

MEDIA RELEASE

The Services Union To Appeal QIRC Decision!

2 NOVEMBER 2015

The Services Union is dismayed by the Decision handed down by the Industrial Relations Commission (QIRC) today which does nothing to restore the working conditions of local council employees, which were stripped away by the former Newman Government's Legislation and Award Modernisation process.

The Newman Government pushed down wages and conditions, which members of The Services Union have been campaigning to restore ever since.

The Palaszczuk Government kept their election promise with the making of the Industrial Relations (Restoring Fairness) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 which aimed to reverse the previous government's legislation.

Unfortunately, the Full Bench of the QIRC decided that restoring fairness to these workers through the Award Modernisation process was not on their agenda!

Secretary of The Services Union Neil Henderson said local councils across the State are the heart of communities which employ thousands of Queenslanders.

"Local council employees are proud of the work they do to ensure their communities are modern and safe with adequate services to meet the needs of residents," Mr Henderson said.

"This decision simply devalues employees work and the contribution they make to their communities."

"It also clearly supports the agenda of Councils which is to drive down industry employment conditions as a way to deal with managing operational costs post the loss of Federal and State Government grants."

"Our members are extremely angry that the QIRC has ignored the Palaszczuk Government's requirement that conditions not be reduced or removed which devalues the work they do. In our view the QIRC has fallen into legal error," Mr Henderson said.

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The Services Union will now lodge an Appeal against this Decision which will encourage Councils to try to negotiate Enterprise Bargaining Agreements (EBAs) that offer inferior conditions to future employees.

The Minister for Industrial Relations Curtis Pitt MP has already flagged the Government's support for an Appeal.

Mr Henderson said that the Queensland Government should be very concerned by the Decision which flies in the face of the Government's specific requirement that conditions not be removed or reduced.

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"The QIRC decision has defeated the purpose of the Restoring Fairness Bill which had the full support of the Government and many of our members' Local Members of Parliament," Mr Henderson said.

"Another real issue for our members is that many have also had not had a pay increase for over 12 months, some even two years because they had faith in the QIRC to do the right thing!"

"Councillors and Mayors of those particular Councils now have an opportunity to do the right thing by maintaining existing conditions and paying their workforce a long overdue wage increase."

"And for those that don't; our Union will campaign against them," said Mr Henderson.