

Tasmanian workers win historic pay deal

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A union-led pay claim for around 11,000 Tasmanian workers has achieved pay rises of up to 50% and shows the benefit of union representation and collective bargaining.

After a two year campaign, unions have reached agreement for a three year deal for 11,000 workers who are the "heart and soul" of delivering the State's public services.

The majority of the workers will win a minimum of 18.35% more in their pay.

The pay rises will bring Tasmanian workers in key government departments, operational and administrative staff as well as in health and education services, into line with the average paid to public servants in other States and Territories.

Entry level professional officers will see their salaries grow by as much as 50% with starting salaries of \$40,000 rising to \$60,000 through the life of the agreement.

Unions argued that Tasmanian public servants were falling behind their colleagues on the mainland and the value of their work was under-recognized.

Community and Public Sector Union Tasmanian Branch secretary Tom Lynch said unions were looking to the future with the pay parity deal.

"These workers are the heart and soul of the public sector – they deserve to be valued for the work they do and paid accordingly," said Mr Lynch.

"We need to attract skilled workers to our State to survive and you can't do that unless you pay competitive salaries.

"These pay rises will ensure we can fill the jobs to provide strong public service into the future."

The agreement is to be voted on by union members in a ballot which closes on 15 October. Key elements include:

- Five salary increases over three years
- A new classification structure
- Improvements to travel allowances, higher duties allowance and overtime payments
- Flexible working arrangements

Salaries for those gaining the minimum 18.35% will increase by:

- 4% in December 2008
- 4.1% in March 2009
- 3.5% in December 2009 (a total of 11.6% in 12 months)
- 3.5% in December 2010
- 2.0% in March 2011

Mr Lynch said as part of the agreement, the parties have agreed on a comprehensive reform agenda designed to modernise Tasmania's public sector, improve efficiency and meet the challenges of a difficult employment market.

The collective bargaining campaign was run jointly with the Health and Community Services Union and was supported by the Australian Education Union, Association of Professional Engineers, Scientists and Managers Australia, Australian Services Union and the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union.