



# OPTUS NEWSLETTER

*Optus Employees - Working Together, Making It Fairer, Achieving the Best*

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## JOURNEY COVER NOW OFFERED FREE

### OPTUS Financial members of the CEPU can now benefit from free Journey Insurance Cover, which will help protect their financial security in case of an accident

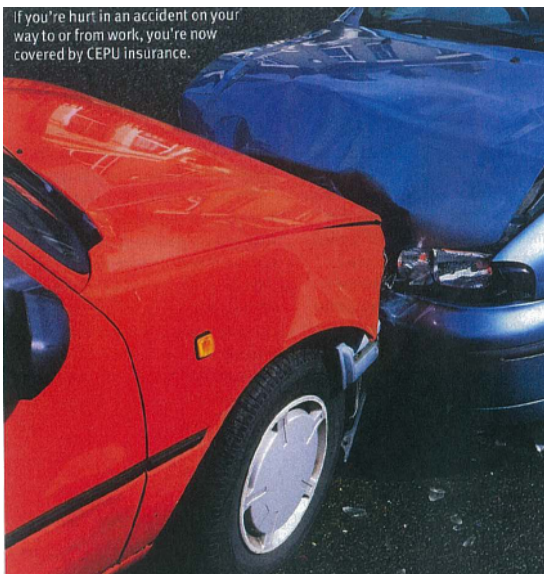
Besides being the start of the New Year, 2009 is also special for financial CEPU members for another important reason.

#### THE JOURNEY INSURANCE COVER INCLUDES:

- Weekly Benefit of 85 per cent of Earnings to \$1500
- Accidental Death Benefit of \$100,000 (\$20,000 without dependants)

After months of negotiation, the CEPU entered into a journey cover deal with respected insurance brokers Ausinsure.

As you know, the former Howard Government stripped away a critical protection for Australian



workers: the right to claim workers' compensation for injuries sustained on the way to and from work. And workers who sustained an injury while on a meal break away from a workplace also had their workers' compensation rights seriously limited.

**According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, more than a quarter of workplace deaths were attributed to commuting workers.** But with this new benefit, financial CEPU members can relax in the knowledge that in the event of an accident on the way to and from work, they are now insured – at no cost to themselves.

Similarly, members are covered if an injury is sustained during an authorised employer meal break.

This new policy will also cover members who might experience an accident on their way to or from an out-of-hours Union meeting. Optus estimated that it would save more than \$2m a year on its \$6m workers compensation bill when it moved to Comcare. Following the Howard Government changes it is likely Optus saved even more. Regrettably the new Labor Government has not yet reinstated your rights in this regard.

Right now, if you have an accident on the way to or from your job and you cannot work for weeks, you would have no income available to you. Under this CEPU scheme up to 85 per cent of your normal weekly wage can be paid to you, to help you get by until you return to work.

While the scheme may not exactly replicate previous workers' compensation benefits, it will certainly provide improved income support – and that means better peace of mind for our members and their families.

**“With this new benefit... in the event of an accident on the way to and from work financial CEPU members are now insured – at no cost to themselves.”**

The other key point is that the service is being provided to members at no cost. It's free to financial CEPU members – the cost is covered through your membership fee. It's another example of how valuable it is being a member of your Union, the CEPU.

More details about the CEPU Journey Cover Scheme (including the Product disclosure Statement) can be found at [www.cepconnects.or](http://www.cepconnects.or).

## **OPTUS EMPLOYMENT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**

Optus employees are reminded that the EPA is up later this year and this is your opportunity to work for improved wages and conditions. CEPU is seeking a fair union collective deal that rewards Optus employees fairly for their efforts in making Optus the successful company it is.

In talking to members CEPU believes the following are clearly in the forefront of employees minds:

- Pay increases that are equal to or better than inflation and reflect the productivity improvements at Optus.
- Security of a union collective agreement that protects their current entitlements.
- A properly regulated performance bonus scheme based on reasonable and agreed targets, backed up with a fair appeals process.
- A dispute settling clause that allows any party to the agreement to refer a dispute to the independent umpire under the Federal Government's Fair Work Australia.

Contact the Branch Office if you have any further ideas around the EPA, or if you would like a visit from a CEPU official to discuss the issues. CEPU is happy to meet during lunch breaks or after hours away from the workplace if you have concerns.

## **OZ MUSIC LEGEND JIMMY BARNES DOESN'T JUST SING ABOUT BEING A WORKING CLASS MAN – HE'S THE REAL DEAL.**

Rock historian Glenn A. Baker, another music industry icon, introduced us to the big-hearted block behind the legendary voice.

The best way I could express it, when I engaged Jimmy Barnes in recent conversation for Ovation Channel's Up Close And Personal series and then when I then conducted an on-stage Q&A with him at the launch of his Icons of Australian Music scrapbook, is that he was found himself in a good place. And it's 35 years after he began unleashing his incandescent vocal assault in the industrial suburbs of Adelaide.



Jimmy with asbestos sufferer the late Bernie Banton. Jimmy performed the anthem *Working Class Man at the Your Right At Work* rally at the MCG in November 2006.

Though it wasn't always guaranteed, he has come through the furnace forged rather than frayed and is now ensconced at the heart of a remarkable family – both immediate and extended – that provides him with support and creative stimulus. His tempestuous voice has survived the vodka and the long howling nights and developed a seasoned timbre which can even be said to have a sweetness to it, when called upon. He is able to craft songs of strong personal meaning and make the records he wants to make. In demand on television and radio, his position as an elder statesman of Oz Rock, along with a continued

capacity to fill any venue he performs at, is a comfortable one indeed. Not all this nation's favourite sons have become so enshrined in our consciousness.

### **Hard knocks and kind hearts**

It is not just the grounding of frantic family life that has connected Jimmy a little closer to his mortality and his humanity. Open-heart surgery did its bit, as did a mentoring role with the Choir of Hard Knocks. "That was an experience different to what I expected," he admits. "I already felt for the homeless and people in trouble; I guess because I came from a disadvantaged background and grew up seeing first-hand the problems of alcoholism and drug addiction. What I saw in the choir were people from all walks of life with all sorts of problems, some small and some big. It surprised me because I realized that there were more similarities than differences between them and myself and I feel now that if more people look for the similarities between themselves and those who need help, they'd be more inclined to offer that help."

## COMMUNICATIONS UNION (CEPU)

# Don't Go To Work Without Us!

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