



MEDIA STATEMENT

Friday 9 June 2016

Statement from Gerard Dwyer, National Secretary of the SDA – the union for retail, fast-food and warehouse workers – re Coles decision

The SDA is extremely disappointed that Coles have not agreed to make undertakings as invited to by the Fair Work Commission. Undertakings could have addressed the anomalies identified by the Commission and mean that an enterprise agreement that provides higher wages and benefits to the vast majority of employees would have remained in place.

The 2014 Coles Agreement was endorsed by over 90 per cent of employees in a ballot conducted by an independent outside party and it was an agreement that paid more in wages than would have been paid under the Retail Award.

The SDA urged Coles to make undertakings and it is the SDA's view that by doing so the company would have been acting in the best interests of its workforce.

As a result of today's decision, the SDA has now approached Coles to recommence negotiations for a new enterprise agreement that will meet the Fair Work Commission's BOOT as now applied.

The SDA notes that the company has agreed to preserve the current rates of pay and will pass on the next increase that would have been due under the Agreement on the 4th of July.

The historic junior rates increases negotiated in the latest enterprise agreement and which came into effect on 6 June will also be honored – these have seen 18 and 19 year old workers receive 7.5 per cent and 10 per cent pay increases respectively.

We're looking forward to negotiating a new enterprise agreement with Coles that ensures that Coles workers remain among the best paid retail workers in the world.

We stand by our claim that the Coles enterprise agreement leaves the majority of workers better off. The Coles wages budget is significantly higher under the agreement than it would be under the General Retail Industry Award.

Any move to push Coles workers back onto the General Retail Industry Award would see the vast majority of Coles workers left significantly worse off.

As always, we will continue to work with our members to negotiate the best possible outcomes. Australian retail workers covered by collective agreements are among the best paid retail workers in the world.

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