

BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES FOR ROSTERING
Meeting MEAA House Committee & ABC 19/10/2018

Background: With a reduction in funding within the ABC and the recent *Local Journalism Initiative* that seeks to transform local and metropolitan newsrooms to a multiplatform media operation a number of factors have arisen that are impacting journalists. One of the significant but manageable issues is rostering of staff. After considerable discussion with staff in regards to rostering the following matters have been highlighted.

- ▶ the need to identify staff shortages early and adapt editorial coverage to fit
- ▶ A lack of organisational rostering principles or guidelines to guide how rosters are developed.
- ▶ A desire for family and work balance
- ▶ Inequity in rostering employees
- ▶ Daily overtime not being acknowledged or recorded
- ▶ Split days off are on the increase
- ▶ Requests for leave are often unable to be met as no backfill is available
- ▶ Concern about the quality of reporting due to staff shortages
- ▶ Not enough lead time on publishing of rosters to allow staff to plan their lives

The principles below are designed to assist and give guidance to management and to the person(s) writing the rosters to ensure transparency and better planning, equity and consistency and work life balance is taken into consideration when determining rosters. The following objectives and principles have been developed through input and discussions with members and employees at ABC and seek to enhance the rostering process, meet the operational requirements and sustain the health and wellbeing of staff.

A proposed way forward

Objective A: Changes to rostering systems are managed in accordance with the current EBA and must meet members leave entitlement and suggest improvements

Objective B: Ensure employees are rostered in a fair, reasonable and equitable manner

Objective C: Rostering systems are to support work life balance and the health and wellbeing of all staff.

Objective D: Proposed changes to individual rosters must be discussed with the affected member and be mutually agreed in writing

Principle 1: Monthly Rosters - Staff will be rostered monthly.

Principle 2: Notice Period - Minimum of 4 weeks' notice

Principle 3: Skills - Staff rostered on at any time must cover a range of experience and competencies

Principle 4: Weekends - Equity in weekends off for all employees

Principle 5: Consecutive Days – Two consecutive days to be given in any one week unless mutually agreed.

Principle 6: Shift Cycles - Schedule consistent start times each week or if rotating rosters are used, shift start times should move in a back rotation (i.e. night- afternoon-morning).

Principle 7 Adaptation - as a minimum, employees new to shift work and those returning after an extended period of annual or sick leave should not be rostered on night work or an early morning start for their first shift.

Principle 8: Fatigue - Take action to reduce the risk of fatigue when roster changes are made, for example, when covering unplanned absences or the need to work extra hours as a result of unforeseen circumstances.

Principle 9: OHS - Rostering to take into account the Occupational, Health and Safety matters i.e. trained first aider on each shift and or a Health and Safety Representative.

Principle 10: Resourcing - Staff members delegated to write rosters will have designated time to complete rosters.

Principle 11: Review and Consultation - The roster should enable employees to be actively involved in the review of equity within the rosters by way of a staff committee. Committee made up of representatives from designated work groups (DWG's) those impacted by the roster.

Principle 12: Conflict – where conflict arises, an agreed person who is external to writing the rosters agreed by the parties will mediate the matter. If unresolved Dispute Settling Procedures under the EBA can be invoked.