

SAPN/Enerven EA – THCD and Secondments Ban

The CEPU have notified SA Power Networks of 4 Protected Industrial Actions that will be starting on Wednesday the 14th of April 2021 at 6:00AM.

These actions are:

- An indefinite ban on the performance of Temporary Higher Class Duties, commencing at 6:00AM on the 14th of April 2021.
- An indefinite ban on the performance of Temporary Secondment roles, starting at 6:00AM on the 14th of April 2021.
- The amending and issuing of work-related emails with the link to the website www.sapowerworkers.com.au , commencing at 6:00AM on 16th April 2021.
- An indefinite ban on the performance of work in clothes worn at work which stickers, badges, slogans and messages, are not attached, within the bounds of workplace safety commencing at 6:00AM on the 16th of April 2021.

The ban on THCD and Secondments have raised many queries from the workforce, this shows how widespread these issues are, below is a clarification of these actions.

Temporary Higher Class Duties and Secondments have been over used in SA Power Networks/Enerven. We have tried to fix these issues in the past but the problem has been getting worse.

The problem with these employment arrangements is that they are temporary, which limits a worker's ability to achieve permanent career progression. There is 1 type of Secondment in the Enterprise Agreement, this includes a training plan and at the end of the Secondment the employee should be awarded the position on a permanent basis.

What happens in reality is that HR offers a worker a "temporary secondment" that operates outside of the EA, that can be renewed/rolled over until eternity. Some Secondments have been rolled over for 4-5 years without the worker ever achieving a permanent role. This is unfair and needs to STOP. The temporary structure that this creates is also an issue. For example:

In the Powerline area a TSW8 is seconded to an Ops Supervisor role.

A TSW6 is then seconded to the TSW8 role

A TSW5 is then seconded to the TSW6 role

A TSW4 is then seconded to the TSW5 role etc. etc.

This cascading secondment/temporary employment arrangement creates a temporary structure where nobody actually achieves any true career progression. These workers are filling a higher position on a temporary basis and this allows them to be pressured/coerced into performing tasks outside of their role, just so there is a better chance of them permanently achieving that role. At any point they can be pushed back down the ladder to their "substantiative" role (their old position).

These Secondments have also been used to avoid accruing hours that count towards the 'Hancock Rule' which further limits permanent positions.

There is no place for continuing/rolling temporary Secondments in Our Industry. If a worker wishes to take up a Secondment to gain skills with a view to moving up/sideways in the business, this is fine, but to use Secondments to place workers into precarious work arrangements and hold them there, without a true chance at permanency, is a predatory practise that needs to STOP.

We have a put forward claim in Enterprise Agreement negotiations to fix this issue, SAPN/Enerven have rejected this, so action is being used to pursue our claim.

Our ban will affect Temporary Secondments that are in place because of "cascading secondments" or because of a lack of resourcing. These fall outside of the Enterprise Agreement Secondment Provisions.

Our ban will not affect Temporary Secondments that are in line with the Enterprise Agreement (Clause 2.5.2 or Clause 7.3.4) or Secondments that are relevant to a Defined Term Projects, as these workers would have been aware that this was not leading to a permanent position at the time of accepting the role.

Finally, the THCD ban is not intended to affect Emergency Response crews or Emergency Rosters. But we need to make it very clear, that the amount of THCD leadership positions that are currently in place on the Second Call rosters is unacceptable. This is a prime illustration of how this issue has got out of hand and why it needs to be fixed.

For more information regarding the SAPN/Enerven enterprise agreement negotiations, contact your relevant union workplace delegate or your Union Organiser:

Ben Jewell CEPU 0422 339 699

BenjaminJ@cepusa.com.au

Scott McFarlane ASU 0426 291 572

smcfarlane@asu.sant-asn.au

Sarah Andrews PA 0411 124 351

sandrews@professionalsaustralia.org.au

Stuart Gordon AMWU 0410 809 160

stuart.gordon@amwu.org.au

PLEASE SHARE THIS UPDATE WITH YOUR WORKMATES