

MEAA consultation with Regional management re proposed changes – September 25, 11.30am Sydney – Andrew Fisher, Jonathan Wright (Regional Planning) ABC HR and MEAA – Katelin McInerney and Charlotte Clark (NSW)

Proposal to move from 4-week roster to 2-week roster (loss of Roster-Free Day)

Issue	Key MEAA concerns and questions	Management response
Losing 12 Days off a year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hours of work change will not recognise current levels of work being performed in newsrooms around the country. pre-existing issue with lack of formal system to this is a loss of a formal system of roster that recognises additional work and supplies time off. • This amounts to a loss of pay for which there will be no compensation as none of the journalists impacted will be shortening rosters. How does management plan to record these hours as the shift change crosses over? Will time sheets be available and used by managers to ensure people are not missing out on overtime worked as a result of this change? • Issue for staff in remote areas using RFDs to visit family etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABC did not respond immediately to MEAA’s request for a formal, tamper-proof recording of actual overtime, but are considering the matter and will come back to MEAA on how they would calculate the 0.4 hours for the 40 staff impacted
No plan in the foreseeable future - what changed?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional funding has changed the ball game
Casuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happens to the casuals currently working weekends and that pathway into the ABC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew Fisher advised that we will still be using casuals and confirmed that budget will remain for casuals as backfill, for leave and sickness and potentially fast breaking stories. The way they will be used however will alter. There is no plan to change the part timers either aside from the roster rotations.

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Proposal to move to 7-day roster

Issue	Key MEAA concerns and questions	Management response
<p>Lack of respect and recognition for work currently being performed by Regional news staff and the impact on personal lives and workloads this change will have.</p>	<p>Key issue is Regional News staff are already working significant overtime to get the job done, with very little respect given or recognition of overtime and workload intensification being made by management.</p> <p>Members hear managers across the board making comments like “maybe you lack discipline” and “you just need to manage your time more effectively” which completely ignores the systemic reality of this problem, for which the ABC has no clear guidelines, protocols or mechanisms to adequately define or quantify overtime let alone ensure the terms of the EBA are adhered to. This is a direct infringement of safe work regulations for the management of workloads and fatigue.</p> <p>MEAA has asked the ABC to outline the formal overtime system it intends to implement if this proposal goes ahead.</p>	<p>See below</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workload not there currently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saturday and Sunday there is not enough work 	<p>The basis of this proposed work pattern change is on greater resourcing and not asking more of those who are currently rostered by resourcing to fill gaps and develop 7 day coverage. This is critical when every other news outlet is withdrawing from the regions and this demonstrates a commitment to regional areas and jobs.</p>
<p>Features reporters rostered on Sundays</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the changes that will impact on Features Reporters (old CMRs and Open Producers) is that we will potentially be rostered on Sunday shifts where a news bulletin needs to be produced for Monday. • If we are the only staff member at work than we will be doing this which means the output of our primary role as a features producer will be impacted. • This seems in conflict with the goals of the roster strategy and regional 	<p>The intent is still to roster staff to their particular skill. With the additional resourcing feature reporters will still be expected to work on weekends but with a better view to having them do feature reports that may be scheduled for weekends. If stories break on the weekends and resources are needed for whatever reason that can be allocated as happens now. We are undertaking identification of</p>

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	<p>restructure – engaging audience and local for national coverage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management said feature reporters can be upskilled to do a news reporter role – I am sure that I like many of my colleagues don't think of this as upskilling but rather side-skilling into a role that I did not apply to do. 	<p>skill gaps and will be targeting training where it is most needed and of most value.</p>
Casual shifts gone	As above	
Breakdown of impact	<p>MEAA sought a breakdown of the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New positions allocated to each stations (yet to be hired) • How many vacancies there are currently in Regional News roles around the country • How many staff does the 7-day roster proposed change impact? • Please confirm that a total of 40 staff will be impacted by the RFD change proposed by the ABC. • The ABC has confirmed 25 roles have been filled under new regional funding allocated by ABC senior executive - can the ABC please provide a breakdown as to where those staff have been allocated • Can the ABC provide a breakdown of where the remainder of the 80 roles are proposed to be allocated by station and roll? • Can the ABC confirm which of the 7 sites selected as the Phase One sites have had staff allocated and how many, and where (if any) allocated roles still need to be filled? I have Port Pirie in my notes. • In the meeting today Andrew Fisher stated that the ABC does not intend to lose casuals for backfilling - is the ABC able to tell MEAA how many casual shifts will be lost due to the 7 day roster proposal? Does the ABC intend to retain casual staff in addition to rostered staff under the proposal at any sites in particular? • MEAA requests the ABC please provide detail about the current system used by Regional staff to enter TOIL into the payroll system. • MEAA requests the ABC provide the audience data (or a commercially suitable version) and trend report that is driving the proposed move to a 7-day roster. • Can the ABC provide a copy of all 36 indicative rosters to the MEAA. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are all impacted staff on Schedule B? If not, how many staff are on Schedule A?• How many current vacancies are there in ABC Regional newsrooms that pre-date the new Regional funding pool?• How many of the new 80 positions will be filled on an ongoing basis, how many will be offered as fixed-term, or specified task arrangements?	
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