

Hi Jason,

AFAP Update – Skippers Aviation Bargaining Dec 2024

The AFAP (Industrial Officer, Jason Newell) met with Skippers Aviation CEO and management pilots (Skippers) on 4 December 2024 via MS teams.

This was the first bargaining meeting since October and the parties exchanging various views in writing regarding claims. The bargaining towards a new Skippers Aviation Enterprise Agreement (EA), will continue into 2025.

What progress has been made in bargaining?

There is some progress on some items but there is a bit more work to do. The AFAP are seeking member input before making any agreements on the Skippers EA. Some general updates are in this email, and in January 2025 there will be a Skipper EA pilot survey - your feedback gives direction to the priorities in the new Skippers EA.

Remuneration Rates & Remuneration Management

- Rates of Pay, the AFAP seeking rates are reviewed to ensure all rates are competitive and above the Award.
- Includes consideration by Skippers for pay rates of direct entry Fokker Capt./FO rates to be increased (i.e. not upgrading from Dash8).
- Skippers position for CPI increases (Skippers have not agreed to min 3% or CPI whichever is higher).
- Claims for changes to timing of increment increases are not supported, however Skippers offering improvements for the progression of FO's (tied to ATPL studies).
- Remuneration – work hours (ongoing discussions – see notes below).

Training Bonds

- Skippers 2016 EA was prior to Award training bonds terms.
- Skippers seeking to establish training bond rules as per Award.
- AFAP continue to seek 'fixed' rates or caps to bond amounts (yet to be determined).
- Skippers approach to bonds in EA may be included in the new EA (i.e. schedule of template forms, the content of new forms to be discussed).

Productivity

- Skippers' agreement to the claim that a new EA to include current policy for double shift payments.
- Skippers have also offered a CPI increase to this allowance in the EA to what have been fixed rates.

- No agreement on overtime or additional hours management, noting below ongoing discussions on the approach to work hours.

Retention Strategies

- No agreement made on retention strategies proposed in claims.
- Skippers approach to encourage progression of FO's (for ATPL studies)
- Discussions in bargaining included a focus on career progression includes that options after reaching top tier, may be additional remuneration due to extra responsibilities to increase remuneration, i.e. training captain.

Rostering Rules

- No agreement reached in discussions regarding rostering rules, and application of current conditions remains the position of Skippers.
- The AFAP view it is worth exploring some examples with rostering rules the pilot group can identify and target areas of improvement.
- AFAP to survey members for further input.

Modern EA

- Updates to the old 2016 agreement included to capture all modern EA terms.
- Parties agree to workplace delegates rights in the EA, it is a query whether conditions are as current EA or updated to capture some terms in the Award delegates rights.
- The right to disconnect will apply to pilots in the EA (and is required to apply), parties considering whether to align the Award terms or add in additional details to the EA.
- Capps for any terms contracts is covered as per the Fair Work Act.
- The AFAP have suggested some references to National Employment Standards (NES) terms should appear in the EA.
- This includes request to reference all the NES leave and request for flexible work arrangements as per NES within the EA.

Ongoing Discussions – Work Hours

- The AFAP has agreed to provide more information to Skippers regarding the application of work hours (considering the NES and the 38-hour week).
- The AFAP discussed that matters from SA Employment Court, and appealed to full Federal Court (heard on 19/20 Nov 2024) and that Award interpretation may then relate to the EA.
- The AFAP view a Skippers EA should structure the work hours, set up averaging of hours arrangements and align to 3 weekly roster periods. The EA requires terms to structure are aligned arrangement.
- This is part of the ongoing bargaining discussions, therefore both parties are continuing with considerations of what may work best in a new EA.

You can provide feedback and questions to the AFAP via AFAP Industrial Officer, Jason Newell on Jason@afap.org.au.

Want to attend the next AFAP and Skippers EA meeting?

The AFAP are seeking interested member(s) who are interested to assist with some of the bargaining meetings. Contact Jason on Jason@afap.org.au or 0466780847 to discuss further.

The AFAP will be seeking members feedback during January 2025 – with the plan before the next bargaining meeting to determine and outline some of the agreed items. It is also important to consider the employers position where there is not an agreement, and whether there are strong views on these items, or if it is possible to consider a changed or compromised position.

If you have any queries, concerns, or would like to assist further during the EA negotiations process please contact the AFAP.

Yours sincerely,

The AFAP Industrial Team

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