

AMWU

News

Australian Manufacturing Workers Union



AMWU

Spring 2020

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Meet Steve Murphy

In July, the AMWU's National Council met to fill the vacancy created by Paul Bastian's resignation as National Secretary. I am humbled to have been appointed unanimously by leaders across our union to follow in Paul's footsteps and lead the union that has served me and my workmates since I first joined as a young apprentice.

After 17 years of service to our members in New South Wales, I am humbled to be entrusted to lead our union nationally. In every position I have held within the AMWU, from delegate through to national secretary, I start by thinking about how I want to be remembered when I finish.

I know I want to lead a union that all of our members are proud of, and that workers across our industries want to join. To get there we have to focus on three vital things:

1. maintaining and building on our industrial militancy
2. championing working class politics and
3. establishing a culture that is the envy of the rest of the trade union movement.

Industrial Militancy

To me, being a militant trade unionist is more than just fighting for the right to strike. It's about building our industrial power, and thinking carefully about how we use it to win for members, industry and the community.

As the core function of our union, we must use our industrial power to deliver good jobs, decent pay, safe workplaces, respect, and a sense of security about our future.

But our history is one where we've used our power for much more. Whether it's defending our jobs and conditions, or fighting for a future that's Australian made, our tradition of using our power for the betterment of the nation is something that must be maintained.

Ending dodgy free trade agreements, the offshoring of our jobs and the erosion of our industrial rights must be a central focus of our collective effort.

I will not take a step backward in pushing our agenda – whether it's in front of industry, government or anyone else who stands in our way.

Working Class politics

What has always made me proud to be AMWU is that we believe in the power of working people. We organise workers to win.

As your new National Secretary, I will be making sure that we put AMWU members at the centre of everything we do.

We have to re-establish a sense of pride in being working class. There is dignity in trading your skills, labour and energy for wages – and it's our core responsibility to ensure there is fairness and respect in that exchange.

I plan to be a champion for working class politics and our members' interests. There will be no doubt as to where I stand on a range of issues – I am on the side of working people.

Union Culture

We can only deliver on our vision if we have our internal culture right.

Our union's culture is who we are. It is the way we think and behave, built on our collective values and beliefs. It is the sum of everything we say and do, as individuals and as an organisation.



We will always use the resources of our union in the best interests of our members. We will be transparent in our decision-making, always act with integrity, be effective in our roles and always accountable for our behaviours. It is what members expect of us, and it's what we will do.

We have a National Strategic Plan and some important decisions from our rank and file led National Conference that I am obligated – but proud to deliver on.

Working across our union with members from every corner of our country is an incredibly exciting prospect. I look forward to visiting workplaces, meeting members, supporting workplace leaders and giving our members a national platform based in working class values.

While it's difficult to meet face to face right now, I am already planning visits to your workplaces, or catching up at the upcoming delegates forums, State Conference and our National Conference in 2021.

Most of all, I am looking forward to working with you to make sure we leave our union in the best shape possible for the next generation of union members who will take up our positions and the struggle.

Lastly, I want to say thank you to all that have put their faith in me to take up this role. I do not take the support, and the responsibility, for granted.

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Printer pulps workforce trust

Print and packaging company Ovato is moving to cut up to 300 staff before Christmas and, adding insult to injury, wants to rob them of hundreds of thousands of dollars in redundancy entitlements earned over decades.

For many years, workers have forgone wage increases at workplace agreement negotiations to ensure they kept their redundancy provisions, with some owed up to two or three years wages accrued over 30 years of service.

In a recent open letter to staff, Print and Residential Distribution CEO Adrian O'Connor guaranteed the payments – but now company management is using the COVID-19 crisis to try and worm out of their obligations.

Ovato, Australia's largest printing group, has 1300 staff and sites in every Australian state, except Tasmania, including Clayton in Melbourne and Warwick Farm in Sydney.

Ovato prints titles like The Australian Women's Weekly, House & Garden, NW and catalogues for Woolworths, ALDI and Bunnings.

Lorraine Cassin, AMWU Assistant National Secretary (Print and Packaging) says, when COVID-19 hit, workers supported Ovato because the union, workers, and the company historically had a good relationship.

"Without asking too many details the workers agreed to a 40% pay cut on the basis that 'we're all in this together'," said Lorraine.

"Well before JobKeeper, workers reduced their working hours, changed shifts, and accessed their annual leave, anything to keep the show on the road."

But Lorraine says the company changed its tune when the old agreement expired on June 30. When an agreement expires the company can apply to terminate it.

In July, Ovato notified the AMWU that they had made an application to the Fair Work Commission to terminate the agreement covering the majority

of the Ovato workforce. Terminating the agreement would force workers back onto the pay and conditions set out in the National Employment Standards, effectively cutting their entitlements. The hearing for the termination application is set down for three days starting on September 30th. A decision is expected in late October or early November.

"We do feel the company played us along to get past the expiry date," says Lorraine.

"We've been getting the 'we're all in this together' line since March and we were working to reach a conclusion which worked for everyone, but once the agreement expired we were told 'we'll only re-negotiate if you agree to take out what's in there for redundancy'."

"It feels like there's a shotgun at people's heads."



Anika Wells MP and Leanne Linard MP supporting AMWU members at Ovato Geebung, Queensland.



AMWU members at Warwick Farm, New South Wales, are standing strong.

"Without their agreement, staff will revert back to the pay and conditions set out in the Graphic Arts Award."

"So you're talking about people who might be entitled to 130 weeks going down to a maximum of just 13 weeks.

"People were and are relying on those redundancy provisions of up to two to three years wages.

"In this climate of COVID-19, if they're forcibly made redundant, it's unlikely they're going to go into any sort of full time work and they will now find themselves losing homes, in financial stress, and we already have members suffering mental health difficulties.

"We are campaigning to get the Ovato chairman, Michael Hannan, to come back to the negotiating table and we are seeking legal advice around our opportunities for industrial action", Lorraine says.

Mark Allen, who is head delegate or 'Father of the Chapel' at Ovato's Warwick Farm site, says workplace laws give him and his fellow workers almost no flexibility when it comes to industrial action.

"We don't have the right to strike as we're not in a bargaining period, conservative governments have taken all that away.

"We feel we have the cards stacked against us here.

"The Government in power have just made it easier for the rich to get richer and the poor to get poorer."

Long time Ovato employee at the Clayton site in Victoria and AMWU Delegate Shaun Ryan says workers feel angry and betrayed.

"We did the right thing by the company before JobKeeper became available and now they've turned around and terminated our agreement," says Shaun.

"Workers feel lied to. We did everything we could for the company when COVID-19 hit. They shouldn't be able to just terminate our agreement like this." ●



Paul Bastian steps down

It was when Paul Bastian was at sea at the age of 19 as an on-board shipwright that he realised he would be a union man for life.

In the Port of Newcastle he stood alone as the only shipwright on board and went on strike to support shore-based shipwrights who were fighting for better conditions.

It wasn't the first time he'd downed tools. As a 16-year-old delegate for apprentices on Cockatoo Island in '74, he'd backed his beliefs and encouraged his fellow apprentices to do the same.

After a few years in the many yards on the Sydney waterfront he was soon back on Cockatoo Island – back when it was a serious shipyard – where the naval supply vessel HMAS Success was built, and the Oberon Class submarine fleet was refitted.

He was then given an opportunity to work as an acting AMWU organiser for a few years.

Back on the tools at Sydney Ferries he realised that he'd found his real calling and was itching to work for the union again.

"It's a very privileged position to work for a union, it's an honour," he said.

"It's not really a job, it's a vocation.

"There's an imbalance of power that exists in all workplaces and workers need a counterbalance that can only come from joining together in their union."

As a union organiser he took his belief in the fundamental decency owed to working people on the road, riding his trusty motorbike to construction sites, factories and workshops all over Sydney.

"I'll never forget the time a factory owner threatened me with a lump of wood," he laughs.

"I rang the State Secretary and he said, 'You should have kept your helmet on'."

In 1987, Paul was elected to the position of organiser with the NSW branch. Despite leaving school at 14, Paul enrolled part time at UTS and graduated with a Bachelor of Law in 1998.

In 1997 he was elected NSW State Secretary and a few years later, the union threw its weight behind a large group of our members and Australian workers as they faced the biggest fight of their lives.

"In the late 90s we got a whisper that

asbestos manufacturer James Hardie was going to do a runner from Australia," he said.

"Their compensation fund only had about \$293 million in it, which we knew was not enough."

Over the next eight years Paul worked tirelessly, in solidarity with members and other unions like the CFMEU, ETU and MUA to boycott James Hardie products and bring pressure to bear on the company and governments to make sure these workers and their families were not abandoned.

"Everyone will remember Bernie Banton's role in the campaign but there were others who played an enormous part in the campaign like the AMWU's Jan Primrose, Armando Gardiman of Turner Freeman lawyers, Barry Robson of ADFA and other asbestos victims groups around the country, the ACTU's Greg Combet and so many others – it was truly a movement-wide campaign."

"I remember when Jan Primrose went to the stock exchange and painstakingly went through the James Hardie share register and she wrote individual letters to hundreds of them – banks, superannuation funds, doctors – anyone Jan thought we might be able to influence.

It was a successful campaign and we convinced many of the company's shareholders to sign up to the campaign and I remember one shareholder donating their dividend cheque."

The campaign culminated with Paul rushing to The Netherlands where James Hardie had moved the business. On the same plane were James Hardie executives.

"We got out in Singapore and I made sure I was sitting outside the Qantas Lounge when Chairperson Meredith Hellicar came past, she needed to know she could never escape us," he said.

"Paul was absolutely uncompromising and tireless in the James Hardie dispute," said Senator Tim Ayres, a former NSW State Secretary of the AMWU.

"Coming from the shipbuilding industry, Paul knew dozens and dozens of comrades who have contracted asbestosis and mesothelioma and how they and their families have suffered."

After years of campaigning James Hardie finally committed to a funding formula to ensure asbestos sufferers would receive ongoing compensation – a settlement that was estimated to be worth around \$4.5 billion for victims.

"Whilst we secured future funding, I still struggle to comprehend that the actions of James Hardie's directors were not in breach of their duties under Australian Corporations Law. None of the directors of James Hardie were ever held to account for their actions and that is a disgrace," he said.

In 2009, Paul was elected as the National President and then in 2012 he was elected AMWU National Secretary where he led significant structural reform of the union.

"The AMWU is made up of a host of antecedent unions but, in its modern form, it saw five major amalgamations with the coming together of the metal workers, printers, food and confectionery, vehicle builders and technical and supervisory workers – all unions with proud histories and cultures," he said.

But after 25 years since the last amalgamation Paul and the leadership believed it was time to unite around one single structure, with a common vision, so the union can continue delivering for its members for another 167 years.

That structural reform will be Paul's final legacy.

"It's a very privileged position to work for a union, it's an honour,"

"It's not really a job, it's a vocation."

"He came to discussions about the future of the union with integrity and authority," remembers Senator Tim Ayres.

"He's one of the sharpest and best negotiators in the union movement and he steadfastly refused to do the self-promotion and media interviews other union leaders might do,"

"His contribution to the union, the movement and the country has been enormous and he will be missed.

After 39 years working for the AMWU, Paul will soon step down to spend more time with his family.

The union, and its members, thank him for his integrity, his smarts and most of all, his passion. ●



Worked to the bone

Chicken de-boners at the Ingham Processing Plant in Perth say the company is turning up the speed of the processing line just as workplace agreement negotiations stall over the company's unreasonable demands

Knife wielding workers report 'chasing chickens' down the production line to complete their cuts and have noticed an increase in soreness in arms, shoulders and other injuries. One worker even suffered a nasty stab wound due to the production line's increased speed.

Last year the workers, many of whom have over 20 years experience, agreed to a 23 bird per minute boning rate, but in July this year they noticed the line was getting faster and faster.

When they stopped work in protest they had four hours pay deducted and received a final written warning.

Management denied the line speed was being increased but refused to install a speedometer using various excuses from COVID-19 to an inability to get a speedometer machine.

Ingham Chickens, which supplies meat to KFC, Nandos, Coles and Woolworths was sold by the Ingham family in 2017 to a private equity firm and workers say this is when

conditions started to deteriorate at the plant.

"The staff aren't happy, they are worked continuously and are not appreciated," says AMWU organiser Renee Portland.

"They all make the comment that when the Ingham brothers owned the business, they felt valued and everyone was happy."

The speed of the line isn't the only sticking point for the workers as the current owners also want to extend shifts from 7.6 hours to 9.5 hours, and force workers to work on Saturdays and Public Holidays.

Workers have voted down the proposed changes twice.

And other workplace practices have also upset workers.

The production line used to stop when they changed stations – but now it doesn't. And they have to undertake their complex



Ingham's workers are standing together to protect their conditions.

food handling sanitation procedure in their own time.

"The last 12 months have been very frustrating – and that's why workers have voted no on the agreements – they feel they are not getting heard," says Renee Portland. ●

Fighting off foreign French fries

It was a show of unified force that so far has kept European producers from dumping dirt-cheap French fries onto our shores.

Back in June, AMWU members and potato farmers rallied together in Ballarat in Victoria and Smithton in Tasmania calling on the Federal Government to step in and help protect thousands of regional jobs.

The AMWU also wrote to the Prime Minister warning of the looming threat and secured the support of McCain and Simplot – Australia's two largest manufacturers of frozen French fries.

All are in agreement that a stockpile of some 2.6 million tonnes of potatoes in Europe would wreak havoc on our local potato industry if it made its way to Australia.

AMWU delegate and McCain worker Ross Kenna was one of those who took part in the rally in Ballarat and says so far, the signs look promising. "Our jobs were at stake through no fault of our own. The Europeans allowed this stockpile to grow during the COVID-19 pandemic and were more than happy to dump it here.



AMWU members and farmers banded together to stop the dumping of dud spuds.

"The numbers they were talking about were huge – it was equivalent to about two years' worth of what we produce here in Australia which would have flooded our supermarket shelves.

"There would be no way to compete with such an influx of highly subsidised, imported processed potatoes being sold at below their cost of production. Job losses would have been inevitable and everyone along the supply chain would have been hit, from the farmers to the distributors. Thousands of regional jobs were at stake.

"But, our anti-dumping campaign has definitely slowed down any stockpile coming

our way and it looks like if we do get any European produce here, it won't be on anywhere near the scale we feared."

The battle's not over yet though. AMWU officials and delegates are keeping a watchful eye on what's coming on sale in the frozen aisles of Australia's supermarkets.

Ross said: "I work in the food industry so I am always checking the label and buying produce that is made here in Australia. It's supporting our industry but I also know it's the best quality product out there. If we see any evidence of any influx of overseas French fries we will be back in action and calling on the Australian public to buy Australian made fries."

The Federal Government is currently undertaking a review of packaging regulation and the AMWU will fight any attempt that would give foreign manufacturers an upper hand.

Ross added: "Unfortunately, the government appears to be listening to the business lobby rather than our farmers and food workers.

"Having clear country of origin identification and being able to see how much of a product has been made here in Australia supports local industry. We support trade of course, but it needs to be fair trade, not a free for all." ●

Standing up for what is fair and right

On August 13 2020, the High Court of Australia handed down a judgement in the matter of AMWU vs Mondelez – a precedent-setting case that has become known around the country as the Cadbury sick leave case.



Natasha and Brendon outside the Federal Court in February 2019.

Disappointingly, the High Court ruling did not go our way, but we could not be prouder of delegates Natasha Tewson and Brendon McCormack who pushed Mondelez and the Federal Government to the bitter end.

Natasha and Brendon led the case from where it started in the Fair Work Commission, through to the Federal Court and then the High Court. It took Mondelez and the Federal Government four attempts to get the outcome they desired – at the expense of more than one million shift workers across the country.

Natasha and Brendon, backed by the AMWU, began their battle when Mondelez tried to tell its shift workers that they weren't entitled to 10 days paid personal leave as specified by the

National Employment Standards (NES). Despite workers doing 12-hour shifts, which would add up to 120 hours of personal leave a year, the company refused to pay more than the 96 hours included in the Mondelez Enterprise Agreement. Shift workers without an enterprise agreement will be entitled to even less as a result of the High Court judgement – averaging out at only six sick days per year.

Delegate Natasha Tewson said: "We felt we had a very strong chance of winning this case. We had been vindicated by the Fair Work Commission and the Federal Court. We work incredibly long hours, and we just wanted to be able to access the same rights as other workers across the country.

"Whilst I found the final decision by the High Court very disappointing it will not deter me from fighting the 'good fight' or standing up for what is fair and right in the workplace."

Delegate Brendon McCormack added: "We put up the best fight we possibly could and I feel proud of what we achieved. But, when you have a company like Mondelez and the Government working against you, it was always going to be an uphill battle. I would like to thank the lawyers for their time and effort, and a big thank you to the AMWU. Without their support we couldn't have got where we did."

"We felt we had a very strong chance of winning this case. We had been vindicated by the Fair Work Commission and the Federal Court. We work incredibly long hours, and we just wanted to be able to access the same rights as other workers across the country."



AMWU Tasmania State Secretary John Short said: "Shift workers have gone above and beyond during COVID-19. Our food manufacturing workers have kept shelves full across the country despite unprecedented demand. Paramedics and nurses who work 12 hour shifts are putting their lives at risk. Unlike many Australians, they can't work from home and if they get sick from COVID-19 they will have to rely on sick leave.

"But, now it means they will only get paid for just 6.5 days a year which is an insult. They deserve far better treatment from our government."

The Federal Government intervened at every level in support of Cadbury-Mondelez – at the Fair Work Commission, at the Federal Court, and at the High Court.

The AMWU is now calling for the Federal Government to amend the Fair Work Act so that every worker has access to ten days of paid personal leave every year, no matter what hours they work. ●

Western Australia to become the renewable state

Manufacturing advanced lithium batteries used in the next generation of electric cars and home energy storage systems could be coming to Western Australia.

The state already mines and processes the metal but thanks to a strong campaign by the AMWU, the WA Government is spending \$13.2 million to attract a 'global cathode active materials manufacturer' to establish a plant in WA. AMWU State Secretary Steve McCartney applauds the plan but wants it to go further.

"We see a future where the entire lithium battery cycle can happen in the South West of Western Australia – a region which has the critical mass of highly skilled workers ready to lead new industries," said McCartney.

"From lithium mining in Greenbushes, to cathode manufacturing in Bunbury to storage unit manufacturing and recycling in Collie."

"Collie and the broader South West has been literally powering the state for 100 years with its power stations using locally mined coal."

"When we talk about a transition and green jobs, these are the kind of jobs we want to see created"



"We see no reason why they shouldn't continue to power the state into the 21st century by leading the charge into battery storage."

"The AMWU in WA has long said manufacturing in WA needs to be supported and it's a shame it takes a global crisis to bring the message home," he said.

The lithium battery manufacturing plan is one of a raft of new manufacturing initiatives that the AMWU has been campaigning for that has been announced by the West Australian Government as part of their \$2.7 billion coronavirus recovery plan.

Around \$600,000 will also be spent examining the viability of an eco-concrete processing plant in Collie, in the state's South West, which would use the fly-ash from the nearby coal-powered power stations rather than imported cement.

"This fly-ash initiative is exactly the kind of project that makes the most of industries already present in WA," said Steve.

"When we talk about a transition and green jobs, these are the kind of jobs we want to see created", he added.

The McGowan Government has allocated a further \$20 million in grants and industrial land to support the growth of a local waste processing capacity. An additional \$15 million will be pumped into developing a specialised wastepaper and cardboard recycling site.

A \$40 million diesel railcar maintenance facility will also be built to upkeep and clean regional railcars as well as Public Transport Authority locomotives used for rail shunting and regular track maintenance.

The facility will be co-located in the Bellevue railcar manufacturing plant which is already under construction and will deliver 246 new railcars for Perth's METRONET trains.

While the Western Australian Government's big spend on railcar maintenance has been applauded by Steve as a 'good start' he says more needs to be done to grow the manufacturing sector in the country's biggest state.

"The diesel maintenance facility is a step in the right direction, the next step would be manufacturing railcars in a new 21st century advanced manufacturing hub in the South West," he says.

"A number of different industries are a custom fit for the South West including railcar manufacture."

With the WA State Election looming on March 21, 2021 the union will continue campaigning to boost manufacturing in the mining dependent state.

"No matter who holds government, we are going to be out there campaigning with our members for WA manufacturing jobs", Steve said. ●

The beers are on me

Fitters at Australia's oldest brewery are celebrating with a few cold ones after securing a 'win-win' pay deal guaranteeing them a 4% pay rise every year for 3 years.

The Cascade Brewery, opened in 1824 in South Hobart at the foot of Mt Wellington, is behind the iconic Cascade Premium Lager enjoyed all over Australia.

As well as the solid annual pay rise, fitters and maintenance staff at the picturesque brewery worked hard during negotiations to hold onto their unique skills-based pay scaling system designed back in the 1990s.

The system rewards workers when they master specialised skills unique to the historic brewery.

One of the system's designers Ross Barnes, who celebrated 50 years at the brewery in January, says rewarding staff for undertaking professional development is an obvious win-win.

"Each time you go back to TAFE and learn more, whether that be on beer lines or beer vats or with refrigeration plants, or with the rinsing and pasteurisation equipment or with the packing and labelling machinery you earn a bit more," says Ross, who's been a delegate for 30 years.

"It creates a flexible workforce."

Every time you can operate a new machine in the brewery, you can slot in there and keep the place running if someone is sick, we get paid to stay nimble and flexible with our skills."

"Later we worked an annualised salary into the agreement which factors in overtime, and whacked that into the bloke's salaries, that's great."

Ross has some advice for his fellow fitters and maintenance staff for after he leaves.

"Remember all the hard work that went into implementing this system because once it's gone you'll never get it back," he said.

He also has a few words of wisdom when it comes to negotiating.

"I don't go in and say 'we want 10%' and come down, I go in with 4% straight up, no ambit claims," he said.

"We don't need anything else than a pay rise anyway because we have everything else, we only had eight meetings and they gradually worked their way up to what we were asking for."

AMWU organiser Jacob Batt says he's happy with the outcome.

"For 30 years this system has ensured fitters got rewarded for the skills they have, and in return ensured an efficient and productive workforce for the company," said Jacob Batt.

"This was a real win-win." ●



AMWU members at Cascade Brewery have sealed the deal on a new EA that recognises their skills.

Work ethic creates bright future

In the midst of unprecedented job losses caused by the global pandemic, it would be easy to think that it's all doom and gloom in the manufacturing world.

But, at the Electrolux home products plant in Adelaide, AMWU members can barely keep with demand and are working overtime just to meet orders.

Every month they are producing 37,000 ovens – which says AMWU delegate Matt Hastings is putting more cash into the pockets of every worker. "Whilst many job sectors are struggling around Australia, it's boom time for us. We are definitely making the most of this uptick in demand and doing a lot more overtime."

Mr Hastings says the demand for ovens is being driven by many households working from home, and spending more money on renovations.

"A lot of the normal family expenses like overseas holidays have gone so people have more money to spend. They are also spending a lot more time at home and there's a real

increase in home improvements and we are certainly benefiting from it."

Demand is so high, that the plant is struggling to source materials. Mr Hastings added: "We just can't get enough steel, we use steel from BlueScope and from overseas but we've been affected by the global supply chain issues and it is holding us back a bit."

The busy times are welcome news for AMWU members at Electrolux who have been hit by automation and casualisation.

Since 2001, blue and white collar workers numbers have dropped from around 850 to 450, and the once long-held practice of moving casuals into permanents within three months of being employed has pretty much ended.

Electrolux has also closed a couple of its other plants and moved production overseas in recent years.

But, the long term future for his site looks increasingly positive with the recent construction of a \$6 million warehouse alongside the factory.

AMWU Assistant State Secretary Stuart Gordon said: "It has been a tough few years with Electrolux closing all its operations in Australia bar one."



Delegate Matt Hastings and Assistant State Secretary Stuart Gordon say it's boom time for AMWU members at Electrolux in South Australia.

But, what we are seeing at this plant is that our members will work tirelessly and go above and beyond to meet the demands of Australians. Their work ethic is a very real reason why this business is profitable and has a bright future here in Adelaide." ●

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DELEGATE PROFILE

Mark Allen

Being a delegate is a role that has its ups and its downs. No one knows that better than Mark Allen, who is the head delegate (or Father of the Chapel as it's known in the print industry) at Ovato's Warwick Farm site in Sydney.

Ovato's workers are facing the loss of hundreds of thousands of dollars in redundancy entitlements after the company applied to terminate their Enterprise Agreement.

Mark has asked his partner to stop trying on wedding dresses, and his own plans to retrain as a teacher are on hold while the workers fight to retain the entitlements they bargained for over decades.

As delegate, Mark has been counselling his fellow members, many of whom are devastated.

"I'll go from \$150,000 to \$20,000 if they have their way, but some long serving staff would go from \$380,000 to \$50,000," he said.

"One bloke here has been with the company for 27 years and in 1996 he was injured at work — since then he's been in a wheelchair," he said.

"He's applied to be made redundant before, but they wouldn't let him go.

"This guy is just going to be destroyed if they succeed in this — he'll go from 120 weeks to 12.

"Another bloke wants to buy a Winnebago and travel with his grandkids — that'll be off the cards if Ovato succeeds.

"We'll see what the court rules in October, but the reality is workers here have given up their piece of the profit pie for their retirement and now this mob wants to take it.

"What they are trying to do should be criminal, workers are paying for their mismanagement.



Mark's voluntary work as Father of the Chapel has taken its toll over recent months — but his father's words still ring in his ears whenever he feels he can't go on.

"My dad also worked in printing and was Father of the Chapel. He always said, 'Son you've got to speak up for others, speak up for people who are too scared to speak up for themselves'," Mark remembers. ●

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