

Disappointing 'False Start' to Negotiations for new Agreement

22 September 2020



As SASMOA Members will be aware, negotiations for a replacement Enterprise Agreement were scheduled by the employer to commence on Tuesday, after the employer issued its formal 'Notice of Intention to Negotiate an Enterprise Agreement' on 2 September 2020.

SASMOA, represented by its President, Dr David Pope, Chief Industrial Officer, Bernadette Mulholland and two Principal Industrial Relations Advisors (*pictured above*) attended the first negotiation meeting with the "declared employer", the Department of Treasury and Finance ("DTF"), and two representatives of the Department of Health and Wellbeing ("DHW").

Having been called to a meeting on a date set by the employer, we were advised the employer was not yet in a position to set out their key themes and establish an agenda for negotiations, as this was still being worked on with DHW. The employer delegates advised they would be unable to provide their agenda items until their key negotiator returns from leave in the first week of November.

SASMOA had indicated our key themes publicly earlier in the day, which include wage theft, fatigue, work/life balance and greater involvement in leadership.

When asked about an expected timeframe for reaching a potential agreement, the key negotiator indicated that the employer still wanted to reach agreement "as soon as practicable" in accordance with the Government's "bargaining principles".

It is disappointing that in a difficult year for frontline health workers that the employer was not ready to progress discussions with its medical workforce. The employer has scheduled the next meeting for six weeks' time, on Tuesday 3 November 2020.

SASMOA will keep all Members informed of developments as they occur and intend to update Members after each meeting.

Bernadette Mulholland
SASMOA, Chief Industrial Officer