

8. PURCHASED LEAVE SCHEME (PLS)

(a) The purpose of the Purchased Leave Scheme (PLS) is:

- (i) an arrangement for employees to have 10 additional days of leave by taking 9 days leave without pay;
- (ii) to allow employees additional leave to achieve a better, more flexible work-life balance; and
- (iii) to allow the employer to improve productivity by reducing absenteeism through improved leave planning and providing an opportunity for salary savings.

(b) Purchased leave is to be managed and taken in the same manner as recreation leave. The requirements for the management and taking of recreation leave are detailed in clause 5 of this part. The maximum accrual of recreation leave and purchased leave combined must not exceed two years of entitlement to recreation leave, i.e. 294 hours for a full-time employee.

(c) Prior to approval of an application to participate in the PLS the employee and relevant manager are strongly advised to discuss the management of purchased leave accrual, the impact on their salary, plans to manage any outstanding accrued leave and adherence to recreation leave entitlements and obligations under this Award.

(d) A part-time employee is able to participate in the PLS in direct proportion to their full-time equivalent employment.

Purchased Leave Scheme (PLS) Implementation

(e) Employees will be entitled to apply to purchase 10 days of additional leave in each 12 month period. Applications will be for a 12 month period unless exceptional circumstances apply.

(f) The employer may only refuse an application for PLS on reasonable grounds related to the effect on the workplace or the employer's business. Such grounds might include cost, lack of suitable replacement staff, loss of efficiency and effectiveness, the specialised nature of the work and the impact on customer service.

(g) The salary paid to an employee for whom participation in the PLS has been approved is as specified in Appendix 18 rather than the rates in Part II – Salaries and Related matters, Clause 3.

(h) All shift penalty rates, are to be calculated on the PLS salary rates. Overtime is paid at the normal Award rate for the employee's classification.

(i) All leave taken by an employee who is participating in the PLS is paid at the relevant PLS rate, including SSALs, recreation, personal, long service, parental leave and all other forms of paid leave according to the relevant Award and legislation. The PLS rate also applies to an employee who is participating in the PLS and is in receipt of a Higher Duties Allowance.

(j) Purchased leave for full-time employees accrues at the rate of 2.82 hours for each fortnight worked for employees who work 73.5 hours per fortnight.

(k) An employee may withdraw from participating in the PLS by giving the employer at least 2 weeks' notice from the start of their next full pay period. Upon withdrawal an employee may not be able to recommence participation until 12 months after the date of withdrawal. Upon withdrawal the

employee is to be paid the full salary rate as prescribed in Part II – Salaries and Related Matters, Clause 3.

(l) Employees who consider participating in the PLS are encouraged to seek advice from their relevant superannuation fund regarding any implications of their participation on their superannuation payments and entitlements.

(m) An employee who is a member of the Retirement Benefits Fund (RBF) and who participates in the PLS is treated as being on leave without pay for 10 days per annum.