

NSW Police – Radio Operations Group

Result of ballot on management proposal to resolve meal/crib breaks dispute

As members will be aware, NSW Police chose to overturn more than 20 years of custom and practice by reducing meal and crib breaks across ROG in August 2017. This change was a unilateral decision of NSW Police and one the PSA opposed from the very beginning given that these breaks greatly assisted in managing fatigue in what can be a very stressful and challenging workplace.

A previously offered compromise from the PSA that would have seen the retention of 60-minute meal breaks, with crib breaks reduced to 20 minutes, was refused by NSW Police.

Following work bans and the negotiations that followed, NSW Police put a final compromise offer to members, which was circulated last week to vote on.

The ballot offered both options from the letter, as well as a third option to reject the compromise and contest the case in the Industrial Relations Commission.

The result of the ballot is that Option B was the preferred option of members.

The wording of this proposal is:

“Implementation of a 50-minute meal break and 30-minute crib break ('50/30') on the basis that the ad-hoc breaks that officers currently access at their discretion are subject to approval by their shift supervisor. In effect, this means officers would otherwise not be leaving their desk for ad-hoc breaks (excluding reasonable bathroom breaks) without prior permission from their shift supervisor.”

It is important that members understand that this **does not** mean they are no longer entitled to ad-hoc breaks. It is a critical part of WHS principles that you have opportunities periodically to get away from the console, stretch your legs, and give your eyes a break from the screen. It does, however, require that these breaks are taken with the approval of your shift supervisor. Bathroom breaks will not require the permission of your shift supervisor.

The PSA has written to NSW Police to formally accept the position based on the ballot of members. This will apply to all ROG Centres across NSW.

The strength and resolve of members throughout this process has been commendable. Without the fight of PSA members, 50/20 meal/crib breaks would have been introduced across the Command in January 2017.

A union workplace is a stronger and fairer workplace – talk to your colleagues about joining the PSA!

