



YOUR UNION WORKING FOR YOU!



State Secretary, Brad O'Carroll

Just a quick update to let you know about some great wins your Union has had recently. For a small Union we are definitely punching above our weight and continue to strive for the best for our members. Kind regards,

Brad

YOUR UNION TOOK ON A CORPORATE GIANT AND WON!

The Union was engaged in a real David vs Goliath battle in July when it took on corporate giant, Rheem.

Rheem workers had not been paid their award allowances, despite them having an agreement stating that the terms of the award must be included in their agreement. These are low paid workers which the Union estimates were around \$144 a week worse off by not being paid their award allowances.

The matter was taken to the Fair Work Commission where Rheem, who engaged the services of major employer group AIG, argued that its agreement stood alone and that the award allowances did not apply, despite the clause in the agreement stating otherwise. This meant that workers weren't being paid award allowances such as:

- tool allowance;
- meal allowance;
- inclement weather allowance; and
- first aid allowance.

The Commission agreed that the Union was correct in its arguments and that the award allowances should apply, although there's no specifications yet on which allowances so that is yet to be determined. We'll be following up with these workers to make sure their pay packets now include the \$144 – oh and the Commission also stated that they be backpaid to September 2013!

This decision will also apply to Rheem workers in other states as their agreements contain the same clause so these workers can thank the Plumbers Union Queensland for their pay rise!

The Union thanks the persistence of a small group of Rheem workers who knew they were on the side of right on this issue. Also, we ran this case against a major corporate company with one Industrial Officer and an Organiser and won!

It just goes to show what can be achieved when we are fighting for what's right, fair and reasonable for our members. Talk about punching above our weight on this one!

WAGE RECOVERY ALMOST HITS \$1MILLION

The Union has now recovered almost \$1million in unpaid wages and entitlements!! And this is only since April 2014. Considering we collected about \$850,000 in the preceding 12 months, it's almost frightening to think how much we will collect by March 2015.

If you think you might not be getting paid correctly, please check with your delegate or organiser who will be able to assist you in the first instance. It's always best to try and sort the issue out on the job first as pursuit of a claim may involve lengthy and expensive court proceedings.

PAY INCREASE FOR CONSTRUCTION WORKERS



Members working under EB7 received another increase on 1 September, 2014. There are now only two more increases under the

current EBA (1 March and 1 September 2015) with EB8 due for negotiation in 2015. This will be a much harder slog for everyone due to changes the Abbott Government is likely to attempt soon. It's important that members stay strong and know that the Union will be doing its utmost to come up with a good agreement. Updated summary sheets are available for downloading at www.plumbersunionqld.com or by calling the Union Office on (07) 3844 8433.