



MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, July 19, 2024

Nine Publishing journalists vote in favour of industrial action

Journalists employed by Nine Publishing will take industrial action next week in pursuit of a fair deal in a new enterprise bargaining agreement and on the back of the company's announcement during negotiations to cut 90 jobs from the mastheads.

Journalists at the *Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Age*, *The Australian Financial Review*, *Brisbane Times* and *WAtoday* will begin taking action through social media and calling for public support. They will meet during next week to discuss future actions including stop works.

The Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance notified Nine Publishing this afternoon of the results of a ballot that showed more than 90% of union members were in favour of a range of protected action including an indefinite strike.

Members taking part in next week's action include journalists assigned to cover the Paris Olympics, which begin on July 26.

The acting Director of MEAA Media, Michelle Rae, said members were prepared to walk off the job if management did not put a serious offer on the table.

Negotiations have been underway for several months, but management has refused to budge on key claims, including a fair pay rise that keeps ahead of the cost of living, a genuine commitment to better workplace gender and cultural diversity, improvements to grade progression, and adherence to the MEAA freelance charter of rights.

MEAA members are also seeking formal recognition of the charter of editorial independence in the new agreement along with genuine consultation and commitments over the use of generative Artificial Intelligence.

Late last month – following the announcement of 200 job cuts at Nine – MEAA members at Nine Publishing passed a resounding vote of no confidence in managing director Mike Sneesby.

"Members' anger is white hot that the job cuts will fall disproportionately upon the publishing division, which is profitable and productive," Ms Rae said.

"These mastheads are strong financial performers, and have a reputation for award-winning journalism, and Nine needs to put its editorial front line ahead of its financial bottom line.

"Australian Olympic athletes have the chance to stand on top of the podium once every four years, but editorial workers at Nine are delivering gold every day with quality public interest journalism.

"MEAA members are also angry at a lack of acknowledgement of the role that the independent reporting of the publishing division has played in upholding the reputation of the company's news division.

"They don't want to take industrial action but management's intransigence has left them with no choice."

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