

Crucial cases in play for pay rises

August 30, 2020

Federation has lodged a bargaining dispute with the Fair Work Commission regarding TAFE NSW's refusal to honour the agreement reached with Federation about pay increases for teachers and related employees.

One of the issues Federation raised in the Fair Work Commission is that TAFE is not engaging in good-faith bargaining with respect to a new TAFE teachers and related employees enterprise agreement.

Bargaining between Federation and TAFE management led to agreement on the terms of a proposed enterprise agreement for TAFE teachers and related employees. On 27 February, TAFE teachers received a joint communique, signed by TAFE Managing Director Steffan Faurby and Federation President Angelo Gavrielatos, in which members were assured that "both parties have been engaged in collaborative negotiations and remain committed to reaching an agreement soon".



Then, on 11 March, Federation and TAFE NSW settled on proposed wording for the agreement, to be put to teachers and related employees in a ballot to close on 1 April to allow for pay increases to commence in term 2.

On 18 March, TAFE NSW, at the behest of the Berejiklian Government, reneged on its commitment to put this agreement to members for voting.

In correspondence in June, TAFE NSW indicated it was not prepared to finalise agreements until the NSW Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) handed down a decision in the arbitration of numerous public sector awards where the NSW Government's submissions call for a 12-month wage freeze for nurses and other public sector workers.

Federation has engaged in three hearings before the Commission to date and remains committed to the pursuit of just salary increases for TAFE members without compromising conditions.

Federation has intervened in the joint public sector awards case and has made both written and verbal submissions, interjecting on matters specifically related to teachers and students.

So far there have been eight days of hearings considering legislative matters and evidence on the present state of the NSW economy.

It is hoped a decision in this matter will be handed down by the full bench of the IRC in the near future.

On the matter of the HSC markers' salaries and allowances — given there was no indication from the NSW

Education Standards Authority when bargaining for a new Award would begin — Federation filed an application in the IRC for a variation to the 2019 award, to pursue a 2.5 per cent increase for HSC markers for 2020. This has been stood over with the consent of all parties until a decision is made in the joint public sector awards case.