



MEDIA RELEASE: Monday, December 5, 2016

Media union goes to Fair Work to get paid overtime for journalists

The Fair Work Commission will today hear an application by the Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance to vary the two key Awards governing working conditions in the media to ensure that journalists are financially compensated for any overtime they work.

MEAA is supporting the inclusion of new clauses into the *Journalists Print Media Award* (JPMA) and the *Broadcast and Recorded Entertainment Award* (BREA) that would mean journalists would receive overtime pay unless they opted to receive time in lieu (TOIL) for extra hours worked.

MEAA says the Awards need to be updated to more accurately reflect the reality of the modern media workplace, where increased work intensification and under-resourcing of staff means TOIL is often impractical, and journalists are in practice not being compensated at all for their extra work.

MEAA argues that the existing TOIL provisions in the Awards are inadequate and often ignored by employers. As journalists are working harder and for increasingly longer hours, the opportunity to take “time off” for rest is increasingly difficult.

The director of MEAA’s Media section, Katelin McInerney, said of 209 journalists who took part in a recent survey conducted by MEAA, 65% said they worked four or more hours of overtime a week.

“But the way they are compensated is ad-hoc, with very few journalists reporting their hours are being formally recorded, and some being given TOIL, others being paid, and others not being compensated at all for overtime worked,” she said.

“Journalists are dedicated to their craft and have always understood that if a big story is breaking, they will need to stay at work to file the story, but like other industries, they have the right to have that overtime compensated in return. Traditionally this has been through TOIL.

“But the reality is that because of the cuts to staff in recent years, newsrooms are understaffed and the pressure to turn up and put in extra hours just to get the job done is so great that the notion of TOIL is becoming non-existent.

“All we are asking is for the Fair Work Commission to recognise how journalism has changed and to grant the right to overtime pay to journalists that workers in most other industries already have.”

More information: Mark Phillips – ph: 03 9691 7105 or mark.phillips@meaa.org

The Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance - the people who inform and entertain

📍 PO Box 723 Strawberry Hills NSW 2012 ☎ 1300 656 513

BUILT ON INTEGRITY. POWERED BY CREATIVITY. MEAA.ORG