MEDIA RELEASE
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Move to axe independent 7-Eleven panel slammed

Workers have slammed 7-Eleven's decision to scrap the panel pursuing wage reimbursement for exploited workers and to take the inquiry in-house, saying full transparency around the ongoing process is crucial.

The company announced on Wednesday that it will axe the Fels panel – the independent panel set up to deal with the massive wages scandal - and continue the claims process internally.

SDA – the union for retail, fast-food and warehouse workers – National Secretary, Gerard Dwyer said the move is incredibly disappointing and said the union will be seeking rock-solid guarantees around the transparency of the future process.

"Axing the independent panel, led by Allan Fels, would be an incredibly disappointing move by 7-Eleven," Mr Dwyer said.

"You've really got to question what 7-Eleven's motives for doing this are.

"The panel has determined payouts to exploited workers of around $10million so far, and we know there's more to come.

"The issues uncovered so far are just the tip the iceberg. There are still claims in the system waiting to be heard and processed, and we know there are still many more out there waiting to be heard.

"We need to know what mechanisms are in place to ensure claims can continue to be lodged in full and to ensure that no worker is going to fall through the cracks.

"Workers and the broader community need to be confident that the process will continue to be conducted in a fair and transparent manner. That's going to be very difficult if the procedure is taken in-house.

"The Fels panel has proven very effective. You've got to ask why 7-Eleven would be moving to take this process in-house.

"It would be incredibly disappointing if the company was found to be trying to sweep the whole horrific saga under the rug.

"7-Eleven needs to come clean about why it is axing the Fels panel and what benefits there are to taking the successful process in-house."

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