

# Combined Rail Unions'

22 January 2019

Dear Member

## Aurizon Bargaining Update

Your Union bargaining representatives have been bargaining with Aurizon for some time now and the results have been less than satisfactory.

Aurizon have been dragging their heels by offering few real concessions and cancelling numerous meetings across all the streams- it's time they got serious with bargaining.

So far, we've seen few real concessions and lots of delays or cancellations of meetings.

Last week saw Coal Bargaining take place with no significant progress – some meetings lasted half an hour because Aurizon representatives did not have the authority to make decisions.

For Traincrew, Aurizon tabled a document which had no real changes from the last round, except they had badged up several claims they had withdrawn as 'concessions'. Aurizon knew that the withdrawn claims were never going to be accepted anyway – so they were hardly concessions.

Let's be clear though – Aurizon has not significantly advanced their offer at all – your bargaining representatives were asked to provide feedback on the Aurizon offer following the Christmas break and their feedback was simple: Aurizon has not addressed the concerns about rostering and have made next to no progress on core issues – they seem to be playing games and it's time for them to get serious.

Coal Maintenance was next cab off the rank, and it was just as disappointing. There was little progress made with management being told that their offer was not good enough and more work needed to be done on issues such as pay for public holidays and RDO's, the rolling up of allowances and of course – shift status.

Over the weekend, members in AER and some in Bulk took industrial action. Aurizon's reaction was not just irrational, but also telling.

One manager said that the industrial action was not influencing Aurizon, that it wouldn't change their mind – they then said that it was crippling Aurizon and could be the reason the business would get sold! They seem to be under a bit of pressure.

Prior to Christmas, negotiators in Bulk were told that Aurizon wouldn't be prepared to meet until well into February, proposing around a 6 week break in talks. No wonder they were angry, when management refused to budge on the date. Again, there was insufficient progress in those discussions.

This week should have seen the commencement of Core bargaining – those issues which affect everyone – but Aurizon cancelled them.

They cancelled them because of industrial action. Even though Core conditions affect everyone, and only some areas are taking action – they cancelled them anyway. It looks more and more like a delaying tactic.

Members deserve more than this shambles that's coming from Aurizon. Your claims for a fair wage increase, job security and correcting disputed entitlements are not outrageous claims. Time and again, members have said they want to see:

- Concrete improvement to job security;
- Work/life balance delivered by fairer rostering processes;
- Reasonable recognition for the unique hours and demands imposed by the rail industry; and
- A fair increase to take account of the real cost of living.

They aren't too much to ask – and it's about time Aurizon stopped playing games and got back to the table to resolve these agreements. Today we wrote to Aurizon and outlined our concerns. The letter is attached below.

Authorised by:

Owen Doogan  
State Secretary  
RTBU



Rohan Webb  
State Secretary, AMWU



Peter Ong  
State Secretary, CEPU -  
Electrical Div



Mick McKittrick  
State Secretary, AFULE



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Mitch Patterson  
Principal ER Adviser  
Aurizon Holdings Pty Ltd  
Level 15  
175 Eagle Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000  
Via email: [mitch.patterson@aurizon.com.au](mailto:mitch.patterson@aurizon.com.au)

Dear Mitch

## Re: Cancelled Negotiations

We were disappointed to receive your letter in which Aurizon again cancelled negotiations.

You state that Aurizon will not negotiate while unions use their legal and legitimate right to apply pressure to the company via industrial action.

Aurizon says it's keen to reach an agreement yet is dragging its feet in providing responses to claims in a range of areas.

Aurizon says it's keen to reach an agreement yet cancels negotiations in a huff despite time being agreed and scheduled.

The decision to cancel negotiations is a bad one. It does however fit with some astonishing logic we have seen recently.

- We heard over the weekend the same manager saying that union action was somehow both ineffective and not going to shift Aurizon's view but at the same time crippling the company and might cause the business to be sold!
- Aurizon say it's keen to reach an agreement in Bulk but steadfastly refused to shorten an almost 6 week break in talks.
- Now we see that negotiations for core conditions – those which affect everyone – are cancelled for everyone because some people are taking action.

It's obvious the strategy that Aurizon is playing and it's time the games came to an end.

For good reason, unions have been concerned that Aurizon is simply wasting time so it can try to cancel our current agreements.

It's little wonder people across Aurizon are angry and want their employer to get serious.

**It is high time Aurizon management listened to their workforce, their local leaders and the union negotiators. Their message is clear, and it's starting to get louder.**

**Aurizon needs to get fair dinkum about this negotiation, stop playing games, and work towards a fair deal acceptable to the company and the workforce.**

On that basis, we propose that core negotiations recommence on Monday, 28<sup>th</sup> February. We also note that we were scheduled for today, tomorrow and the day after. We remain able to restart during those days as well.

We urge Aurizon to take this opportunity to work towards fair agreements. It's time to get serious and stop playing games.

Yours sincerely, with approval from the AFULE, ETU & AMWU



Owen Doogan  
**RTBU State Secretary**

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