This is the first employee EB7 Bulletin associated with the enterprise bargaining process. These bulletins will provide updates on the negotiations as soon as possible after each of the Single Bargaining Unit (SBU) meetings.

I am pleased to advise that negotiations for a replacement enterprise agreement for school-based staff commenced Wednesday 15 February. While this meeting was preliminary in nature, important information was shared between the parties that I hope will set the foundations for negotiations that will be beneficial to our school community.

A summary of the key issues discussed at this meeting is as follows:

- A number of meeting protocols were agreed between the parties.
- Religious Institute Employer representatives outlined their intention to negotiate a single interest employer agreement covering the Religious Institute Schools.
- The parties agreed there was a commitment to good faith bargaining and the guiding principles of the Church in the Workplace document. This document is available on the EB7 website.
- Religious Institute Employer representatives indicated their commitment to:
  - work in partnership with employees for the well-being of students
  - provide fair wages and conditions and exercise responsible stewardship
  - value every staff member and genuinely consider all employee claims
  - use the EB negotiations as an opportunity to work in partnership with employees to enhance working conditions that will ultimately benefit students.
- Religious Institute Employer representatives acknowledged and congratulated the IEUA–Queensland & Northern Territory for its ongoing advocacy for increased funding for Catholic schools.
- An employee log of claims was tabled by union representatives together with draft clauses for some items, with others to follow. Clarity was sought on the claim items and further documentation supporting the outstanding items is expected.
- Religious Institute Employer representatives indicated their intention to table a log of claims at a future meeting. We await the release of the Gonski Review into school funding and a deeper understanding of employee claims.
- Both parties intend to meet on Wednesday 7 March, 2012.