



MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, March 6, 2023

ABC staff postpone planned stoppage

ABC journalists have today voted to postpone tomorrow's stoppage following a new pay offer from management.

MEAA Media members around Australia voted not to go ahead with the planned 40 minute stoppage after the ABC this morning provided an improved offer to union representatives. Members will still use social media tomorrow to inform the public about the state of enterprise bargaining.

The new offer provides pay rises totalling 11% over three years, backdated to October 1 last year, plus a \$1500 sign on bonus.

Management has also agreed to conduct a transparent audit of the gender and CALD pay gap, to fix the broken buyout system, and to put in place a new pathway for career progression for early and mid-career journalists.

As a sign of good faith in bargaining towards a new enterprise agreement, MEAA members met this afternoon and voted to postpone the stoppage to allow negotiations to continue.

MEAA Media Director Cassie Derrick said the threat of industrial action had been successful in bringing the ABC back to the bargaining table.

While the immediate stoppage planned for tomorrow has been postponed to allow negotiations to continue, members reserve their right to take protected industrial action during the current bargaining period if the outcome of those talks is not satisfactory.

"The new offer provided by management this morning contains several improvements on what has been on the table until now," she said.

"Members are encouraged that the new offer hears their concerns on gender and race pay gaps and buyouts and comes some way to addressing claims on progression and a fair pay rise.

"It does not satisfy all of employees' demands and there is still work to be done, but there is no doubt the pressure from union members has led to this better offer from ABC managing director David Anderson after his executives refused to negotiate for weeks.

"This is a major achievement for ABC employees in this campaign who have been united in their resolve to push for a better deal."

MEAA members had planned to take protected industrial action in the form of a 40 minute stoppage at 2pm AEDT tomorrow.

Late last month, MEAA members voted by almost 90% in favour of a broad range of industrial action up to and including an indefinite strike.

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Until now, outstanding issues for ABC staff have included include career progression through pay bands to provide a pathway for junior staff, and the majority of staff in the regions as journalists gain skill and experience in a role; a regular, transparently reported gender and race pay gap audit so we can address specific problems with inequality and retention of diverse staff; and an improved buyout system.

Union members have also insisted that the offer must also include back pay to the expiry date of the previous enterprise bargaining agreement.

“This has never been just about pay,” Ms Derrick said.

“It’s about ensuring a fair go at forging a career at the public broadcaster.

“The public need and deserve an ABC that is diverse, fair and equal. It must invest in a workforce that is supported and have sustainable careers in the cities and the regions and for people from diverse backgrounds and women.”

Ms Derrick said MEAA would discuss the new offer with the other ABC staff union, the Community and Public Sector Union, in coming days.

More information: Mark Phillips, 0422 009 011 or mark.phillips@meaa.org