

ABC ON FACEBOOK | ABC ON TWITTER | ABC YOUTUBE CHANNEL

Industry Product Supply Lines Reviews Deliveries Buses For Sale Sell Specifications Jobs (0) (0) (0)



### BUS WAGE NEGOTIATIONS

Date: 28.04.2015

Like 0 +1 0 Tweet 0

#### Small increase in the Wage Price Index will impact enterprise agreement negotiations

Unionised bus and coach industry workers will have trouble negotiating high percentage increases, if the latest Wage Price Index figures are anything to go by.

WPI rates in the private sector increased by just 2.4 per cent in the 12 months to last year's December quarter. This represents the lowest annual rate since the ABS began reporting on the WPI in 1998.

Australia Public Transport Industrial Association (APTIA) national industrial relations manager Ian MacDonald says pay rises unions try to achieve for their members during contract negotiations are often tied to the Wage Price Index (WPI), and so this becomes a key indicator of how pay negotiations might pan out.

"There are a number of enterprise agreements in the works in NSW and Queensland," he says. "All are linked to the WPI as this is often the foundation of [wage] negotiations."

Essentially, any wage rise negotiated that exceeds the WPI, will eat away at the margin of bus and coach operators and limit their potential to expand their business, give staff more hours, or hire new drivers.

"It will come out of the margins of operators (if an increase of more than 2.4 per cent is successfully negotiated by workers this year)," MacDonald says.

The lower than expected WPI rate will mean that any wage increase those employed by the bus and coach industry do manage to negotiate will be limited.

"In NSW, most of the metro enterprise agreements are up for negotiations and the Transport Workers Union (TWU) will try for a wage increases over and above the WPI," MacDonald says.

"No doubt, they may be seeking to negotiate a higher percentage increase in wages, but if they get it the additional per cent will come out of operator's bottom line."

NSW enterprise agreements expire on June 30 and usually the goal is to have these negotiated well in advance of this deadline.

However, it is not unusual for these pay negotiations to become drawn out as employers, unions and union members dig their heels in — often at the detriment to the community as they are left with reduced or in some cases no services, as drivers' take protected action.

Across the economy, rates excluding bonuses increased by 2.5 per cent annually in trend terms, equal to the record low recorded in the September quarter.

Like 0 +1 0 Tweet 0

### DISCUSSION

0 Comments ABC Busnews

Recommend Share

Login

Sort by Best

Start the discussion.

Be the first to comment.

#### ALSO ON ABC BUSNEWS

**Opal wins award**  
1 comment 2 days ago  
Cam — integrated fares (as opposed to simply integrated ticketing) would make it much more equitable (and ...

**Health risks for NSW**  
1 comment 2 days ago  
David Norris — Good to see emerging industry specific evidence for the need to act. One solution for managers ...

**Trolley buses to go**  
1 comment 2 days ago  
Opal reworked — Another transition to think about is to fast charge the hybrid buses, like Volvo is doing now in ...

**Optare Solo | Video Review**  
1 comment 2 days ago  
Tom Harrison — It's a great review, although a few sound clips of the actual bus wouldn't go amiss, ...

Advanced search SEARCH

You are logged in as: 17408868

Change Your Password

### SUBSCRIBE

Latest Issue ABC COACHING Subscribe online to receive each issue direct to your door. SUBSCRIBE

VIS-Check Brake Testing Equipment For quick, easy and accurate road compliance. FIND OUT MORE > www.napier.com

### FEATURED VIDEO

**Video Review: BCI Proma DX**  
BCI's recently upgraded Proma DX midi coach could be just the ticket for inbound work and long-di... MORE

Trade Trucks #1 TRUCK CLASSIFIEDS BUY AND SELL TRUCKS WITH AUSTRALIA'S