



EBA Bulletin No 6

Wednesday 2 January 2008

# Voting for industrial action

Alliance members will vote this **Thursday 10 January between 12 noon and 2pm** to authorise industrial action.

The secret ballot, conducted by the Australian Electoral Commission, will be an attendance ballot in the workplace, rather than a postal ballot. Members must attend the polling place while the ballot is open to cast a valid vote. **If it's your day off, you'll have to come in to vote.**

In an attendance ballot, members enter a private room individually where their name is checked against the roll of eligible voters. At least 50% of members on the roll (financial members as at 24/12/07 employed at the five newspapers) must vote and at least 50% of those must vote in favour.

The question on the ballot paper will be:

**"Do you, for the purpose of advancing claims in the negotiation of a union collective agreement between the Alliance and Regional Publishers Pty Ltd, authorise industrial action in the form of rolling stoppages, strikes, bans and limitations by Alliance members employed by Regional Publishers?"**

The result will known by Friday 11 January. If the industrial action is authorised by members, the union must then provide the employer with three days' notice of industrial action, and the type of action that will be taken.

## **What kind of industrial action?**

Obviously, we're not going to telegraph our punches. Each workplace should consider the pressure points at their newspaper. The type of action and the timing will be determined by our strike committee, made up of workplace delegates. We'll be out to maximise the inconvenience to the company while minimising the cost to us.

If the industrial action lasts less than four hours, then four hours pay must be docked; if the action lasts longer than four hours then a day's pay must be docked.

Only Alliance members can take "protected industrial action", where they cannot be sued or dismissed by the employer. The few non-members left are encouraged to join the union.

## **Does it have to be industrial action?**

The company clearly doesn't rate the work of its journalists – apparently we don't contribute to the profitability of the newspapers. It's shown no willingness to increase the pay offer above 3% per year. It did offer a two year agreement with 3% a year, and then even offered a 12 month agreement for 3%. But no more money.

At the last meeting, your negotiators said that an extra one percent over the three years would match the Canberra Times deal, but the company wouldn't even come up with that. We also said that if members took industrial action they'd be seeking a lot more than the Canberra Times.

**We're always prepared to talk. The company could stop this right now with a better offer.**

For more information contact your house committee representative or [richard.harris@alliance.org.au](mailto:richard.harris@alliance.org.au) on 02 9333 0957.

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