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Media Release

Campaign by meat workers union may result in pay cuts for up to 800 Beenleigh workers

One of Australia's largest beef processors has warned its employees that the improved conditions they've been employed under since October may be lost due to an ongoing "sabotage" campaign by the Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union (AMIEU).

The warning by Teys Australia to employees at its Beenleigh plant came after the Fair Work Commission (FWC) on Tuesday threw out an enterprise bargaining agreement (EBA) following an appeal by the AMIEU.

The decision means the EBA that commenced on October 7 last year and included wage and productivity increases, an initial cash bonus and profit sharing, will go back to the FWC for re-approval – where it will presumably once again be challenged by the union - despite employees voting in favour of the EBA in August.

In a statement issued to employees today, Teys said, "The conduct of the AMIEU has, and continues to be, very upsetting to many of our staff because the company and workforce have been working collaboratively and cooperatively under the new agreement for the past 6 months."

"The union has fought tooth and nail to sabotage this new EBA in order to retain its power base and relevance, at the expense of our employees and....its own members," it continued.

Teys General Manager Corporate Affairs Tom Maguire said it was important for employees to know that the AMIEU is wasting members' money to fight an EBA that "both the company and the majority of employees voted to support."

In a revelation that may shock employees, the statement said, "Incredibly, if (the union) gets its way and the EBA is dismantled, some 500 employees will immediately have their weekly pay packet reduced by \$25 to \$30."

If that wasn't enough, "a majority of the employees on the site may also actually find themselves in a position where they owe the company as much as \$900 each!"

Mr Maguire said the Beenleigh plant had again been thrown into uncertainty, while "the union has robbed 800 workers of job security".