

# SUPERMARKET MEMBERS UPDATE



**AMIEU**  
FEDERAL

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**Dear members,**

We have waited until we had some certainty of where industrial matters with Coles and Woolworths are heading before sending you updates which has meant a long delay between news, but we are now in a position to provide you with an outline as to where we all are with supermarket bargaining.

As most of you know, all supermarket chains put enterprise bargaining on hold with all unions until the outcome of the Fair Work Commission hearing that Penny Vickers (supermarket worker in Queensland) initiated where she sought to terminate the Coles 2011 expired enterprise agreement which would revert store workers to the award (all enterprise agreements are 'backed up' by an industry award).

In the meantime, the new agreement that was negotiated with Woolworths in 2015 has been held up by Woolworths (essentially because they know it fails the requirements that workers be better off under the agreement than the award) and Coles refused to bargain until just recently when they decided to negotiate an agreement with the shop workers union (SDA) as a backup measure.

This new agreement does not cover meat units, including Queensland, and the intention is



to now negotiate a meat unit agreement to cover AMIEU members nationally. The new shop / SDA agreement will not come into force until May 2018 but will be voted on in February by the store workers.

There was initially an intention to move onto the meat units straight after the shop negotiations but the Vickers matter hearing dates then fell at the same time and so progress was stalled.

This matter was withdrawn by Penny Vickers on Monday 6th November 2017 and is now ended. This leaves Coles free to meet with us and move forward with enterprise bargaining for meat workers.

We have also written to Woolworths requesting a further administrative pay increase for meat unit workers as they have not had a pay rise now for some 18 months. The SDA have made similar approaches to Woolworths also.

## **So, long story short:**

The Woolworths currently proposed agreement cannot pass the legal requirements to be made and so the SDA and the AMIEU will have to require Woolworths to meet with us to renegotiate the agreement until it is capable of being registered by the Fair Work Commission.

Coles and the AMIEU will soon begin discussions about the possible making of a national meat unit agreement within the Coles group of supermarkets.

The AMIEU national executive meets soon to look at the logistics of negotiating one agreement for all meat unit workers nationally and we will provide more news on this soon.



**Graham Smith**  
*Federal Secretary*

**Questions?** Contact your local AMIEU branch office to learn more.