



MEDIA RELEASE

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Bega Workers Cheesed Off

Workers at Bega's South Coast Cheese manufacturing facility have overwhelmingly endorsed industrial action after the company refused to come to the table with a fair pay rise in negotiations for a new Enterprise Agreement.

Australian Meat Industry Employees' Union (AMIEU) NSW Secretary, Patricia Fernandez, said that industrial action was unprecedented in the history of Bega Cheese.

"Workers have bargained in good faith and are making reasonable demands at the table", Ms Fernandez said.

"They have made the historic decision to take industrial action because Bega Cheese refuses to give them a fair pay rise."

Workers' at the Bega facility, are represented by The Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union (AMIEU), the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union (AMWU) and the Electrical Trades Union (ETU).

AMWU members have given notice of planned industrial action to take place on Friday, with other workers joining early next week, after the company on Tuesday refused to offer pay rises above 2.5 per cent.

AMWU State Secretary, Steve Murphy said "The Board of Directors are happy to award themselves a pay rise of 2.7%, but when it comes to the workers who actually manufacture this product, they say that 2.5% is good enough."

"With a national wages crisis, we expect local employers such as Bega Cheese to acknowledge the important role they play in keeping local economies growing"

"Bega Cheese has relied on the hard work of locals for decades to deliver their iconic Australian product, and should recognise that without workers, there would be no profits."

Further industrial action is planned by all parties unless Bega Cheese comes back with a fair offer on pay.

Justin Page, ETU State Secretary, said "All unions are united in the fight for a better deal for Bega and will continue to campaign until workers get the respect they deserve".

A previous offer put to workers by the company was rejected by a significant majority of workers.

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