

**AUGUST 2017 IR NEWS**

**Member Update August 2017 –**

**Minimum Engagement to be Reduced to Two Hours for**

**school children engaged in Dairies.**

The review into the Modern Awards is now reaching an advanced stage. The Fair Work Commission (“FWC”) rejected the request that the minimum engagement of three hours for casual and part-time employees in the Pastoral Award 2010 be reduced to two hours.

The FWC accepted the NFF’s application for employees who are school children and engaged in a dairy that the minimum engagement will be 2 hours.

The FWC found that “Casual dairy farm work would provide a valuable employment entry point, as well as additional income*, for school students in rural areas, and we do not consider that the modern awards objective is served if such employment is inhibited. We will therefore reduce the minimum engagement period to 2 hours for junior employees who are school students*”. However, this variation will only apply to dairies and not across the board.

The precedent for this approach may have been the General Retail Award 2010 which makes provision for the two hours minimum engagement be conditional that it only applies on school days and not during weekends and school holidays.

The FWC has directed the NFF to prepare a draft determination to give effect to the its decision, and the AWU and any other interested parties will be given an opportunity later on to make other submissions about the form of the variation the NFF .

At this stage the variation has not come into effect but this update is intended to forewarn dairy farmers of this impending change.

We will prepare another update when the decision is finalised.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require clarification.

Chas Cini

