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# Tip Top workers' bunfight

By Cam Lucadou-Wells

Tip Top Bakery is embroiled in a 'bunfight' with its maintenance workers, who are holding rolling strikes at the Dandenong South site.

According to AMWU delegate 'Graham', the crew of up to 20 maintenance workers have stepped up protected industrial action over the past several weeks.

On 5 September, the workers stopped work for 24-hours. A further 12-hour strike was scheduled for two days later.

In between, the crew's electricians also held a separate 24-hour strike.

The dispute has been sparked by EBA negotiations stalling over recent months.

Workers rejected a 1.5 per cent pay rise offer from the company - described as "effectively a pay cut" when compared to CPI.

Tip Top had also intended to remove conditions which opened up the potential use of labour hire and contractors at a lower rate, Graham said.

He said the company had already introduced savings measures such as a more efficient ordering system for large clients like

Coles and Woolworths.

"We all enjoy working there. All of this has brought all of us (employees) a lot closer together.

"What we're asking for is about 1 per cent above CPI and don't take any (conditions) off us."

In a statement, Tip Top said its offer was "fair and responsible".

The bread and baking industry faced "significant challenges" due to rising manufactur-

ing costs and price pressure from increased competition, it stated.

"Tip Top's current pay rates are well above award rates and the business is committed to maintaining above award conditions of employment for our people.

"We remain open to continuing union negotiations to achieve an agreement that will deliver a fair financial outcome for our people and ensure our business can remain competitive in the future."



Strikers protest in front of Tip Top Bakery on 5 September. 184924

Picture: GARY SISSONS