

## AXA throws its Rattle from the Car

**Amicus believe in working with the Company wherever possible within AXA and the backbone of this relationship is meaningful consultation. There are, however, times when this consultation can appear to exist in name only.**

Current examples of this are a change to the ECOS scheme and the handling of the removal of the AXA subsidy for employees who have places for their children in the AXA Centre nursery.

### ECOS

**The Employee Car Ownership Scheme covers employees who have a company car, either as a business need or a perk of their grade. Amicus were told the decision had been taken at AXA Group level to remove this “perk” entitlement from anyone promoted to Level 5 in AXA Life after 1 January 2006.**

The justification was to bring AXA Life into line with the rest of AXA, as was done with Shared Services. Amicus made it clear that this argument does not stand up. The removal of the entitlement for new Level 5 employees in Shared Services was part of the negotiation of a new set of harmonised terms and conditions. Under this some employees may have lost out in one area but gained in another. This imposed change in AXA Life is simply a one-sided cost cutting measure.

The company appear to be confident in imposing this change as nothing is being taken away from existing staff. However, Amicus believe this does not address whether the reduced attraction of the Level 5 role will prevent some staff from seeking promotion. This will limit both their personal development and that of the Company. Indeed, if it proves more difficult to recruit staff at Level 5, could an artificial enhancement of job grade result with positions being pushed towards Level 4B to secure applicants? This would of course absorb any potential cost savings.

***Amicus condemn this move. It may not affect existing Level 5 members, but it will create future inequities.***

***Any such changes should only be made as part of proper negotiations to harmonise terms & conditions.***

### AXA Centre Nursery

**On 28 November 2005 the Company told Amicus that Acorns were due to increase the cost of places in the Nursery at the AXA Centre. AXA also advised that they were going to cease the subsidy that is paid by AXA to these employees, because these staff are already benefiting over those who were unsuccessful in applying for one of the limited Nursery places. Use of the Salary Sacrifice scheme would offset the cost of both the increased fees and the removal of the subsidy.**

Amicus conceded that in the light of the current extreme cost challenges facing the Company, it couldn't particularly object to the company not paying a “double” benefit to a minority of staff, as members who missed out on getting a nursery place weren't getting the subsidy anyway. However, we did state that there must be a sufficient notice period for the change.

The company decided to press ahead immediately and the following concerns have come to light:

- To our amazement AXA has not had the courtesy to write to employees explaining that it is removing the subsidy and why. Instead all communication was left to Acorns, the company that run the nursery.
- There were delays in issuing the letters, so some employees have not had even the minimum legal notice period for a contractual change.
- As a result of the lack of notice, employees have not had the chance to weigh up their options.
- Some employees claim they were not given sufficient information about the Salary Sacrifice scheme.

***Amicus call on AXA to resolve this by writing to affected employees and delaying the removal of the subsidy.***

***Amicus will support members who wish to lodge a grievance over the lack of formal notice they have been given about this change.***

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**or call the recruitment hotline free 0800 587 1222**