

Welcome to the second June Edition of *Member News!*

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Date: Thursday 18 July 2019

Venue: Launceston Conference Centre,
50 Glen Dhu Street, South Launceston.

Time: 10:30am – 11:00 am followed by light refreshments.

ANNUAL WAGE REVIEW

The Fair Work Commission has approved a 3% increase in the Award rates of pay.

All award rates of pay will increase from the first full pay period commencing on or after 1 July 2019.

The rates of pay for all the awards are now available on the Member's Only section of the website, www.primaryemployers.com.au and wage schedules will be posted to all members in due course.

The increase can be absorbed into over-award payments. If you are paying an annualised salary you should check to ensure that the salary will cover the increased wage rates.

SUPERANNUATION UPDATE

The Australian Taxation Office has stated that superannuation is payable on annual leave loading, unless it can be shown that the loading is being paid in lieu of foregone overtime.

Historically this was part of the reason for the introduction of annual leave loading, that is, when going on annual leave an employee could not do the overtime that might otherwise have been available, nor be paid various allowances they would otherwise be entitled to if still working.

However, it then became a standard payment to all employees covered by awards, even those that would never work overtime or be paid allowances.

QUAD BIKES

As advised in our last newsletter, the Tasmanian Government has announced a rebate for the installation of crush protection devices on quad bikes used on farms. The rebate is \$500 per bike with a maximum claim of \$1,000 per farm.

A rebate can be claimed for any such purchase dated after 23 May 2019, though you cannot lodge your claim until after 1 July 2019. Valid proof of purchase will be required.

More information is available from the Worksafe website: [Quad Bike Safety Rebate Scheme](#).

On a sobering note there have been 8 quad bike fatalities since May 2018, **four of which were children under 10 years old, including a 9-year-old in Tasmania.**

Across Australia, each year there are over 650 hospitalisations as a result of quad bike accidents and an estimated 6 people per day attend emergency departments.

We urge all members to mandate the wearing of appropriate helmets for your staff on motor bikes, quad bikes and side-by-sides, and to ensure that training in the safe operation of quad bikes is regularly provided.

Primary Employers Tasmania is a member of the Safe Farming Tasmania Reference Group which has been pushing for safety reforms for many years. Safe Farming Tasmania, will be running sessions around Tasmania to promote the rebate and provide important information about quad bikes and other issues in July. A flyer is attached.

SINGLE TOUCH PAYROLL

Single Touch Payroll (STP) is a new way of reporting tax and super information to the ATO.

If you are using a payroll or accounting software that offers STP reporting, you will send your employees' tax and super information to the ATO each time you run your payroll and pay your employees.

The information is sent to us either directly from your software, or through a third party – such as a sending service provider.

If you have a software provider, they can tell you more about the type of STP solution they offer.

There will also be a number of options available for employers who do not use payroll software, such as [No-cost and low-cost Single Touch Payroll solutions](#).

Options will depend on your number of employees:

- Large employers with 20 or more employees should now be reporting through STP, or have applied to the ATO for a later start date.
- Small employers with 19 or fewer employees will need to report through STP from 1 July 2019. This is a gradual transition, and we are providing flexible options.

- If you're an employer with four or less employees you will have additional options.

There will be specific exemptions granted for farm businesses affected by natural disasters, including severe flooding and drought.

More information is available from [the Australian Tax Office](#)

CONTRACTS

We all enter into many contracts each and every day, from one as simple as a purchase at a shop or supermarket.

Obviously, there are many other forms of contracts, some requiring you to commit to larger sums of money and tying you to many years of compliance. It is essential that you get proper advice as to what the contract will require of you, what restrictions and obligations are you entering into, and for how long a period will you be bound.

As a member of Primary Employers Tasmania, we can provide you with advice and assistance with employment contracts. However, major contracts that bind you as an employer for an extended period or for significant sums of money, we recommend you have your solicitor check the contract for you to ensure that you are being protected and fully understand the terms and conditions.

KEEP UP TO DATE

Primary Employers Tasmania has a Facebook page where we often post matters of interest to our members. You can follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/primaryemployertas>

I look forward to seeing you at the Annual General Meeting.



Felicity Richards,
President
Primary Employers Tasmania

EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

Social media usage continues to grow and businesses themselves use it to promote their brand and products. However, an employer has to be careful in monitoring an employee's social media usage, particularly if it is outside of work.

So, as an employer, can you take any action against an employee who has made social media posts outside of their normal working hours?

You can, but only if:

- the post identifies that the person is an employee of the organisation;
- the post is visible during working hours;
- the employer has a social media policy of which the employee is aware and been trained; and
- the post breaches the law or breaches the values, code of conduct or policies of the employer.

However, there are a number of considerations before you can take disciplinary action against an employee. Have you breached the employee's privacy by viewing their social media posts, have you followed your own policies in relation to social media and/or disciplinary policies, how serious are the consequences of the post.

In any disciplinary matter against an employee it is important that you get advice before acting to ensure you follow the proper steps and make the right decision as to the appropriate disciplinary action.



Andrew Cameron
Workplace Relations Director
and Executive Officer
Primary Employers Tasmania



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