

WESTPAC UNION NEWS

News from the Finsec Union Council's regular meeting with Westpac November 2008

Our union council held its quarterly meeting with senior Westpac management on 11 November in Wellington to raise issues and resolve concerns on behalf of Finsec members. This newsletter summarises the key issues that we discussed.

Targets

We presented our targets submission (based on the survey members filled in). We discussed the effect of the economic environment on members' ability to meet targets.

We have asked the bank to provide information on how the targets were determined, and to confirm the number of weeks the targets are factored over (i.e. 45 or 52 weeks).

Westpac will consider the recommendations in our submission and will respond at the next competency pay meeting.

Use of Casuals

This was raised as an issue due to the lack of casuals being utilised by branches to cover staff away on planned and unplanned leave.

The bank said that part timers should be offered extra hours to cover those who are away on leave.

Relief Staff

The bank said the relief staffing component is being utilised by 97% of branches and that they will review why the other 3% were not putting relief in place.

We questioned the accuracy of these statistics and reported how staff were being moved from their domiciled branch to cover for unplanned circumstances in other branches.

We asked the bank to look into how this was being recorded in the system.

Christmas Cover/Annual Leave

The union council asked how leave was planned for the Christmas period and if the bank was using tertiary students.

Westpac said they will be utilising students in the Auckland region over the Christmas/New Year period. Due to the time of the year, they are unable to offer this for other regions but will for next year.

We raised an issue about the number of staff being allowed to take leave during this period. The bank said that it is dependent on business activity, and that co-ordinators work with operations when planning leave. Usually Christmas leave is planned 4 months out and annual leave is planned 2 months out.

Staff transfers

An issue was raised about the practice and implementation of Clause 20 in the collective agreement, Staff Transfers, when managers transferring permanent staff between branches.

Westpac said manager should firstly discuss with all staff in the branch if anyone is interested in transferring, and then work through a consultation process.



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If you are aware of issues with staff transfers please contact the union council who can then liaise directly with the People Consultant.

Incentive Payment

The bank has said that staff had been advised they would receive their payment in the second week of December.

They had ironed out the issues relating to the validation process.

We have asked the bank to supply us with a list of members who will be receiving an incentive payment for this quarter and the previous quarters, so that we can do an analysis of how many are achieving incentive payments.

Minimum Staffing Levels

The bank reported back that the minimum number of staff for safety purposes for a branch to operate is two.

Westpac said staff are entitled to their lunch breaks and that if a branch has only two staff on they should advise their manager that they will be closing the branch to enable them to have their lunch.

Branch Model Review

The union council highlighted a number of concerns with the CSO model, from staff and customer perspectives. The bank commented that they had similar issues but that in principle the CSO role as established was good.

They gave an overview of another pilot they are running in the Tauranga area where they will be looking at its processes, procedures, work flows and systems.

As the pilot is in its early stages, the bank will be in a better position to report back in the New Year. They have said that where the CSO model is currently being applied it would remain.

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