

# Repeat offenders...

*"When driving and you see a speed limit sign for 80 km/h, it's for right away, not 10 km down the road, isn't it?"*

**That's a common-sense observation.** However, AFP's management doesn't appear to share that viewpoint. While the Paris Court of Appeal in its September 19 ruling declared the key provision of the accord d'entreprise of March 10, 2017 to be *illegal*, management submitted to trade unions an "**Accord to delay**" the effects of the ruling. The text was signed by two out of the five representative French trade unions that represent 65% of HQ status staff.

## What about the 12 additional days off after December 31, 2019?

It matters little that the "delay" accord will be in effect only a short time: it extends an illegal situation. Moreover, it doesn't answer any of the questions of employees about the impact of the ruling, as the other three trade unions - SUD, FO and CFE-CGC - recently emphasized in their *joint statement*.

The preamble of the "delay" accord states its impact "*is strictly limited to securing days off for the period of June 1, 2017 to December 31, 2019*". From whom or what do these days off need to be protected except from management which would benefit in one sense from retroactively reclaiming them? The Court of Appeal did not order such a step. There is no need for an accord between management and unions to make "*secure*" these days: a simple management note would have sufficed.

**Who do they think they are fooling?** The two majority unions, signatories of the "Grand Accord" as well as this (most likely illegal) "delay" accord, are once again playing management's game. And this *without having obtained guarantees of any kind on the additional days off for journalists in 2020* as the accord makes no mention of them.

In negotiations on this text SUD made a **counterproposal** to immediately edit the key provision of the "Grand Accord" and *immediately secure 12 additional days off for all journalists*. If the final version of the "delay" accord incorporated a number of our suggested passages for the preamble, these were purely cosmetic, and our substantive proposals were ignored.

## Risky HR management costs staff dearly

We're already feeling it: our pay scales have been frozen since November 2012. That is because the ENArques who control the fate of AFP have found "*controlling the evolution of the wage bill*" to be their only reliable tool. Here is a passage for the Aims and Means Contract of 2014-2018, the framework for relations between AFP and the French state (and which is under the watchful eye of the European Commission):

*"The wage bill has integrated the reabsorption of liabilities that have emerged in recent years ... Furthermore, AFP is pursuing a policy more assertive than in the past that aims for an appropriate adaptation to and more systematic conformity with national laws of the countries in which it operates."*

The plan is for us to continue along this path in coming years: *no general wage increases are envisaged* for HQ status employees. But as the costs of the risky HR policies mount (along with the government's policy of reducing public spending), management is now turning to *job cuts*.

**That is why we have a collective interest in refusing illegal arrangements and deals.**