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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **ARTIO NSW Welcomes Amendments to Long Service Leave Provisions Applicable in NSW**

The Australian Road Transport Industrial Organisation NSW Branch welcomes the passage of new amendments to the Long Service Leave Act through NSW parliament which gives earlier and more flexible access to long service leave during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The amendments enable long service leave to be taken in periods of as little as one day where there is agreement between employer and employee,” ARTIO NSW Secretary/Treasurer, Hugh McMaster said.

“There are several ways this may work in practice, for example, the employer and the employee may agree that the employee works three days and take two days’ long service leave in a particular week.

“The requirement that an employer must give at least one month’s notice before long service leave can be taken has also been waived.

“This means an employer can give less than a month’s notice to an employee to take long service leave if the employee agrees.

“Long service leave may be taken in advance where there is agreement to do so between the employer and employee.

“Where the employer and employee agree, the taking of leave may be postponed.

“When this occurs, the employer and employee may also agree that the amount paid for the leave to be taken at a later date will be whatever rate of pay the employee is earning at the time of the agreement instead of the rate of pay when the postponed leave is taken.

“It is important to note that these amendments are intended to be temporary and to apply during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“While provision has been made that they will cease initially after six months, these amendments also allow the NSW Government to apply these changes for up to 12 months, if circumstances require this.

“It is also important to note that these amendments only apply in NSW and not in other states and territories.

“ARTIO NSW encourages employers in the industry in NSW to take whatever steps are necessary to retain employees in what are very challenging times.

“Our view is that taking long service leave is one option employers should, if necessary, implement, in consultation with employees, before considering whether to stand them down.

“Stand downs should only be considered as a last resort.

“This Bill was assented to on 25 March and is now law.”

**ENDS**

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