

Hi,

Thank you for taking an active interest in this issue currently facing the Australian Public Service (APS). Enterprise bargaining under the *Fair Work Act 2009*, is not a perfect process, however I have been through four of these process now and this iteration has been unnecessarily destructive to the entire APS.

Prefacing the repeated budget cuts imposed upon the APS, my Department has lost around 25% of its staff over the last handful of years; through processes such as spill and fills, and redundancies – severely handicapping our capability. On top of this, we have undergone numerous strategic, efficiency, functional, budget and system reviews, audits etc –all truncated within this very fine timeframe. Further to losing a significant cohort of senior staff and staff with considerable corporate knowledge, the APS is now expected to undertake the same amount of work, to the same quality as before the cuts.

The last 3 years of our negotiation have been confined by an unrealistic and draconian bargaining policy enforced by the APSC under the both the current administration, and the previous administration. On top of the enormous morale hit resulting from successive rounds of jobs losses, dealing with significant uncertainty and instability; the imposition of a bargaining policy which offered a maximum pay increase of half of the consumer price index in return for sacrificing *core* entitlements such as our superannuation, was particularly shocking and unbelievable. Whilst the APS sustained the repeated cuts to its staffing levels (hurting both the public and businesses requiring our services), to be directed to sign away our core entitlements was particularly disrespectful and offensive.

We do not expect a huge pay rise. All we were hoping for is a reasonable negotiation processes resulting in a mutually beneficial outcome. The government's bargaining framework has irrevocably damaged our Department's reputation for looking after their staff, through no fault of their own, due to this constraint. It is highly disappointing that the government has chosen to turn its back on its own workforce; rather than allow us to negotiate in good faith from the outset and get on with constructively building a stable, strong and productive APS.

Kind regards,
Chris