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TASMANIAN INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION

Industrial Relations Act 1984
s23 application for award or variation of award

Tasmanian Trades and Labor Council
(T12444 of 2005)
Private Sector Awards

FULL BENCH:

PRESIDENT P L LEARY
COMMISSIONER T J ABEY
COMMISSIONER J P McALPINE

Award variation – Personal Leave – application approved – operative date 15 March 2006

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS AWARD

ORDER BY CONSENT –

No. 1 of 2006

THE **ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS AWARD** IS VARIED IN THE FOLLOWING MANNER:

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1. By deleting from Part VI – Leave of Absence and Holidays with Pay, Clause 3 – Personal Leave, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

“3. PERSONAL LEAVE

The provisions of this apply to employees other than casuals. The entitlements to casual employees are set out in subclause (f) – Casual Employees – Caring Responsibilities.

(a) Amount of paid personal leave

(i) Paid personal leave is available to an employee when they are absent due to:

- (1) Personal illness or injury (sick leave) or;
- (2) For the purposes of caring for an immediate family or household member who is sick and requires the employee's care and support (carer's leave); or
- (3) bereavement on the death of an immediate family or household member (bereavement leave).

(ii) The amount of personal leave to which an employee is entitled is as follows

Seven days in the first six months and then five additional days in the second six months shall be available in the first year of employment;

Twelve days at the beginning of the employees second and each subsequent year, which shall commence on the anniversary of engagement

In any year unused personal leave accrues at the rate of the lesser of :

Ten days less the amount of sick leave and carer's leave taken from the current year's personal leave entitlement in that year; or

the balance of the year's unused personal leave.

(b) Immediate family or household

(i) The entitlement to use personal leave for the purpose of carer's or bereavement leave is subject to the person being either:

- a member of the employee's immediate family; or
- a member of the employee's household

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- (ii) The term immediate family includes:
 - (1) Spouse (including a former spouse, a de facto spouse and a former de facto spouse) of the employee. A de facto spouse means a person who lives with the employee on a bona fide domestic basis; and
 - (2) Child or adult child (including an adopted child, a step child or an ex-nuptial child), parent, grandparent, grandchild or sibling of the employee or spouse of the employee.

- (c) Sick leave
 - (i) An employee during the first year of employment with an employer shall be entitled to use personal leave as sick leave, on account of personal illness or injury other than that covered by workers compensation, at the rate of five days in the first six months and five days in the second six months.
 - (ii) On application by the employee during the sixth month of employment, and subject to the availability of an unclaimed balance of sick leave, the employee shall be paid for any sick leave taken during the first five months and in respect of which payment was not made.

PROVIDED that an employee who has completed one year of continuous employment shall be credited with a further 10 days sick leave entitlement at the beginning of the employee's second and subsequent years, which shall commence on the anniversary of engagement
 - (iii) An employee is entitled to use accumulated personal leave for the purpose of sick leave where the current year's sick leave entitlement has been exhausted.
 - (iv) An employee shall within 24 hours of the commencement of such sick leave inform the employer of the employee's inability to attend for duty, and as far as practicable state the nature of the injury or illness and the estimated duration of the absence.
 - (v) An employee shall prove to the employer's satisfaction that the employee was unable on account of such illness or injury to attend for duty on the day or days for which sick leave is claimed.
 - (vi) The employee shall be entitled to take leave for part of a day as well as for a full day or more.

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- (vii) In the case of an employee who claims to be allowed paid sick leave in accordance with this clause for an absence of one day only such employee if in the year the employee has already been allowed paid sick leave on two occasions for one day only, shall not be entitled to payment for the day claimed unless the employee produces to the employer within 48 hours a certificate of a duly qualified medical practitioner that in the medical practitioner's opinion, the employee was unable to attend for duty on account of personal illness or on account of injury. Provided that an employer may agree to accept from the employee a Statutory Declaration, stating that the employee was unable to attend for duty on account of personal illness or injury in lieu of a medical certificate.
 - (viii) Where an employee is sick or injured on an RDO the employee shall not be entitled to sick pay in addition to the normal weekly pay nor will the employee's sick leave entitlement be reduced as a result of the sickness or injury that day.
 - (ix) Any sick leave for which an employee may become eligible under this award by reason of service with one employer shall not be cumulative upon sick leave for which the employee may become eligible by reason of subsequent service with another employer.
 - (x) If an employee is terminated by the employer and is re-engaged by the same employer within a period of six months, then the employee's unclaimed balance of sick leave shall continue from the date of re-engagement. In such cases the employee's next year of service will commence after a total of twelve months has been served with the employer, excluding the previous period of employment or the anniversary of the commencement of the previous period of employment, as the case may be.
- (d) Bereavement leave
- (i) An employee (other than a casual) is entitled to use up to two days paid personal leave as bereavement leave on the death within Australia of a member of the employee's immediate family or household. Such leave shall be up to and including the day of the funeral of such family or household (or where made necessary because of travel arrangements, the day after the funeral).
 - (ii) On the production of satisfactory evidence of the death outside of Australia of an employee's immediate family or household where such employee travels outside of Australia to attend the funeral, the employee shall be entitled to two days bereavement leave.

PROVIDED further that, with the consent of the employer, which will not be unreasonably withheld, an employee shall in addition be entitled to up to ten working days' unpaid leave bereavement leave in respect of the death within Australia or overseas of a member of the employee's immediate family or household to whom the clause applies.

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- (iii) Proof of such death shall be furnished by the employee to the satisfaction of the employer.
 - (iv) An employee may take unpaid bereavement leave by agreement with the employer.
- (e) Carer's leave
- (i) An employee is entitled to use up to 10 days personal leave, including accrued leave, each year to care for members of their immediate family or household who are sick and require care and support or who require care due to an unexpected emergency, subject to the conditions set out in this clause.

Leave may be taken for part of a single day.
 - (ii) By agreement between an employer and an individual employee, the employee may access an additional amount of their accrued personal leave for the purposes set out in paragraph (e)(i), beyond the limit set out in paragraph (e)(i). In such circumstances, the employer and the employee shall agree upon the additional amount that may be accessed.
 - (iii) When taking leave to care for members of their immediate family or household who require care due to an unexpected emergency, the employee must, if required by the employer, establish by production of documentation acceptable to the employer or a statutory declaration, the nature of the emergency and that such emergency resulted in the person concerned requiring care by the employee.
 - (iv) The employee shall, wherever practicable, give the employer notice prior to the absence of the intention to take leave, the name of the person requiring care and their relationship to the employee, the reason for taking such leave and the estimated length of absence. If it is not practicable for the employee to give prior notice of absence, the employee shall notify the employer by telephone of such absence at the first opportunity on the day of absence.
 - (v) Where an employee has exhausted all paid personal leave entitlements, they are entitled to take unpaid personal leave to care for members of their immediate family or household who are sick and require care and support or who require care due to an unexpected emergency. The employer and the employee shall agree on the period. In the absence of agreement, the employee is entitled to take up to two days (up to a maximum of 16 hours) per occasion, provided the requirements of subclause (e) is met.
 - (vi) In normal circumstances an employee shall not take carer's leave under this clause where another person has taken leave to care for the same person.
- (f) Casual Employees - Caring responsibilities
- (i) Subject to the evidentiary and notice requirements in subclause (e), casual employees are entitled to not be available to attend work, or to leave work:

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- (1) if they need to care for members of their immediate family or household who are sick and require care and support, or who require care due to an unexpected emergency, or the birth of a child; or
 - (2) upon the death in Australia of an immediate family or household member.
- (ii) The employer and the employee shall agree on the period for which the employee will be entitled to not be available to attend work. In the absence of agreement, the employee is entitled to not be available to attend work for up to 48 hours (i.e. two days) per occasion. The casual employee is not entitled to any payment for the period of non-attendance.
 - (iii) An employer must not fail to re-engage a casual employee because the employee accessed the entitlements provided for in this clause. The rights of an employer to engage or not to engage a casual employee are otherwise not affected."

2. By deleting from Part VI – Leave of Absence and Holidays with Pay, Clause 4 – Parental Leave, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

"4. PARENTAL LEAVE

Subject to the terms of this clause employees are entitled to maternity, paternity and adoption leave and to work part-time in connection with the birth or adoption of a child.

(a) Definitions

For the purposes of this clause:

- (i) **'Child'** means a child of the employee under the age of one year except for adoption of a child where 'child' means a person under the age of five years who is placed with the employee for the purposes of adoption, other than a child or step-child of the employee or of the parent of the employee or a child who has previously lived continuously with the employee for a period of six month or more.
- (ii) **'Continuous service'** means service under an unbroken contract of employment and includes:
 - (1) any period of leave taken in accordance with this clause;
 - (2) any period of part-time employment worked in accordance with this clause; or
 - (3) any period of leave or absence authorised by the employer or by the award.

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- (iii) **'Employee'** includes a part-time employee but does not include an employee engaged upon casual work, unless that work has been under a continuous contract of employment of at least 12 months.
 - (iv) **'Female employee'** means an employed female who is pregnant or is caring for a child she has borne or a child who has been placed with her for adoption purposes.
 - (v) **'Male employee'** means an employed male who is caring for a child borne of his spouse or a child placed with the employee for adoption purposes.
 - (vi) **'Primary care-giver'** means a person who assumes the principal role of providing care and attention to a child.
 - (vii) **'Spouse'** includes a de facto or a former spouse.
- (b) Entitlement
- (i) After twelve months continuous service, parents are entitled to a combined total of 52 weeks unpaid parental leave on a shared basis in relation to the birth or adoption of their child. For mothers, maternity leave provisions apply and for male employees, paternity leave provisions apply. Adoption leave provisions apply in the case of adoption.
 - (ii) Subject to subclause (c) (vi), parental leave is to be available to only one parent at a time, in a single unbroken period, except that both parents may simultaneously take:
 - (1) for maternity and paternity leave, an unbroken period of up to one week at the time of the birth of the child;
 - (2) for adoption leave, an unbroken period of up to three weeks at the time of placement of the child.
 - (iii) Unless otherwise agreed between the employee and the employer, parental leave shall be granted and taken in accordance with the notice given by the employee as specified below.
- (c) Maternity Leave
- (i) An employee must provide notice to the employer in advance of the expected date of commencement of parental leave. The notice requirements are:
 - (1) of the expected date of confinement (included in a certificate from a registered medical practitioner stating that the employee is pregnant) – at least 10 weeks;
 - (2) of the date on which the employee proposes to commence maternity leave and the period of leave to be taken – at least 4 weeks.

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- (ii) Where the employee gives notice under (d) (i) the employee must also provide a statutory declaration stating particulars of any period of paternity leave sought or taken by her spouse, and that for the period of maternity leave she will not engage in any conduct inconsistent with her contract of employment.
- (iii) An employee will not be in breach of this clause if failure to give the stipulated notice is occasioned by confinement occurring earlier than the presumed date or other compelling circumstances.
- (iv) An employee may commence maternity leave at any time within six weeks immediately prior to the expected date of birth.
- (v) Where an employee continues to work within the six week period immediately prior to the expected date of birth, or where the employee elects to return to work within six weeks after the birth of the child, an employer may require the employee to provide a medical certificate stating that she is fit to work on her normal duties.
- (vi) Special Maternity Leave
 - (1) Where the pregnancy of an employee not then on maternity leave terminates after 28 weeks other than by the birth of a living child, then the employee may take unpaid special maternity leave of such periods as a registered medical practitioner certifies as necessary.
 - (2) Where an employee is suffering from an illness not related to the direct consequences of the confinement, an employee may take any paid personal leave to which she is entitled in lieu of, or in addition to, special maternity leave.
 - (3) Where an employee not then on maternity leave suffers illness related to her pregnancy, she may take any paid personal leave to which she is then entitled and such further unpaid special maternity leave as a registered medical, practitioner certifies as necessary before her return to work. The aggregate of paid personal leave, special maternity leave and parental leave, including paternity leave taken by her spouse, may not exceed 52 weeks.
- (vii) Transfer to a safe job
 - (1) Where an employee is pregnant and, in the opinion of a registered medical practitioner, illness or risks arising out of the pregnancy or hazards connected with the work assigned to the employee make it inadvisable for the employee to continue at her present work, the employee will, if the employer deems it practicable, be transferred to a safe job at the rate and on the conditions attaching to that job until the commencement of maternity leave.

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- (2) If the transfer to a safe job is not practicable, the employee may elect, or the employer may require the employee to commence parental leave for such period as is certified necessary by a registered medical practitioner.

(d) Paternity Leave

- (i) A male employee will provide to the employer at least 10 weeks prior to each proposed period of paternity leave:
 - (1) that a certificate from a registered medical practitioner which names his spouse, states that she is pregnant and the expected date of confinement, or states the date on which the birth took place, and
 - (2) written notification of the proposed dates on which the period of paternity leave will start and finish and
 - (3) a statutory declaration stating:
 - (A) that period of paternity leave will be taken to become the primary care-giver of a child;
 - (B) particulars of any period of maternity leave sought or taken by the mother, and
 - (C) that for the period of paternity leave, the employee will not engage in any conduct inconsistent with their contract of employment.
 - (4) The employee will not be in breach of this subclause if the failure to give the required period of notice is because of the birth occurring earlier than expected, the death of the mother of the child, or other compelling circumstances.

(e) Adoption leave

- (i) The employee will notify the employer at least ten weeks in advance of the date of commencement of adoption leave and the period of leave to be taken. An employee may commence adoption leave prior to providing such notice, where through circumstances beyond the control of the employee, the adoption of a child takes place earlier.
- (ii) Before commencing adoption leave, an employee will provide the employer with a statutory declaration stating:
 - (1) the employee is seeking adoption leave to become the primary care-giver of the child;
 - (2) particulars of any period of adoption leave sought or taken by any other person in respect of that child, and

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- (3) that for the period of adoption leave the employee will not engage in any conduct inconsistent with their contract of employment.
- (iii) An employer may require an employee to provide confirmation from the appropriate government authority of the placement.
- (iv) Where the placement of a child for adoption with an employee does not proceed or continue, the employee will notify the employer immediately and the employer will nominate a time not exceeding four weeks from receipt of notification for the employee's return to work.
- (v) An employee will not be in breach of this subclause as a consequence of failure to give the stipulated periods of notice if such failure results from a requirement of an adoption agency to accept earlier or later placement of a child, the death of an adoptive parent or other compelling circumstances.
- (vi) An employee seeking to adopt a child is entitled to unpaid leave for the purpose of attending any compulsory interviews or examinations as are necessary as part of the adoption procedure. The employee and the employer should agree on the length of the unpaid leave. Where agreement cannot be reached, the employee is entitled to take up to two days unpaid leave. Where paid leave is available to the employee, the employer may require the employee to take such leave instead.

(f) Parental Leave and Other Entitlements

An employee may in lieu of or in conjunction with parental leave, access any annual leave or long service leave entitlements which they have accrued subject to the total amount of leave not exceeding 52 weeks.

(g) Part time work

(i) Entitlement

With the agreement of the employer:

- (1) An employee may work part-time in one or more periods at any time from the date of birth of the child until its second birthday or, in relation to adoption, from the date of placement of the child until the second anniversary of the placement.
- (2) A female employee may work part-time in one or more periods while she is pregnant where part-time employment is, because of the pregnancy, necessary or desirable.

(ii) Effect of Part-time Employment on Continuous Service

Commencement on part-time work under this clause, and return from part-time work to full-time work under this clause, shall not break the continuity of service or employment.

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(iii) Pro Rata Entitlements

Subject to the provisions of this subclause and the matters agreed to in accordance with this subclause, part-time employment shall be in accordance with the provisions of this award which shall apply pro rata.

(iv) Transitional Arrangements - Annual Leave

(1) An employee working part-time under this subclause shall be entitled to any leave accrued in respect of a period of full-time employment, as if the employee was still working full-time, in the position held prior to taking leave.

(2) (A) A full-time employee shall be entitled to annual leave accrued in respect of a period of part-time employment under this subclause, as if the employee was working part-time in the position held, immediately before resuming full-time work.

(B) Provided that, by agreement between the employer and the employee, the period over which the leave is taken may be shortened to the extent necessary for the employee to receive pay at the employee's current full-time rate.

(v) Transitional Arrangements - Personal Leave

An employee working part-time under this subclause shall have personal leave entitlements which have accrued under this award (including any entitlements accrued in respect of previous full-time employment) converted into hours. When this entitlement is used, whether as a part-time employee or as a full-time employee, it shall be debited for the ordinary hours that the employee would have worked during the period of absence.

(vi) Part-time Work Agreement

(1) Before commencing a period of part-time employment under this subclause the employee and the employer shall agree:

(A) that the employee may work part-time;

(B) upon the hours to be worked by the employee, the days upon which they will be worked and commencing times for the work;

(C) upon the classification applying to the work to be performed; and

(D) upon the period of part-time employment.

(2) The terms of this agreement may be varied by consent.

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(3) The terms of this agreement or any variation to it shall be reduced to writing and retained by the employer. A copy of the agreement and any variation to it shall be provided to the employee by the employer.

(4) The terms of this agreement shall apply to the part-time employment.

(vii) Termination of Employment

(1) The employment of a part-time employee under this clause, may be terminated in accordance with the provisions of this award but may not be terminated by the employer because the employee has exercised or proposes to exercise any rights arising under this clause or has enjoyed or proposes to enjoy any benefits arising under this clause.

(2) Any termination entitlements payable to an employee whose employment is terminated while working part-time under this clause, or while working full-time after transferring from part-time work under this clause, shall be calculated by reference to the full-time rate of pay at the time of termination and by regarding all service as a full-time employee as qualifying for a termination entitlement based on the period of full-time employment and all service as a part-time employee on a pro rata basis.

(viii) Extension of Hours of Work

An employer may request, but not require, an employee working part-time under this clause to work outside or in excess of the employee's ordinary hours of duty provided for in accordance with paragraph (vi).

(ix) Nature of Part-time Work

The work to be performed part-time need not be the work performed by the employee in his or her former position but shall be work otherwise performed under this award.

(x) Inconsistent Award Provisions

An employee may work part-time under this clause notwithstanding any other provisions of this award which limits or restricts the circumstances in which part-time employment may be worked or the terms upon which it may be worked including provisions:

(1) limiting the number of employees who may work part-time;

(2) establishing quotas as to the ratio of part-time to full-time employees;

(3) prescribing a minimum or maximum number of hours a part-time employee may work; or

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(4) requiring consultation with, consent of or monitoring by a union;
and such provisions do not apply to part-time work under this clause.

(h) Replacement Employees

- (i) A replacement employee is an employee specifically engaged as a result of an employee proceeding on parental leave or working part time in accordance with this clause.
- (ii) A replacement employee may be employed part-time. The provisions of this subclause in relation to annual leave and personal leave apply to the part-time employment of replacement employees.
- (iii) Before an employer engages a replacement employee under this paragraph, the employer shall inform the person of the temporary nature of the employment and of the rights of the employee who is being replaced. Specifically, the employer must advise that the period of engagement is subject to variation or change in the event that the employee on leave exercises the right to vary the period of leave.
- (iv) Unbroken service as a replacement employee shall be treated as continuous service.
- (v) Nothing in this subclause shall be construed as requiring an employer to engage a replacement employee.

(i) Return to Former Position after a Period of Parental Leave or Part Time Work

Unless other wise agreed between employee and employer, and consistent with the provisions of this clause

- (i) An employee will give at least four weeks' notice prior of their intention to return to work after a period of parental leave or part time work in accordance with this clause.
- (ii) An employee will be entitled to the position which they held immediately before proceeding on parental leave or part time work. In the case of an employee transferred to a safe job pursuant to subclause (c) (vii) clause, the employee will be entitled to return to the position they held immediately before such transfer.
- (iii) During the period of parental leave an employee shall be entitled to return to work at any time, as agreed between the employer and the employee, provided that the employer may require notice of not more than four weeks.
- (iv) An employee shall be entitled to extend the period of parental leave on one occasion, provided that the employer may require notice of not more than four weeks.

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By mutual agreement between the employee and the employer, the period of leave may be further extended.

(j) Redundancy

- (i) If a position held by an employee prior to taking parental leave is likely to be made redundant before the employee returns to work, the employer must advise the employee of the impending redundancy, provide an opportunity for consultation and shall not disadvantage the employee by virtue of the taking of parental leave.
- (ii) Where such position no longer exists but there are other positions available which the employee is qualified for and is capable of performing, the employee will be entitled to a position as nearly comparable in status and pay to that of their former position.

(k) Right To Request Variation To Parental Leave Provision

- (i) An employee entitled to parental leave pursuant to the provisions of this clause may request the employer to allow the employee:
 - (1) to extend the period of simultaneous unpaid parental leave up to a maximum of eight weeks;
 - (2) to extend the period of unpaid parental leave by a further continuous period of leave not exceeding 12 months;
 - (3) to return from a period of parental leave on a part-time basis until the child reaches school age,to assist the employee in reconciling work and parental responsibilities.
- (ii) The employer shall consider the request having regard to the employee's circumstances and, provided the request is genuinely based on the employee's parental responsibilities, may only refuse the request on reasonable grounds related to the effect on the workplace or the employer's business. Such grounds might include cost, lack of adequate replacement staff, loss of efficiency and the impact on customer service.

(l) Communication During Parental Leave

- (i) Where an employee is on parental leave and a definite decision has been made to introduce significant change at the workplace, the employer shall take reasonable steps to:
 - (1) make information available in relation to any significant effect the change will have on the status or responsibility level of the position the employee held before commencing parental leave; and

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- (2) provide an opportunity for the employee to discuss any significant effect the change will have on the status or responsibility level of the position the employee held before commencing parental leave.
- (ii) The employee shall take reasonable steps to inform the employer about any significant matter that will affect the employee's decision regarding the duration of parental leave to be taken, whether the employee intends to return to work and whether the employee intends to request to return to work on a part-time basis.
- (iii) The employee shall also notify the employer of changes of address or other contact details which might affect the employer's capacity to comply with (l)(i)(1)."

OPERATIVE DATE

These variations shall come into operation on and from 15 March 2006.

James P McAlpine
COMMISSIONER

24 March 2006