

**AMWU
NEWS**

AUSTRALIAN MANUFACTURING WORKERS' UNION

UNION VICTORY AT NEWCASTLE PORT **P8.**

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SPRING 2017





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TIME TO CHANGE THE RULES

AS THE YEAR TICKS ON AMWU MEMBERS CONTINUE TO BATTLE WITH THEIR EMPLOYERS FOR THEIR RIGHTS AT WORK.

And we've had some great wins over recent months, some of which are detailed in this Journal. From health and safety wins, to payment of allowances, to some great new union agreements, members around the country are working with their union for a better future.

But with every win we are reminded how much the deck is stacked against working people in Australia – and it's getting worse. From NRG in Gladstone to Collie in WA, Streets in NSW to Esso in Victoria, employers are rolling out the tactic of terminating agreements and cycling contracts in order to cut pay and conditions.

The system that allows them to do this shows our workplace laws are fundamentally broken. We had a big win last year with CUB and one earlier this year at Parmalat – but we won't be so lucky with every dispute. Employers are threatening to terminate agreements more often. We can fight back at workplaces but we need to fight back by changing the laws that allow companies to do this in the first place.

The whole movement is united in this cause – under the #changetherules campaign. We're determined to see our laws change so that working people are no longer disadvantaged but are on an equal playing field with employers.

And the actions by employers are not limited to our industries. As I write, Murdoch University in Western Australia has terminated the Agreement for its academic staff – kicking them back to Award rates of pay. Disgracefully, the

Minister for Education has encouraged other universities to do the same around the country! No industry or profession is safe.

Fighting Back

There will be meetings held in every state in coming months where members from across different industries will meet to discuss the Change the Rules campaign.

This is a fight worth joining and a fight that members need to win – keep an eye out for the meeting in your state and how you can get involved.

New NSW State Secretary

Just to let members know that we now have a new State Secretary in NSW, following the resignation of Brother Tim Ayers from the position after 20 years of service and commitment to NSW members.

Long standing Assistant State Secretary Steve Murphy was recently appointed to the role by the NSW State Council through to elections for the position in 2019. Steve brings a proud history and deep experience working for members and I know he will make a great contribution to the leadership of our Union.



Paul Bastian
AMWU National Secretary

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MADE IN AUSTRALIA BY
AMWU MEMBERS

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Please contact your union organiser for updates.

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ROSTER OVER-REACH BACKFIRES ON BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL

A cynical attempt by Brisbane City Council (BCC) to put maintenance workers on-call 24/7 has turned into a win for workers – with the council having to back away from its proposal.

What's more, around 40 new members have signed up to the AMWU, bringing union density at the Council close to 90 per cent.

The Council's proposal for a flexible rostering system would have given council managers the power to call workers in any time at short notice – effectively putting workers such as electricians, bus mechanics, boilermakers and fitters permanently 'on call'.

Electricians (ETU members) initially responded by taking minor industrial action – only to be locked out by the employer.

But when AMWU members voted to also take industrial action, BCC realised it had bitten off more than it could chew.



AMWU and ETU members stood strong together in the face of Council over-reach.

AMWU member Mark Green said the proposed roster would have been a disaster for workers with family commitments.

"My partner and I have two young boys, she works afternoon shifts and these rosters would have made it impossible for us to plan or arrange childcare for our kids," Mark said.

"Council's decision shows that we had to stand up together to secure a good outcome for our families, or they wouldn't have done a thing to help us."

AMWU Queensland Secretary Rohan Webb said BCC's actions had angered workers, and inspired many to join their union for the first time.

"The proposed rosters were a power grab that gave the council ultimate flexibility at the expense of the

family lives of their workforce," Rohan said.

"Make no mistake about it, this would not have been possible without the commitment from the members. Council would not have budged an inch if workers didn't unite and take a stand.

The AMWU Queensland Branch's broader campaign in support of good, secure jobs was also gaining support among workers at the Council.

"The AMWU is a campaigning organisation that helps members stand up for their rights and this is another great union win," Rohan said.



FIGHT THE POWER

Companies who take on their workers are also taking on their workers' families, friends, and neighbours.

That's the lesson from Gladstone, where NRG Power – the operator of Queensland's largest power station – is facing a huge backlash from the local community.

AMWU members have been trying to negotiate a new Enterprise Agreement with NRG for months – but are refusing to accept the loss of conditions which the company is offering.

The members have counted over 70

conditions which NRG is trying to remove from the EBA.

The solidarity among workers was clear when a ballot on the company's proposed agreement returned a whopping 98 per cent 'NO' vote.

But instead of going back to the negotiating table, NRG responded by applying to the Fair Work Commission to terminate the Agreement entirely.

NRG worker, AMWU Delegate and father of two Andrew Lockwood has taken a leading role in the campaign against NRG, often speaking on behalf

of his colleagues in the local media and public events.

"At the moment I don't think my boys would know what I do for work," said Andrew, "They'd just think that I talk in front of crowds and cameras for a living."

Hundreds have turned out for rallies in support of the workers, and other unions with members at NRG have joined the AMWU in defence of local jobs.

"Regional communities need good employers – companies that look after their workforces and look after these towns, said AMWU Queensland State Secretary Rohan Webb.

"NRG is giving the whole town of Gladstone a kick in the guts. Every cent

these workers are paid goes back to the town, to the local businesses, to the sporting clubs.

"All the workers are doing is trying to protect their conditions and make sure they have good, stable jobs."

Andrew Lockwood said the workforce was angry and disappointed that the company had chosen to ignore their views.

"We need good employment, secure employment and a company that looks after our community," Andrew said.

"We've said that we don't want a pay rise. But we also don't want the company fiddling with shifts or the penalty rates we're entitled to.

"That's why we're fighting so hard."



Members stand strong to fight back against NRG



The whole Gladstone community has joined the fight, backing workers and joining rallies



"WE NEED GOOD EMPLOYMENT, SECURE EMPLOYMENT AND A COMPANY THAT LOOKS AFTER OUR COMMUNITY."



NO WAY KONE! LIFT WORKERS FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO PAY PARITY

Negotiations over a new agreement at lift maintenance company Kone in Sydney are reaching a critical stage.

Workers have staged a series of stoppages, forcing the company to take their claims for pay parity seriously.

Kone is one of the world's three big players in the lift business. In NSW, however, workers have become concerned that pay and conditions at Kone have fallen well behind industry standards.

With staff retention becoming a major issue in the industry, Kone is at risk of losing more skilled and experienced employees to its rivals.

AMWU Delegate Pedro Orellana says frustrated workers are now looking at the pay and conditions offered at other companies and in other states, and wondering why they are getting less.

"Fitters' work is fitters' work, wherever you are," Pedro says.

"We install rails and doorframes the same as they do elsewhere, but we don't get the same pay. We simply want equality and fairness."

The AMWU and the ETU have been locked in tough negotiations with Kone management for several months, with workers twice voting down an EA offer from the company.

Aside from base pay, negotiations have also focused on allowances, superannuation contributions, and

classifications.

The two unions have put forward a new classifications structure that would offer better incentives for experienced workers to stay with the company.

Pedro Orellana says Kone management have tried to play 'divide and conquer' by offering increases to some

allowances rather than an across-the-board pay rise acceptable to the entire workforce.

"What's making it almost impossible is the way the company has allocated different rates and allowances," Pedro says.

"They're giving some workers an

increase in allowances, but large numbers of workers would miss out.

"So the company has really brought this situation on themselves."

The rolling stoppages are continuing in Sydney as AMWU News goes to press, with workers hopeful they will soon reach a resolution.



BRA BAN CAUSES A STORM IN A D-CUP

A proposal to ban female workers at the Perth Mint from wearing underwire bras has been criticised by workers and ridiculed on social media.

Perth Mint has suggested that workers should refrain from wearing any metal clothing – including buckles, zips, buttons and underwear – as part of its attempts to raise the bra on security at the facility.

They suggested that female workers would have

to strip down and remove their underwear before walking through the normal safety screening machines (which are similar to airport screening).

The bust-up came about after a \$50,000 gold bar went missing, prompting the Mint to do a review of its security procedures.

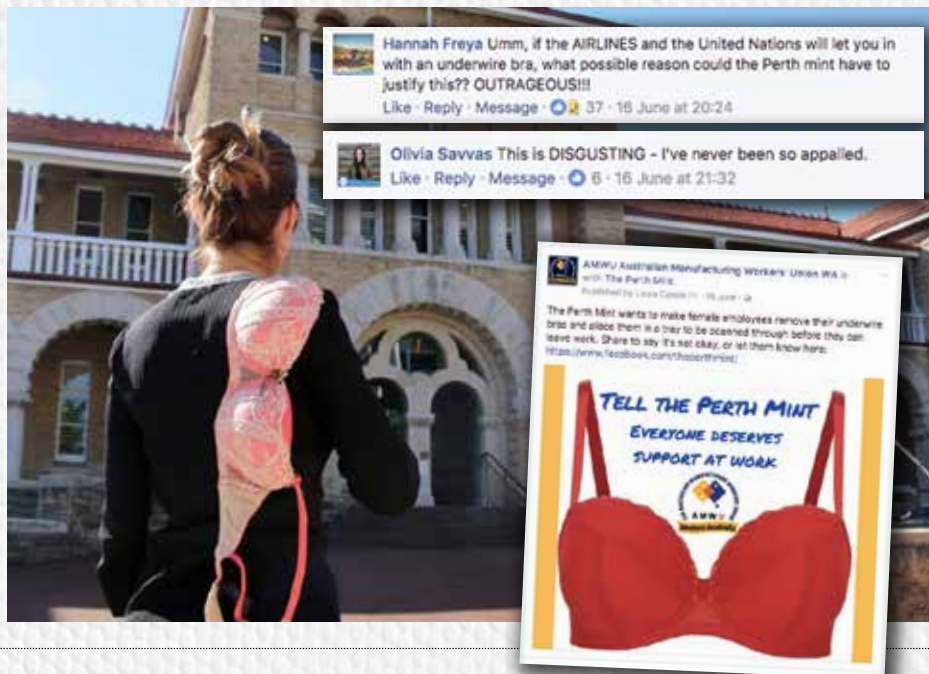
AMWU Western Australia State Secretary Steve McCartney said the idea was a disgrace.

"It's taking things too far in our view and it was introduced without any real discussion.

"I'm pretty sure they could find the technology that saves women from having to go through this embarrassment. It's a stupid and discriminatory idea.

"We think it's an attack on women's rights and an attack on women."

The Mint's actions caused a social media furore around WA and spread across Australia, which put real pressure on the Mint. They are now reviewing the idea although no final decision has yet been made.



"Women who wear an underwire bra and work at the mint be ready for back aches. Perth mint be ready for workers comp claims. Some women have no choice, it's either underwire or sore back." Casey Stevens.

"After travelling and going thru airport security... this is ridiculous! They don't even set scanners off. Andrea Pea.

"How degrading and sexist! Big boobs need the wire bras. An idiot has come up with this disgusting idea!" Jennifer Goodall.

"OMG they have lost the plot". Joyce Cavanagh.

"Ridiculous. Everyone go in tracksuits." Jenny.

#ChangetheRules

THE GAME IS RIGGED: GAS WORKERS HIT BY NEW SHAM AGREEMENT SCANDAL

If you want to know whether the so-called fair work system is rigged, then ask a maintenance worker at the Longford Esso gas plant in the Bass Strait.

Workers at Esso are facing massive pay cuts of 15 to 30 per cent, after the company used a loophole in the Fair Work Act to sack around 200 workers and then offered to re-employ them but under a sham Enterprise Agreement.

It's CUB all over again.

Not only were workers going to take a hit to their pay, they were being asked to sign up to harsh rostering arrangements which will see them confined to a rig for weeks at a time – isolated from their families.

The tactics used by Esso and its maintenance contractor UGL are exactly the same as those used by CUB in the infamous dispute that saw 45 workers sacked (and later re-employed) at the Abbotsford brewery last year.

Incredibly, the Fair Work Commission is powerless to stop the scam, and the Federal Government is doing nothing to close the loophole.

But like at CUB, the workers are fighting back. The workers have taken matters into their own hands to shame Esso and its maintenance contractor UGL for their appalling corporate behavior, and have launched a campaign to end the corporate greed.

HOW THE SCAM WORKS

For the past few years, Esso has been contracting out maintenance work on its Bass Strait oil rigs to another multinational company, UGL.

In December 2016, UGL secretly registered a subsidiary company called MCTC Services. MCTC then signed an Enterprise Agreement with a handful of workers in another state working in unrelated occupations. The pay and conditions in the MCTC agreement are far lower than those earned by UGL's employees in Victoria.

UGL was recently awarded a new five-year contract to keep doing the Bass Strait maintenance work. But instead of continuing business as usual, UGL told its 200-strong workforce that their jobs had been made redundant and they would now need to apply for new jobs with MCTC. So workers have been sacked and made to reapply for their old jobs, but on dramatically reduced wages and conditions.

TAX DODGERS

Esso – like the other major gas and mining multinationals operating in Australia – has become notorious for the amount of money it doesn't pay in tax. In fact, between 2013 and 2015, ExxonMobil, which owns Esso, paid no income tax at all in Australia, despite pulling in a whopping \$18.08 billion in revenue.

Companies like Esso are able to minimise, or avoid, paying tax by setting up elaborate corporate structures, and using intra-company loans to send all their profits back to overseas subsidiaries.

The irony is that each and every one of the workers who have been made redundant and told to reapply for their jobs pay more income tax than Esso itself.

It's a ridiculous situation, and

it shows how Esso is not only ripping off its workers, it's ripping off the people of Australia.

LOCAL WORKERS BEING REPLACED BY FLY-INS

To add insult to injury, it recently emerged that UGL intends to recruit interstate workers on a fly-in fly-out (FIFO) basis to replace the local workers who have been made redundant.

A leaked email from a UGL manager in Brisbane showed that UGL was promoting opportunities for FIFO workers in its Gippsland operations. The email stated that "UGL and the client will pay for interstate flights".

The revelation has further angered the community in Gippsland, which had been told that UGL was committed to keeping the jobs local.

SCABBY GOES TO COURT

Workers – from the AMWU, AWU and ETU – have been protesting at Esso's Longford gas operations since June, but they haven't been alone. Scabby the Rat – the giant inflatable rodent that has been touring the country in support of workers – joined the picketers to give them a hand.

While workers were delighted to have Scabby in the fold, bosses from Esso and UGL weren't quite as happy. In fact, UGL launched legal action, and obtained court orders to get Scabby deflated.

Scabby has since moved on from Longford, but he hasn't slowed down – reappearing at other workplace disputes around the country. What's more, Scabby sent a mate to take his place on the picket line – another giant inflatable prop

called Greedy the Fat Cat.

The cigar-chomping feline grips an exploited local worker in one paw, and a big bag of money in the other. So it looks like UGL's expensive legal action on Scabby backfired!

WORKERS HITTING BACK

AMWU Victorian State Secretary Steve Dargavel said Esso's arrogant behaviour towards workers and the Gippsland community was a disgrace.

"The community is forced to either accept cuts to the livelihoods of hundreds of local families or they will fly in workers from interstate," Steve said.

"How can they in good conscience claim that they are committed to Gippsland?"

AMWU Delegate Troy Carter summed it up when he told the crowd at a rally outside Esso's headquarters in Melbourne that Esso and UGL had betrayed its workforce.

"UGL, the company we work for, has used safety records and our skills to win another contract," Troy said.

"And then they turned around and offered us a shonky deal that'll see us spend more time offshore, less time with our families, with less money in the bank."

The dispute is shaping up as another David and Goliath battle, but as workers showed in the fight against CUB last year, a united and determined workforce can never be underestimated.

But workers need your help.

These 200 workers and their families deserve better than a sneaky corporate restructure that will slash their pay and give them less time with their families.



As AMWU News goes to press, the 200 workers have been protesting for over 70 days, with no signs of stopping. You can support the picketing workers at:

www.amwu.org.au/supportessoworkers

or by contacting your Branch to organise a workplace collection. Every little bit will help these workers pay the bills while they fight for their jobs.



APPRENTICES TAKE ON CANBERRA

In June this year, a small group of dedicated AMWU and ETU Apprentices descended on Canberra during National TAFE week.

AMWU Apprentices Cassie-Ann Egan (Aurizon, Rockhampton QLD), Pro Chandra (Sydney Trains, NSW) and Nick Carlton (CUB, Victoria) pounded the halls to meet with as many politicians as they could to show the benefits of investing in a high quality skills and training system.

They especially wanted to bring home the message of investing in TAFE around Australia.

They were joined by the union's Skills and Training & Apprenticeships Coordinator, Ian Curry, National President Andrew Dettmer, National Communications Officer Georgia Kriz and members of the union's National Skills Trades Committee.

The week they visited was no coincidence – it was National TAFE Week. As well as meeting with politicians one-on-one, the union (joined by the ETU and Australian Education Union) hosted a drinks night in support of TAFE.

"Apprentices are the future of Australia's workforce," said Apprentice Cassie-Ann Egan. "Not everyone wants to or should go to University. We need skilled trades to keep our industries going."

Unfortunately, Governments at a National and State level have been systematically de-funding

TAFE for many years, and often preferencing private training colleges. This has especially become an issue in States like NSW, which has seen many TAFE campuses close around the State.

"TAFE is the principal provider of skilled trades training in Australia and we must fight to protect it," said Ian Curry.

"As well as being a trusted provider of high quality training, it is also an equity provider – until recent years, TAFE courses have been accessible and affordable to everyone and there was a TAFE campus in nearly every town around the country. With savage cuts to their funding, this is sadly no longer the case."

National President Andrew Dettmer echoed these sentiments. "We've seen scandals in recent times of private training colleges just up and disappearing, taking students' money or never offering training in the first place. The fact that most of these providers have received Government funding is a disgrace."

The Apprentices were delighted to get the chance to talk to politicians from many parties, including some of the Independents and to meet Opposition Leader Bill Shorten at an event in support of TAFE.

Unfortunately the Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull declined to meet with the Apprentices.

AND IN OTHER APPRENTICE NEWS.... QLD AMWU CONTINUES THE FIGHT AGAINST ALL-TRADES

Our Queensland branch has been in the fight against employer All-Trades for over six months now – but they just can't take the hint that they've lost.

All-Trades have kept Queensland-based trainees the lowest paid in Australia by paying them under an old state-based Award, rather than the modern Federal Award.

The union has now twice won against All-Trades in the Fair Work Commission, arguing that the Apprentices should be paid under the modern Federal Award.

But All-Trades can't take the hint, and have now applied to take their appeal to the Federal Court in Brisbane.

AMWU QLD and NT Secretary Rohan Webb showed how far employers were willing to go to pay their workers less.

"This is the third time the case will be heard – and we hope the third time that All-Trades will lose. The current State Award is paying these Apprentices around \$4 an hour less than others in the country – it's a disgrace. It's time for All-Trades to accept the result and pay up."



SHIPPING AGENTS BOW TO PRESSURE



Pressure from union members and the local community has forced the Port of Newcastle and shipping agents to backtrack on the use of 457 workers to help unload wind turbines from the decks of incoming vessels.

The decision is a win for AMWU members and the whole Hunter union movement.

Danish wind farm giant Vestas and Chinese company Goldwind have been importing huge wind turbines to NSW for two major wind energy projects on the Northern Tablelands. The turbines come into Australia at the Port of Newcastle.

Recently it was discovered that the complex job of delugging the turbines from the decks of ships was being performed by Singaporean workers on 457 visas, rather than local boilermakers.

AMWU Hunter Lead Organiser Cory Wright said unions quickly sprang into action, and organised a campaign to have the work done locally.

"With the help of the MUA, we set up picket lines to protest the use of overseas labour, held community rallies and spread the word about the issue on social media," Cory said.

"Other unions got involved – including truck drivers from the TWU – and we also received support from local Federal and State politicians.

"With everyone working together and by putting pressure on the Port of Newcastle, Vestas and the shipping agents, we were able to get commitment that the work would go back to local contractors."

Cory Wright said there were significant safety issues at stake.

"The work involved is highly specialised and requires professional tradespeople," Cory said.

"The bolts holding the turbines in place must be both welded and cut cleanly in a way that does not damage the machinery, or undermine the structural integrity of the ship.

"Before we got involved they were using the wrong equipment for the task, and not doing the job to Australian standards. It was high risk work, and anything could have gone wrong."

The first few shiploads of wind turbines were successfully unloaded by trained boilermakers from local engineering



AMWU members were joined by MUA and TWU union members in their protest action at the port.



“ Other unions got involved – including truck drivers from the TWU – and we also received support from local Federal and State politicians. ”

firm Varley's in Newcastle. Following the campaign, the work has gone back to Varley's again.

AMWU Delegate at Varley's, Dave Norris, said the campaign was about more than just the work of delugging wind turbines.

"If companies can bring in eight workers from overseas to do work like this, it is the thin end of the wedge," Dave said.

"If local jobs in Australian ports are going to be done by overseas workers, then what are we going to do? What are our kids going to do?"

UGL WELDERS BREATHE EASY AFTER DOUBLE WIN

A win over payment of a tool allowance turned out to be the catalyst for another win on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for UGL boilermaker/welders at Alcoa alumina refineries in Western Australia.

UGL is the maintenance contractor at Alcoa's three Western Australian alumina refineries at Kwinana, Pinjarra and Wagerup.

The members are entitled to a tool allowance under their EBA – but they realised it hadn't been paid. Working with the branch, they managed to convince their employer that they were being shortchanged.

"In some ways it's a small thing, but it was an entitlement these workers had a right to but weren't getting. By standing together they reminded the company that it wasn't being paid, and got it fixed," said AMWU State

Secretary Steve McCartney.

Shortly after they'd secured the tool allowance win, one of the members saw an AMWU Facebook post, reminding workers of the dangers of diesel fumes.

The post formed part of the union's ongoing work to ensure that workers know their rights around crucial OHS issues across a range of industries.

"From seeing the Facebook post, the members realised that they probably didn't have the right safety equipment," said Organiser Simon Rushworth.

"With the tool allowance win under their belts, they were empowered to get better helmets for working in Confined Space Entry (CSE) conditions."

The members had always thought



that the onus was on them to supply their own ventilated helmets, but some digging from the union found that obligation was actually on the employer.

Organiser Simon Rushworth said UGL was now supplying boilermakers/welders with new, state-of-the-art welding helmets with Adflo PAPR (Powered Air Purifying Respirator) systems.

"Welding in tight spaces comes with serious health and safety risks," Simon said.

"In particular, boilermaker/welders at Alcoa were concerned about the potential to breathe in carcinogenic fumes, as UGL was only providing them with P2 dust masks.

"When AMWU Health and Safety Representatives looked into it, they

discovered that our members were being exposed to dangerous gases, and the PPE gear they were being provided with was inadequate.

"In fact, UGL was failing to meet Alcoa's own site requirements by not providing respirator helmets."

AMWU members at the three Alcoa refineries then kicked into action, demanding that UGL meet its workplace health and safety obligations for CSE conditions.

"The members were determined to keep UGL accountable and to protect their own health and safety," Simon said.

"In the end we achieved a great result, with workers now having access to both a better tool allowance and better PPE gear on the job."

STREETS TRIES TO MELT CONDITIONS



Streets workers are standing strong against the company

Everyone loves a Magnum on a hot day. But the workers who make Magnums at Streets' Minto factory have been frozen out with the company applying to the Fair Work Commission to terminate their Agreement – which would mean a 46 per cent pay cut.

Members have been negotiating with Streets for several months over their new Agreement but things turned frosty recently when members voted down a company offer. Since then, progressed has turned glacial and the company has now applied to terminate the Agreement and push workers back

onto Award rates.

"This is yet another example of how employers can take advantage of a system that favours companies over workers," said incoming NSW State Secretary, Steve Murphy.

"These workers have been negotiating in good faith and had almost reached agreement. But instead the company has reached for the nuclear option – to terminate their Agreement."

The Streets case is just the latest in a long line of disputes where employers have moved to terminate entire agreements. Similar cases have been seen around the country, effecting

AMWU members and other unions – across all sectors of work, white and blue collar. Just weeks ago, for example, Murdoch University terminated the agreement of its academic workforce.

"What this shows is that employers are ready to do anything to cut pay and conditions," said Mr Murphy.

Key issues on the line during the negotiations have been the use of casuals, seasonal workers and contractors, with the union wanting to ensure ongoing protections for workers.

"There will always be the need for



some casuals in the food industry – we recognise that there are natural flows in demand. But what the

company wanted was to be able to use a high proportion of contractors year round, rather than offering stable, permanent jobs," said Mr Murphy.

Streets Icecream is owned by the multinational corporation Unilever, with headquarters in Europe. Although they like to project the image of a responsible company that treats workers well, this hasn't been reflected in their actions.

"We're in discussions with the International Union of Foodworkers (IUF) and hoping to reach out to the Unilever head office as well," said National Food Secretary Tom Hale.

"This is a big fight, and we'll do whatever we need to do to support the workers."

Negotiations are continuing as AMWU News goes to press.

ROD AND DAVE: BOYER'S DELEGATE DOUBLE ACT

Rod Graham and Dave Pauly have been a delegate double-act helping their mates at work for two decades, and they don't intend to stop any time soon.

The two Tasmanians work at the Norske Skog paper mill at Boyer – on the banks of the Derwent River about 30 minutes north of Hobart.

For Rod, working at the mill and being part of the union are in his blood.

"My father worked there for 30 years, and my grandfather worked there for 30 years, and I'm chasing down 28 come January," Rod said.

"In fact, my grandfather was a party to the negotiations for the original award

when the mill was first opened."

Rod and Dave first came across each other in the early 90s, when Dave was working in the wood mill, with Rod's father as his manager.

"Dave is a really genuine soul," said Rod.

"He'd give you the last five dollars in his wallet, and the shirt off his back. I've never met someone so genuine and prepared to help in my entire life."

The friendship became stronger when they both became union Delegates. Then Rod became one of the first AMWU Delegates to represent workers across different divisions, and together they forged an important partnership that helped unite the Norske workforce.

"The only thing I haven't seen him wear is union jocks. If there's a branding opportunity for the AMWU, he will find it."

"Rod's a fitter and turner by trade, and I'm a printer," said Dave.

"But it doesn't matter. We're both union, both in the printing industry and both care about all the workers on site. That's the important thing."

The key to their success, and longevity, is their ability to work as a team.

"Rod and me, we're thick as thieves and we couldn't do our delegate jobs without each other," said Dave.

"That's the thing – we each rely on the other, we have different things we're good at."

Rod is the one who takes care of the details during enterprise negotiations, while Dave is always there for his colleagues on the shop floor.

"Dave takes the most pride in signing up a new member, giving them a t-shirt, and telling them the story of the union at Boyer and what the union does for everyone," Rod said.

"If someone at work has a problem, he'll go out of this way and give up his time – his commitment to helping people is just phenomenal."

And then there's Dave's famous devotion to wearing AMWU branded gear.

"He'd wear a union tank top, t-shirt, jumper, coat, beanie – you name it. He's even got union socks," said Rod.

"The only thing I haven't seen him wear is union jocks. If there's a branding opportunity for the AMWU, he will find it."

Dave concedes there is some truth to his reputation as Boyer's 'King of Merch'.

"Look it's true, I love a bit of merchandise," he said.

"It's important that the members have something to wear with pride, and that they know I'm looking out for them and bringing them something back."

"I have to bring something back every time I'm in the union office – otherwise everyone's asking me where the stuff is!"

Boyer, which opened in 1941, was the first mill in Australia to produce newsprint. But with domestic demand for newsprint in decline, the mill has gone through some pretty big changes in the past few years.

It's now exporting more product into Asia, and has diversified into specialty coated papers.

For Rod and Dave, the task is to make sure that workers at the mill continue to get the union support they need and deserve.

"We have a good team of delegates across the whole site," said Dave.

"Norske Skog's a good place to work, and we want to make sure it stays that way."



Rod Graham (at left) and Dave Pauly (right) have been delegates and mates for years.

BELLIGERENT BOSS INSULTS WORKERS

Workers at Chevron's Wheatstone LNG project in the north west of Western Australia have had a gutful of the boorish, belligerent behaviour of Bechtel bosses.

One manager in particular has been accused of referring to workers as 'rats' and 'no better than pedophiles'.

Over 250 workers recently attended a mass meeting about the issue, and signed a petition calling on Chevron's project manager at Bechtel to fix its toxic workplace culture and to start leading by example.

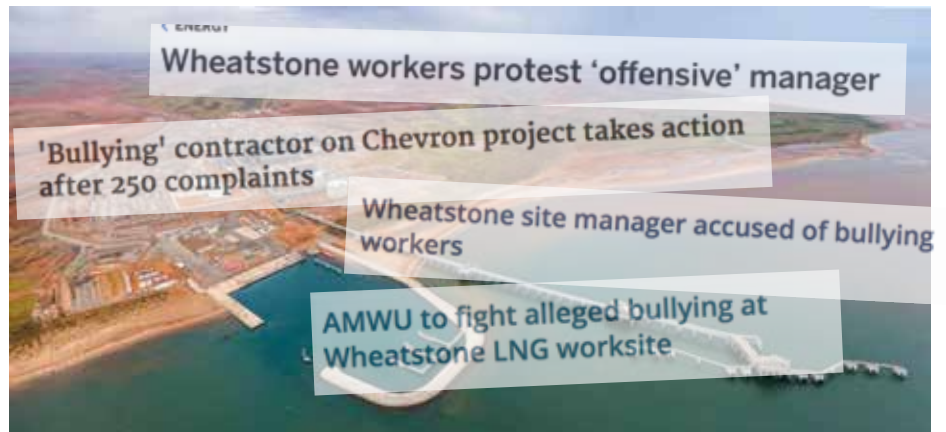
The workers also stated that Bechtel had failed to ensure a bully-free workplace, and they had no faith in the named manager to be able to organise and manage workers on his shift.

AMWU Western Australia State Secretary Steve McCartney said Bechtel had brushed the concerns of workers to the side, while the manager at the centre of the storm was still working.

"We're not going to stand by while Bechtel bury this issue under layers of company bureaucracy that never finds an answer," Steve said.

"Wheatstone is one of the biggest projects in Australia and it's shameful that two of the largest companies involved, Bechtel and Chevron, seemingly won't hold their management to a higher standard."

A recent WA Parliamentary Inquiry into mental health and FIFO practices found that the incidence of mental distress is higher amongst FIFO workers than in the general population.



The Inquiry made a number of findings, including:

FIFO work arrangements should be subject to a code of practice.

Industry must develop procedures and policies for managing suicides and attempted suicides either in the workplace or in accommodation; and training for leaders, middle management and supervisors in mental health issues, prevention and management is crucial.

Steve McCartney said Bechtel has ignored the recommendations of the Inquiry.

"Given what we know about the mental health

stresses faced by FIFO workers, it is completely unacceptable that a company with this many staff working remotely seems to have no intention of preventing behaviour like this.

"They think that because it's a remote site, no-one will notice. But we have noticed, and we're going to represent these workers because everyone deserves a safe workplace free from bullying and abuse.

"Our members have called upon us to ensure this company treats their workers with the same level of respect they always demand of their employees, and to that end we will fight on their behalf."

QUEENSLAND GOES LOCAL

There's nothing more frustrating for Australian workers, and taxpayers, than seeing government work being sent overseas.

State and Federal Governments have used international trade agreements and the lure of cheap labour as an excuse to ignore local workers and give huge public contracts to foreign companies.

However, the Queensland Government is bucking the trend by announcing a

multi-billion dollar strategy to maximise the number of local jobs created through government procurement contracts.

AWMU Queensland State Secretary Rohan Webb said the union's "Good Jobs. Great Life. Secure Future." campaign had helped raise the issue of local jobs to the top of the state's political agenda.

"The Palaszczuk Government spends \$18 billion a year buying supplies and

services, and building the state's infrastructure.

"That's billions of dollars that could be going into securing good local jobs for Queenslanders and boosting regional communities.

"This issue has been at the forefront of the AMWU's campaigning activities, and shows that when we band together as a collective voice, we see real results."

Under the new policy that the union campaigned for, the Queensland Government will:

- Define 'local' as within a 125km radius of where the goods or workers are needed.
- Require at least one local/regional supplier, and one other Queensland-based business, to tender for every procurement opportunity offered.

- Require major infrastructure projects to use local sub-contractors and manufacturers and expend 15% on apprenticeships.
- Require businesses tendering to have a permanent workforce in Queensland to offer fair wages, conditions and superannuation, and have good workplace health and safety records.

The Queensland Government is also aiming to stimulate jobs for Indigenous Queenslanders – increasing the value of procurement contracts awarded to Indigenous businesses.

It is hoped that Indigenous businesses will account for 3 per cent of Queensland Government spending by 2022.

"The campaign isn't over but it's off to a great start," said Rohan.



QLD-NT State Secretary Rohan Webb addresses the QLD Conference



AMWU Members were proud to represent the union at the conference and wore their union colours with pride.

BOOK REVIEW: THE PILBARA: FROM THE DESERTS PROFITS COME

By Bradon Ellem

From the deserts profits come – so wrote Australian poet AD Hope in his work Australia, and nowhere was this more true than in the Pilbara.

Professor Bradon Ellem has been researching the industrial relations landscape for decades, and this is evident in his new book *The Pilbara*. Bradon charts the history of this vital region, and shows how little it has been examined and written about.

The stories of Pilbara boom time in recent years, and the debates over fly-in, fly-out workforces, often



overlook the long history of mining and unions in the Pilbara, a place where unions existed alongside the communities they were such an intrinsic part of.

In early days, it seemed that the Pilbara might be the location of a new kind of trade unionism, with workers winning not only high wages but control of the places where they worked and the towns where they lived – an almost-achieved workers' cooperative for the men and women of the north west.

But the big companies fought back, defeating the early unions and remaking

the Pilbara. The companies went on to reinvent the Pilbara through workplace control, fly-in, fly-out labour, twelve-hour shifts and 14 day rosters. Their vision reshaped not just the desert but the cities, not just work in mines and ports but in offices and shops.

When the biggest boom in mining history came along, it unfolded across a Pilbara landscape very different from a generation earlier. The story behind the boom is revealed in this book: the story of fifty years of conflict about work and life in the Pilbara and how it has affected the rest of Australia.

The AMWU has 20 copies of 'The Pilbara' to give away to members. Please email your full name, postal address and mobile phone number to news@amwu.org.au to go into the draw to win.

UNION NEWS IN BRIEF

ENGINEERING AND MINING SERVICES MEMBERS JOIN TOGETHER

Workers from Engineering and Mining Services came together in Sydney recently to brainstorm campaigns to build a better future in their industry.

The delegates from a range of worksites and occupations joined together to discuss issues and future action in this crucial sector for our union.



Many members work in remote areas or on small sites, so it was a great chance to meet with other workers to build strength and solidarity.

Engineering and Mining Services is a huge growth area in the Australian economy but employers are exploiting loopholes. Delegates reported on overlapping themes across their workplaces – the prevalence of labour hire and casualisation in the industry, and employers continually focused on the driving down of wages and conditions to cut costs.

The high 'change-over' rate of employees has also emboldened many employers to try and introduce employment arrangements that are worse for 'new starters' – in a bid to gradually phase out long-standing union-won conditions.

But green shoots are showing for the first time since the end of the mining

boom and this crucial sector is seeing growth in employment which bodes well for the future.

Delegates debated and agreed upon a campaign plan that aimed at achieving secure and meaningful jobs in their sector for their work colleagues and future generations.

IAN DRAKE: A LIFETIME OF UNIONISM

Tasmanian Branch President Ian 'Edna' Drake has dedicated his life to the cause of the worker. This week the AMWU has celebrated Ian's service at a special dinner and ceremony for him at his home in the north of Tasmania.

'Edna' as he is affectionately known by all AMWU members in Tasmania, joined the union as a 4th year

apprentice boilermaker and continues to this day.

He has 50 years of continuous membership and service.

He is stepping down out of his role as President of the Tasmanian Branch and the State Council held a dinner in his honour.

On 1 April 1968, Ian joined the Boilermakers and Blacksmiths' Society, one of the Unions that went on to become the Amalgamated Metal Workers' Union.

While working as a boilermaker, Ian served as a shop steward (delegate) for many years, as a State Councillor, National Conference Delegate, State Admin Committee Member and finally as State President.

National Secretary Paul Bastian and State Secretary John Short were delighted to toast Ian and present him with his Award of Merit.

"Ian represents the best of unionism – a lifetime dedicated to a fair go for workers and serving his community," said John Short. "We wish him well as he retires from serving the branch."

As to how he got the name Edna, Ian says it was so long ago that no one remembers the story anymore, but it had to do with how close he was to his Aunt Edna, who used to bring him and his siblings food and cakes as a child.

"I was so close to my Aunty Edna that I got the nickname," he jokes. "Many people in Tassie don't even know my real name is Ian – I've always just been Edna."



National Secretary Paul Bastian (left) and Tasmanian Secretary John Short (right) presented Ian Drake his his certificate of union service.

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DELEGATE PROFILE

NATASHA TRIFFITT

CADBURY, HOBART

NATASHA STEPS UP TO HELP HER COLLEAGUES

Silver linings come in many forms.

For Cadbury worker Natasha Triffitt, it was the cloud of a stressful and unwarranted workplace investigation that led her to taking a new role as an AMWU Delegate, and learning more about herself as well.

Natasha started at Cadbury's Claremont (Hobart) factory on a labour hire basis, working on the Flake and Twirl line.

Then a temporary position came up, which became a permanent position, and a move up to the 'penthouse' working on 50g Freddos, Caramello Koalas and fundraiser chocolates.

"I didn't pay much attention to anything that went on in the workplace, other than just doing my job, going home, and collecting my pay," Natasha says.

But all that changed last year, when she turned up to work only to be told that she shouldn't bother clocking on because she'd be marched out at the end of the shift.

"I went straight to my Delegate, Rodney Leek, and told him what had been said to me.

"I had no idea of my rights at work. Rodney and John Short, Tasmania AMWU State Secretary, actually explained to me a lot of my rights, and told me that what was going on was just unacceptable.

"That just made me realise how many of us in the workplace, and in my department in particular, didn't have any idea of what was right or wrong."

Natasha was ultimately cleared by the investigation, and afterwards John Short asked her to become a Delegate.



"Initially I said to John I didn't think I was brave enough," Natasha says.

"But I didn't want to see other people who don't know their rights at work go through something as unfair and intimidating."

Now Natasha is enjoying the challenges of being a leader in her workplace."

"I've gone from not knowing anything to soaking up as much knowledge and learning as I can," she says.

"One of the other Delegates said that I've hit the ground running!"

Natasha will get a chance to soak up more information soon when she participates in Unions Tasmania's Anna Stewart Memorial Project, which aims to help overcome discrimination and exploitation of female workers.

She also hopes to encourage more women to get involved and become active in their union.

"Traditionally it's been men who have tended to take on Delegate roles, but more females should feel that they can step up and have their say, because the Union is very supportive."



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1800 206 316

A free national service available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

No problem is too big, or small. Whatever your age or experience we will listen and support you.

Talk to someone in confidence today. On the Line telephone counsellors are trained to respond to crisis calls, as well as offering emotional support for everyday problems, relationship issues and stress, for all ages and backgrounds.



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