



## **Offshore Update – 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2020**

Members,

This report deals with the issues and updates across your sector. What's disappointing about this update, is with everything that's happening in the world and in our industry, some members greed and selfishness is exposed.

Please ensure that this update is read out at your on-board meetings and shared with other members.

### **WA Border Closure Update**

NSW has now also been locked out of WA joining the Victorians. Given the recent spike in cases in QLD, the latest rumours suggest that either some QLD hotspots or all of QLD will be joining NSW and Victoria lockouts too. Whilst this is not yet confirmed the WA Branch is continuing to lobby the McGowan state government to allow mariners from across the country to be classified as exempt workers. The National office (through Jake Field) is also lobbying the federal government and as per my last update, Jake also participates in the national taskforce.

### **Legal Challenge**

Earlier this week, Clive Palmer and the Federal government sought to challenge the McGowan governments decision on the hard border closures in the High Court. The Federal Government backflipped and withdrew from supporting Clive Palmer given the political pressure mounting on the LNP. The Prime Minister wrote to Mark McGowan over the weekend advising him of their decision.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-08-02/government-removes-support-for-clive-palmers-push-to-open-border/12515948>

Should Palmer continue to press on with the legal action, it is still possible that the decision may be handed down in his favour. Even so, it's not a simple win letting people from outside of WA enter.

1. We expect that there will be further legal challenges, which could result in status quo until that process has been completed.
2. The McGowan government may find other alternatives to keep people out of WA. It may mean that they ban people from the East, but allow people in from SA, NT and Tasmania for example.
3. They could enforce stricter rules on quarantine including making it more costly for people entering, therefore deterring them from coming across in the first place.
  - Rules could include longer time in isolation; or
  - Dividing WA up into separate zones and all entrants will have to isolate in each zone; or
  - Putting a significant state levy upon entry in addition to the above.

Considering this, it's not looking likely that WA's border will be opening any time soon.

### **Despicable Members Actions**

Throughout the COVID outbreak the Union has been campaigning hard to ensure that members across the country continue to be paid and continue to be employed whilst ensuring that our hard-fought workplace rates and conditions are maintained. Yes, we have had to be flexible in some cases, but not to the point where we are selling out our conditions.

To date our members have been disciplined and have continued to ensure that the fundamentals of our industry are maintained. Things such as gangway hopping and ensuring that our normal swing cycles are kept to the confines of the enterprise agreements.

One member recently working on board the OSM crewed vessel, the Geo Coral, has allegedly joined a Toll vessel with 2 weeks of leave still in the bank. The Members across OSM and Toll are furious, and we will be doing what we can to ensure that this member owns up to their anti-union actions and importantly the undermining of the industry standards and conditions.

We have also been made aware that one member working for Dof has gone against the Unions advice and sold out the broader membership. This selfish Dof employee has agreed to do a 10-week straight swing. What makes this even worse is that he had contacted 3 Union officials who all gave him the same advice. This permanent Dof worker also has a bank of leave as well. When we spoke, they threatened to leave the Union.

The Union has since been advised by 2 industry sources that AMMA are now using this as a template to roll out to the broader industry. At a time that we are gearing up to create work with Norwegian rosters, this worker decides that his personal interests are more important than that of the industry.

### **Offshore EBA Update**

By now, every Offshore worker in the country would have received 2 text messages informing them of the upcoming Offshore Commission to be held at 9am (WA time) (11am EST) on Friday the 14<sup>th</sup> August. If not, then they need to update their details and should contact their branches to do so!

All members are being encouraged to participate in this next meeting. If you are at home and your branch is open, then you are encouraged to go to your local branch to participate. Rural members or members on board vessels can dial in. Once again we will be using the video conferencing facilities and if you are intending on participating then please contact Sandra Mirco [Sandra.Mirco@mua.org.au](mailto:Sandra.Mirco@mua.org.au)

Following on from the first Offshore Commission in July, and in accordance with the below resolution from that Offshore Commission, last Friday WA Branch Secretary/ National President Christy Cain, Deputy National Secretary Will Tracey and I met with the 3 key manning agents (OSM, AOS and ATLAS) for initial discussions around a short term solution covering the next year or so. We discussed the need for a simple but pragmatic EBA to have these players align with the broader industry in just over 15 months.

While these discussions are only in the very early stages, we also canvassed that moving to negotiations around the full Log of Claims would be a fallback position if we couldn't agree on a short-term pragmatic outcome in line with the Offshore Commission resolution:

*“Members involved in the 10 July 2020 Offshore Commission moved that the Union seek to align the manning agreements expiring this year with the vessel operators expiring in 2022. The new agreements would also see some non-cost claims addressed, minimal cost items, small movement in wages, Manning levels addressed and seek to fix up some of the issues with the current agreements. Should the first employers not agree to our proposal, then we will seek to place a full log of claims upon them and campaign in the normal manner.”*

We will report back on this in detail at the next Offshore Commission.

### **Temporary Relocation**

We have been made aware that some employers are bullying and standing over workers to force them to relocate at their own expense. If this is happening, then contact your official so we can try to handle this matter.

We can report that we have managed to secure significant payments with some of the operators so that our members that are wishing to relocate temporarily are able to do so comfortably and not be out of pocket. These outcomes can only be achieved if the collective stick together.

We have approached MMA who advised us that they have no intentions nor appetite to temporarily relocate their staff. They believe that they are going to be able to manipulate various governments to allow their workers access to their vessels across the country.

Next week, we will aim to have the conversation with the rest of the industry with a view of securing similar arrangements for those other members.

### **Worked for GO Offshore or Swire Lately?**

If you have worked for Swire or Go Offshore in the past 6 years, then you should fill out the attached document and return it to me before the next Offshore Commission meeting on Friday the 14<sup>th</sup> August.

When you return this document please ensure that you also advise roughly which dates you were working with these operators (this does not have to be accurate). If you worked for both of them, then fill it out twice – one for each employer.

In Unity

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