

FREMANTLE QUBE DISPUTE

MUA QUBE Members National Update

19TH AUGUST 2021 - VOLUME 1



Comrades,

This is a national update on the Fremantle QUBE Dispute following on from the videoclip MUA members at QUBE would have received 2 nights ago. It is also a response to many of the inaccuracies raised in Michael Sousa's memo to employees dated 16 August 2021.

Tomorrow, MUA members at QUBE will be entering their 4th week of industrial action having last entered site to work on Friday, July 30th.

Fremantle MUA members are trying get a new Agreement but unlike many other ports, we have not been able to resolve any local issues. Through 18 months of meetings, local management gave a blanket "NO" to all 42 issues we have locally. They could not agree to one local issue even though many were non-cost and went some way to resolving the significant issues around work life balance, safety and fatigue management.

Further to this on 16th June Michael Sousa withdrew the national agreement for Fremantle by email to our national officials stating

Following up our discussion last week I want to formally advise that any EA not agreed by 30 June, we will not be paying a 2.5% increase as agreed in principle in Part A and those EAs will return to a full negotiation from both sides from scratch.

And so, this is where we have ended up...

An inability to resolve any local issues has put us in this position, with MUA members in Fremantle unfortunately having to resort to action to try and get QUBE back to the negotiating table.

Contrary to Sousa's memo, in an attempt to resolve the impasse the MUA put forward a proposal to focus on five key claims. QUBE still refused to move.

QUBE are certainly servicing some of their vessels slowly and unsafely with scab labour. They have also sent some of the vessels to be discharged in other ports and subcontracted work to Linx – who miraculously are able to allocate before 1400 each day. Same vessels, same clients but with a focus on looking after the welfare of their employees rather than against it.



The local issues that have seen workers in Fremantle “pissed off” have come about due to the sheer amount of work in the port, with QUBE busier than they’ve ever been. Below are the key issues we want to see resolved in the Port of Fremantle:

Allocation Time of 1400 WST

QUBE used to informally notify of the early allocations and then it went back to 1600 WST when it came up as a claim. As one example, a casual was stood down and refused work for apparently refusing work at QUBE and taking shifts elsewhere – primarily Linx allocate between 1230 and 1400 on most occasions. He has a number of kids and a new mortgage. They left him off roster for 3 weeks as retribution for trying to take what work came his way. This type of treatment has been consistent across the casuals for not taking the work QUBE offers once they allocate it. This issue significantly impacts the many single parents who work at QUBE and those who have partners working FIFO in the mines, which means they are the sole parent for between 2 to 3 weeks at a time.

Rosters

Greater certainty of members staying on the same roster for consecutive shifts and adequate rest days between periods of consecutive shifts worked. This also requires clarity around work/time off/on Public Holidays and Closed Port Days and issues pertaining to duration of shifts, consecutive shifts and commencement and completion of shifts.

- We have consistent night/off/night allocations which we were told would never occur.
- We also regularly have a run of 6 consecutive days shifts followed immediately by 4 consecutive 12 hour nights all off the back of each other.
- We also get the occasional 7 consecutive days followed by 4 consecutive 12 hour nights in direct breach of the agreement.

Financial Support for QUBE Workers

For anyone wanting to support the Fremantle QUBE workers financially, donations can be made to the following account:

Account Name: QUBE Dispute 2021
BSB: 822-000 A/C No: 100145032
Ref: (Your Name - Qube Dispute)

Planned Time Off

- A member applied and organised for a planned day off to watch his kids sports for the full day and QUBE rostered him on nightshift going into the planned day which meant he hadn’t slept before driving the kids to various sports events.
- The company is regularly using the 6pm to 6am (evening shift) to get around the 4 x 12hr (7pm to 7am) night shift fatigue limit.
- An employee had 19 consecutive shifts without a calendar day off due to exploitation of the EA allocations and had to book off sick to get a shift off.
- Employees are being allocated after PTO’s and annual leave has been approved and are then being forced to take sick days for these types of allocations.
- Employees are being pressured to come in even if on approved leave.
- Shift requests used to get a little life balance are being ignored consistently.
- There is regular refusal locally to upgrade the correct number of workers despite satisfying the required shifts and hours worked.

Quarantine payments for time spent in quarantine

Workers should be paid for time spent in 14-day quarantine, whether home or hotel, that has occurred because of working on a vessel. This has arisen as a direct result of being at work and the specific circumstances we have in WA via the recently introduced “Exposed On-Board Worker” Directions on July 2nd. The Darwin Linx issue has hammered this home.

THE WORKFORCE IN FREMANTLE AREN'T FIGHTING FOR MORE MONEY!

QUBE has a record volume of work in Fremantle, which is why the late allocation of work is having significantly greater impacts upon workers given they are being required to work more and longer and excessive consecutive shifts. We are simply asking for allocations to occur at a time that provides certainty for both clients and the workforce. We need the issues around rostering, allocations and excessive hours causing fatigue related safety issues fixed.

MUA members take issue with QUBE’s refusal to bargain around conditions which would improve the work-life balance of workers and deliver a safer work environment.

