

THE AUSTRALASIAN MEAT INDUSTRY EMPLOYEES' UNION

(Federal Council)



Federal Secretary
GRAHAM SMITH

227 Henley Beach Road Torrensville, SA 5034, Australia

Telephone: (08) 8274 4100

Facsimile: (08) 8274 4101

Federal President
PAUL CONWAY

Website: <http://amieu.net/>

COLES MEMBERS DECEMBER 2018 UPDATE

Members,

As you are aware, a negotiation team consisting of union officials and shop floor delegates have been meeting with Coles to try and negotiate a single national agreement for people working in meat units.

This is no easy feat as there are currently 6 different sets of terms and conditions covering the six states of Australia, and bringing them together into one common set of conditions is very challenging.

Progress to date has been quite significant and also productive with much of the core of the agreement already locked down, leaving only the really thorny bits to now deal with. What are the thorny bits? Well obviously base rates are one major issue.

We have asked for a catch up on lost earnings while the agreements did not move over the past 18 months or so, as well as increases both immediately and annually over the next two years.

Other very thorny bits include where Coles want to eliminate butchers picnic day as a holiday, remove non-working day benefits, and reduce leave loading amounts. These will be hard fought.

We are also deep in negotiations about people who are on saved arrangements already, and those that may have to be on saved arrangements in the new agreement.

A critical clause that took quite some negotiation was the definition of a butcher, not so much the role or tasks, but the flexibility. The definition finally agreed is as follows:

A butcher's role is to perform tasks within the meat department but may on occasion be directed to work in Fresh departments, Deli, Seafood and Fresh Produce, provided that it does not interfere with the proper operation of the Meat Department. Work outside the Meat Department that is more than occasional or interferes with the proper operation of the Meat Department, requires consultation and agreement by the butcher.

The part about non-interference with the operation of the meat department is obviously the critical factor in the clause.

As a matter of interest the parties have all approached the agreement with the view to making it easy to read and understand and so where in past agreements there has been a tendency to get very wordy and complex in some areas, this agreement will be much more concise, will feature tables to look at rather than having to read thousands of words, and be much smaller in thickness than many predecessors. The current version is only 22 pages long as we are striving to make it much easier for our members to know what it is they are entitled to, and what store managers can and can't do.

We will now break over Christmas and recommence negotiations sometime in the latter part of January and we hope to be in a position to give you some real detail shortly thereafter. We are still too far apart on the major issues to give you a proper evaluation yet.

In the meantime we would like to wish all of our members and their families the very best for Christmas and hope that your new year is wonderful.

Our only parting advice at this time is to not expect Coles to be filling your Santa sacks this Christmas, but we will get what we can out of them in the New Year!



Merry Christmas to all!

GRAHAM SMITH
FEDERAL SECRETARY