



# EMPOWER

Volume 2

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## Peaceful negotiations lead to 17pc increase



# Pay rise

ALL employees of Energy Fiji Limited (EFL) will receive a 17 per cent pay increase, backdated to January, 2023,

After months of patient negotiation with the company, FEWA management signed a deal that's part of the collective agreement that covers all employees' various work remuneration.

FEWA will also share the interest on its account and from its investments with the workers.

FEWA general secretary Hira Shandil said it was a gesture of goodwill by the union to its members.

The pay deal came about after a lengthy negotiation with EFL.

FEWA general secretary Hira Shandil said it had been a long, tiring but successful process.

Mr Shandil thanked FEWA members for their understanding and faith in the union management and the negotiation process. He said members had opted to let FEWA

negotiate on their behalf and their confidence in their officials had eventually paid off. The pay increase came into effect on October 1, 2023, and backdated to January, 2023.

This was despite lobby to force the company to fast-track issues concerning EFL workers with a strike suggestion.

The pay increase will apply across the board, below manager level.

\* **Cash vouchers for all** - Page 4



# Thumbs up for negotiations

Members of a Energy Fiji Limited's union say suggestions to go on strike to force the company to fast-track negotiations on their log of claims was not prudent.

The Fiji Electricity Workers Association (FEWA) annual general meeting (AGM), held at the Crow's Nest Resort, Sigatoka, on June 17, 2023, opted to take a pro-active approach and allow FEWA to continue to negotiate.

FEWA general-secretary Hira Shandil said the approach was prudent for a healthy relationship with the company. "We still have issues on the table," he told delegates at the AGM.

After discussions and deliberations on their issues, delegates said they had confidence in FEWA to complete the negotiations on their behalf.

Mr Shandil thanked members for their confidence in their officials, saying they would continue to do their best to ensure workers got their fair dues working for EFL.

Their grievances were later taken up with the company after the AGM.

The pay increase was activated on October 1, 2023, backdated to January, 2023.

Mr Shandil said negotiations were fruitful and their negotiations covered all employees, not just union members.

He assured delegates that the union would continue to forge ahead to ensure their interests are addressed.





# FEWA account 'healthy'

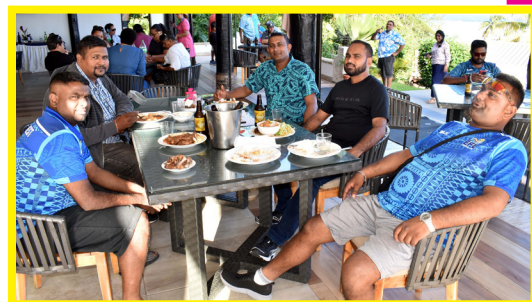
Financial audits of FEWA's accounts were endorsed by members at their AGM.

As of the year ending December 31, 2022, FEWA's account stood at \$219,930.

FEWA treasurer Aruna Goundar, in her report, said their account was healthy and FEWA's statement gave a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the association.

The audit, done by Jay Lal & Company, was endorsed by members who said they were happy with the presentation.

FEWA general-secretary Hira Shandil said they were still considering an investment by the union in a property that could generate income for the union.





# Cash vouchers for members

ALL members of the Fiji Electricity Association will receive a \$50 cash voucher to help ease their Christmas obligations. FEWA general secretary Hira Shandil said they were pleased to be of help to their members. He said the funds were derived from interest on their funds and from the union's investments. "While this may not be much, we hope it'll be of some help to their families during Christmas and as they prepare for the new school year," Mr Shandil said.



All members - even FEWA honorary member Harold Rounds, left, received the cash voucher





# What we put on the table

Among FEWA's log of claims for 2023 is a 5 per cent pay increase and allowances across the board due to the increase in the cost of living and consumer price index (CPI).

- 2-piece working clothes
- Long service leave; On completion of 7 years continuous year of service, 17 working days, 4 days each year thereafter.
- Retirement benefit; On completion of 7 years of service 50 working days and 10 days each year thereafter
- Additional FNPf; EFL shall contribute the sum prescribed by the law of the Republic of Fiji and additional amount equivalent to the following – 5-plus years of continuous service – 1 per cent; 7-plus years continuous service – 2 per cent; 10-plus years continuous years – 3 per cent; 12-plus years continuous service – 4 per cent; 15-plus years continuous service – 5 per cent
- Sick leave – unused sick leave payout.
- PMS – quantum of PMS to increase for trades/ staff/ senior staff/ manager – 15 per cent.
- Retirement age to 60. Employees can continue working after 60 provided good health and service required by the company.
- No contract workers, All employees to be in tenure below manager level.
- Medical policy – EFL to pay 100 per cent premium on medical scheme for all employees.
- Crane operating allowance, \$2 per hour
- Shift allowance, \$41.20 to be paid.
- Shift allowance for national coordinators; Extra Shift or called



**Workers in Labasa. Inset: The new gym for employees.**

for duty allowance of \$152.60 to be paid; Public Holiday shift allowance of \$125,09 to be paid.

- Bereavement Leave; Employees and spouse's brothers, sisters, uncle, grandparents and workmate to be included.
- Improve Communications – Install smart screens on all EFL vehicles to show all EFL asset. The current GPS installed in vehicles to incorporate GIS.
- Meal allowances for all employees from \$15 to \$20.
- Annual leave – The annual leave shall be due after 12 month

of employment and leave is overdue after 6 months from due date.

- Substances allowance -No accommodation, no meal -\$150.00; Accommodation provided, no meals \$80.00
- Overtime payment (trade/ personal and staff category) – Time and a half to be paid from knock-off time to midnight and double time rate to be paid for all works after midnight on midweek. Saturday time and a half to be paid until midday and double time thereafter.
- Job evaluation for all employees as current wager/salary band is outdated.

# The deal we sealed for all of you

## Achievements

FEWA was established in 1999, a merger of the staff association and senior staff association.

It was dissolved when the Essential National Industry Decree was implemented in 2011, after which it negotiated a collective agreement that covered all employees.

Among its achievements, are:

**2016** – 4 per cent salary increase for members

**2017** – 3 per cent salary increase

- Increase in allowance pay to 5 per cent

- Increase in performance pay to 7.5 per cent

- Increase in life insurance cover

- Wiremen license 100 per cent reimbursement.

- Increase in Meal Allowance (from \$8.98 to \$15 and Standby Allowance 2018 – 3% salary increase (Unit Leader below) – Increase in Allowance by 3.37% – Acting Allowance

– Subsistence Allowances – Gym restructuring – Leftover unused Sick leave converted to Paternity leave or Inpatient leave.

- Training senior staff – Increase in meal allowance (\$15) and standby allowance (\$84.00) 2019 – 3% salary increase – Increase in allowances by 3.00% – Higher Education – Any employee who is nominated by EFL for his/her study shall be reimbursed 100% of his/her tuition fee from either of the three universities – University of the South Pacific (USP), Fiji National University (FNU) and University of Fiji (UOF). This would be as per the Training Need Analysis of EFL. – Rural Allowances All workers working fulltime in Supervisory Positions in Taveuni and Levuka for Generation and Network

- SBA will be entitled for \$8400.00 in rural allowance. – Mileage Rate 1001 -1500cc (\$0.45), 1501 -2000cc (\$0.50), 2001+cc (\$0.55) – Tools Allowances of \$70.00 per year will be paid to all staff working in technical areas – Disaster Allowance Any natural disaster that requires Senior Staff (who are not paid overtime) to work overtime for more than three weeks to carry out repairs to EFL infrastructure will be paid a special allowance (\$100 per day).

**2021**

- Increase in cable jointer pay from \$6.79 to \$8.97

**2022**

- 5 per cent increase in pay and allowances



- Increase in funeral expense by 100 per cent. EFL to provide \$1000 for coffin and \$1000 for regurgu.

## 2023

- 2-Piece Overall With regard to the two (2) piece overall (shirt and pants), the parties agreed that all female technical employees are to be issued with the same together with the existing one-piece overall.

Performance Pay Quantum

With regard to the performance Pay Quantum, it has been agreed between the parties that:

a) All employees in Permanent Tradesperson Category Performance Pay quantum is now agreed to increase from 7.5 per cent to 10 per cent; and

b) All employees in Staff Category on full time tenure Performance Pay quantum is now agreed to increase from 7 per cent to 10 per cent respectively.

With regard to the Medical Benefit, it has been agreed between the parties that:

a) All employees in Trades Category: will now pay 15 per cent from the initial 50 per cent.

The employer will now pay 85 per cent from the initial 50 per cent.

The Employer shall reimburse the difference in Medical Premium for three months to all employees in Trades and Staff on Tenure categories.

Whereas the parties have agreed to the following terms and conditions appearing hereinafter: \$- 4,

Crane Operating Allowance will now be paid at the rate of \$2.24 per hour

Geographic Information System (GIS) on EFL operational vehicles With regard to the GIS system on all EFL Operational vehicles, the parties agreed that EFL will explore and revert to FEWA.

Shift and additional shift allowances for National Control Coordinator

Shift on public holiday will be paid \$147.11.

Extra shift by National Control Coordinator will be paid \$179.45

All employees in Trades and Staff Category: No Accommodation and No Meal - \$120.00.

Senior Staff Category: No Accommodation and No Meal - \$150.00 Subsistence allowance with regard to Subsistence Allowance, the parties agreed that the following rate will apply:

Overtime Payment on Saturday will be compensated to all employees who are entitled for overtime works as follows: Saturdays - double time. This overtime rate shall be made effective on October 1, 2023.

Job evaluation - It has been agreed between the parties that EFL will carry out the job evaluation exercise for all positions in EFL.

The Employer shall consult the Union in the course of the evaluation process.

With regards to wages and/or salaries increment! it has been agreed between the parties that all employees that are categorized below manager level positions will have 17 per cent pay increase.

Allowance will also increase and backdated to January, 2023.

Loyalty Payment - it has been agreed between the parties that the Employer shall pay Loyalty payment on the following basis: a) Upon completion of twenty (20) years of continuous service, employees are entitled to eight (8) months' pay and this shall be calculated from the year 2012 for all those employees who got paid the retirement benefit and long service leave in 2012. Should they retire earlier than 20 years, then a pro rata payment will be applicable.

In the event the employees passes away earlier than 20 years, the loyalty payment will be paid to the beneficiary on pro rata. This will be effective from January 1, 2023.

For Employees completing additional 20 years of service thereafter will be paid four months' salary payment as loyalty payment.

Should they retire between 20 years and 40) years, then they will be paid pro rata. In the event the employees passes away between 20 years and 40 years, the loyalty payment will be paid to the beneficiary on pro rata.





## 2023 EFL Allowance Table



	Allowance Type	Category		
		Tradesperson	Staff	Senior Staff
		2023 Rate	2023 Rate	2023 Rate
1	<b>Subsistence:</b>			
	No Accommodation/ No Meals	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 150.00
	Accommodation/No Meals	\$ 52.59	\$ 52.59	\$ 82.81
2	Meal	\$ 19.07	\$ 19.07	Buy and claim with receipt
3	Transfer	\$ 942.15	\$ 942.15	\$ 942.15
4	<b>Standby:</b>			
	Week days	\$ 13.37	\$ 14.56	110.20 weekly
	Weekends/Public Holidays	\$ 19.42	\$ 18.70	
5	<b>Height:</b>			
	40 feet	\$ 0.35		
	60 feet	\$ 0.58		
	80 feet	\$ 0.87		
6	Jack hammer	\$ 0.52		
7	Wet & dirty	\$ 0.22		
8	Underground		\$ 3.19	
9	Hydro tunnel	\$ 31.53		
10	Tools	\$ 86.44	\$ 86.44	\$ 86.44
11	Driver/Grader operator	\$ 1.81		
12	Crane/Forklift operator	\$ 2.00		
13	Chainsaw/Tamper operator	\$ 0.52		
14	Live line Workers	\$ 44.78	\$ 44.78	
15	Natural Disaster		\$ 123.48	\$ 123.48
16	Rural Allowance (F2)			\$ 10,372.32
17	<b>Mileage Rate:</b>			
	1001 - 1500cc		\$ 0.55	\$ 0.55
	1501 - 2000cc		\$ 0.62	\$ 0.62
	2001+cc		\$ 0.68	\$ 0.68
18	<b>National Control Cordinator (F2)</b>			
	Shift on Public Holiday			\$ 147.11
	Extra Shift			\$ 179.45

## YOUR CONTACTS

**National President- Inoke Ravouvou**

**General secretary - Hira Shandil (9929089/7112400**

**National treasurer - Aruna Gounder**

**Executive committee members - Kelevi Marailawa**

**Nitesh Deo**

**Empower Newsletter - Photos: RAMA. Words: ILAITIA TURAGABECI**