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OPEN LETTER TO AIRSERVICES CEO JASON HARFIELD - INVITATION TO MAKE JOINT SUBMISSION ON FIREFIGHTERS' SALARIES TO MINISTER

Jason Harfield
Chief Executive Officer
Airservices Australia (by email)

1/3/2024

Dear Jason,

Airservices' refusal to agree to any of the UFUA's enterprise bargaining claims is very disappointing. We had hoped Airservices would take this opportunity to show that it valued its employees by engaging in good faith negotiations and giving genuine consideration to all of the claims that our members have put forward.

Airservices' choice to run lock step with the Australian Public Sector Commission (APSC) Workplace Relations Policy which offers an 11.2% wage increase over three years is hard enough to accept. Although we note your adherence to this policy does not include the 15.4% superannuation contribution rate that is standard across the public sector.

As you are aware, over the past three years, aviation firefighters have suffered real wage losses while having increased demands made of them following cuts to the workforce. We believe our members' efforts to keep airports operational through this difficult period must be recognised in the new enterprise agreement.

The reason advanced by Airservices for locking into its wage offer is that it is bound by the APSC Policy. This policy clearly states that non-APS agencies, such as Airservices are "*encouraged to apply the Non-APS Policy to the extent practicable, commensurate with their commercial and competitive circumstances.*" This enables Airservices to reach agreements outside of government policy parameters. We also note that the policy allows wage settlements that differ from the 11.2%, where exemptions are considered and granted by the relevant Minister.

In the spirit of co-operation and good faith bargaining, we invite Airservices to make a joint submission with the UFUA to the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government supporting an exemption to the policy's limits on wage increases. This would greatly increase the likelihood of a timely settlement and in turn generate some semblance of trust and goodwill between Airservices' senior management and its aviation rescue firefighters.

Regards,

Wesley Garrett,
Secretary
UFUA Aviation Branch