

## SAPN/Enerven EA

### EA Meeting Update 8/6/2021

Yesterday, Tuesday the 8<sup>th</sup> of June 2021, we met with SA Power Networks/Enerven to continue negotiations. At the start of the meeting the SBU tabled a modified Log of Claims, potentially removing 18 items from the original SBU Log of Claims. This is a substantial change in position and gives a clear illustration of how reasonable the SBU is being at the bargaining table.

SA Power Networks/Enerven did not modify their Log of Claims. **They are maintaining their radical agenda and retain their claims to cut wages and reduce job security.**

The EA meeting lasted 3 hours and at the end of the meeting SA Power Networks/Enerven said that they would have a proposal for the SBU to view by close of business Thursday.

There will be another meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> of June 2021 that will provide the SBU the opportunity to further bargain the proposal. It is important that all Actions and bans continue until the SBU has achieved a fair and reasonable outcome to the Enterprise Agreement.

### **The Industry that SAPN/Enerven Want**

The claims put forth by SA Power Networks/Enerven would undermine wages, conditions and job security. This is not a shock and awe tactic. We are not trying to put fear into the workers, this is the simple truth. We have seen the impact of tiered wage rates in the SA Plumbing Industry.

We will unpack the company's claims over the next week or so, so that you can understand what they would mean for you, your family and your industry.

#### **SAPN/Enerven Claim Number 1**

**Any wage increase over 2% requires change in the Agreement.**

This claim is rigid and restrictive, with an extortionate undertone. *"If you want more than 2%, you need to give up your conditions"* is how we read it – which in itself gives no kudos to any worker for putting in any extra effort over the last 4 years.

#### **SAPN/Enerven Claim Number 2**

**Inclusion of adjusted minimum wage rates for new employees (1a and 1b) (80% of current wage rates).**

This claim is particularly nasty. It is also an extremely unfair and lazy way to deal with the issue that SA Power Networks/Enerven has told us they have.

SA Power Networks/Enerven have said that there are a variety of workers who are over-paid in their business. Their answer for that is to give all *new* employees a 20% pay reduction. So that those that are over-paid will end up being not so over-paid, and those on market rates will end up 20% under the market rate for their role. In our view this creates more issues than it fixes.

If added into the new EA, it will create a 2 tier wage system in SA Power Networks/Enerven, which for a budget driven business has obvious disadvantages for existing workers. Existing workers will be viewed as expensive labour, while new employees will be preferred because of the 20% discount they represent on labour costs. So, when the big jobs come up, with overtime and away work, the workers who are 20% cheaper will always get preference. Add this to the claim where SAPN/Enerven will be allowed to hire directly from outside to fill vacant positions – why would they ever promote from the inside when they can get a 20% discount by hiring external labour.

This will concrete every existing worker in their current position forever, possibly until they agree to become 20% cheaper fresh labour.

#### **SAPN/Enerven Claim Number 3**

**Amend Allowances (Att 2 C7.1) and LAFHA (Att 2 C7.3) provisions to reduce by up to 30% for new employees, and with existing employees, enable reduction for fixed period, by agreement.**

This claim is a repeat of the last, but with a 30% reduction, and the opportunity for existing workers to agree to reduce their own take home pay in an effort to compete with new external labour.

This is a good indication of what the company wants from its workforce.

Competing with each other, reducing your own wage to compete for work.  
This is SAPN/Enerven's Airtasker Dream. Workers under cutting each other with only 1 party (SAPN/Enerven) benefitting!

#### **SAPN/Enerven Claim Number 4**

**Amend Overtime provisions (Att 2 C9.6.2) from double time to 1.5 times for first 3 hours and double time thereafter for new employees, and for existing employees, for fixed periods of time, by agreement.**

This claim once again, is designed to pit worker against worker in a cost race to win work from one another. New employees will set the rate, with no double time until 3 hours after the start of overtime and existing employees will be given the opportunity to compete with that by agreeing to reduce their overtime rate. This "*race to the bottom*" strategy by SAPN/Enerven should leave workers with no false illusions of what your employer wants for you and your family for the future.

These claims need to be seen for what they are – an attack on our industry and a direct attempt by SAPN/Enerven to take money out of the worker's pockets. This isn't fair and reasonable for a business who is an absolute monopoly. For Substation and Line workers in SA, there is nowhere else that you can ply your trade, so if these attacks are successful the choice for these workers is unimaginable. Either lose 20% of your wage and compete with new labour, or walk away from your trade and find a new career, as your trade cannot be used by any other employer (that isn't a contractor, who will also get a 20% hair cut) in South Australia.

The leaders/managers/consultants that have thought up, approved and presented these claims to our industry are the enemy of every worker in our industry. These insidious strategies to undermine our industry (SAPN/Enerven and contractors included) need to be kicked out of our industry, along with those that support them.

We are challenging SA Power Networks on their misleading communications in relation to overtime bans being Partial bans. To be very clear, overtime bans are not partial bans and you **cannot** be sent home for participating in partial bans.

**These claims are the reason every worker must participate in work bans whenever they can.  
This is your industry, yours to save, or yours to lose if you ignore this threat.**

**SAME WORK, LESS PAY, WE SAY, NO WAY!**

For more information regarding the SAPN/Enerven enterprise agreement negotiations, contact your relevant union workplace delegate or your Union Organiser:

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**PLEASE SHARE THIS UPDATE WITH YOUR WORKMATES**