to the final expiry date.
- Other concerns and issues raised by Telstra staff on AWAs must be considered as part of the EA negotiations.

Make sure your voice is heard

Moving away from AWAs is just one way Telstra is changing.

To make sure Telstra excels in its competitive industry, unions have argued that the company has to embrace a new, more productive way of working with staff and their unions.

As part of this process we want you to have your say!

- Do you need help finding out how the new workplace laws could affect you?
- Do you have concerns about moving off your AWA?
- What conditions are most important for you to retain or strengthen when you move off the AWA?

It doesn't matter whether you are on the EA or an AWA- we would like to hear from you. Email your views, completely confidentially, to awaviews@actu.asn.au.

Stay tuned for future bulletins as we keep you informed about negotiations. Please feel free to circulate this flyer to your colleagues.



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