

AMWU NEWS

AUSTRALIAN MANUFACTURING WORKERS' UNION

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Authorised by Gen: Transport and the Maritime Manufacturing Workers Union, 271 Queensland Street, Cairns

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INSIDE

SWEET VICTORY IN LANDMARK CASE — APPRENTICE TAKES TOP AWARD — COMPETITION — WIN A \$500 VOUCHER

SUMMER 2016



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**TEXT —
AND WIN!**

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PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF YOUR UNION

All members know that the manufacturing industry has changed dramatically over the past 20 years.

The failure of government to support our manufacturing sector, new technology, competition from rapidly developing countries like Vietnam, India and China, the high Australian dollar coming out of the GFC, and the end of the mining construction boom, have all contributed to the loss of almost 106,000 manufacturing jobs in just the last five years (168,000 in the last ten).

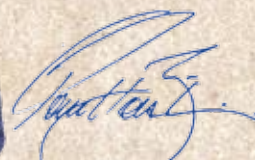
With our industry facing big challenges, we've continued our fight for good manufacturing jobs. We are challenging both government and employers to invest in the training and innovation necessary to keep our industry competitive.

Despite the tough economic circumstances, we had some big wins in 2015 that will see thousands of jobs created and maintained in our industry. In Victoria, AMWU members successfully campaigned for locally built trains. Likewise, in Bendigo, AMWU members will build the Hawkei army vehicles that will keep Australian soldiers safe.

And although we aren't there yet, I'm confident we are on the cusp of a big victory in our campaign to build our next generation of submarines here. This will create and sustain thousands of jobs across Adelaide, Melbourne, the Hunter Region, and Perth.

The collapse of the resource boom has again shown the folly of relying on just one part of our economy. Australia needs a diverse economy with a strong vibrant manufacturing sector. Nonetheless, manufacturing is changing and while there can be a strong future for our sector, it will most likely be in more advanced manufacturing with a value chain around design, planning, installation and servicing.




Paul Bastian
AMWU National Secretary

But that future is not guaranteed and it depends in large part on whether government, employers and our education system can adapt to the changing world.

And as the world changes, so must your union.

The structure of our union was developed more than 20 years ago when five unions came together to form the modern AMWU.

The National Council of the union has recently received a report on options for the future of the union written by two independent people well placed to advise us on these matters.

Greg Combet will be known to many members as the Secretary of the ACTU during the Your Rights at Work campaign that saw the end of the Howard Government. He was also the Minister for Defence Procurement and the Environment in the Rudd and Gillard Governments.

Andrew Whittaker was until recently a partner at Ferrier Hodgson, long standing specialists in corporate advice and restructure and forensic accounting.

Andrew and Greg have recommended some big changes in the way we operate to make the union stronger, smarter and more flexible and to make sure that we are in the best possible shape to organise, represent and defend our members in the years ahead.

The recommendations of the Review will be open for discussion with members and delegates and will be considered through the Conferences and Councils of the union throughout 2016.

Like our industries, our union to is also facing great challenges. If we work together, we can make sure that our current and future members will continue to have a strong, smart, modern union that stands up and fights back.

AMWU NEWS SUMMER 2016

AMWU News is the official publication of the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union, (registered AFMEPKIU) National Office, 133 Parramatta Road, Granville, NSW, 2142.
Editor: Paul Bastian

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Design: dcmc Design, Melbourne.

All information included in this publication was correct at the time of publication, but is subject to change at any time.

Please contact your union organiser for updates.

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Made in Australia by AMWU members

CORRECT WEIGHT AT WEDDERBURN



A ten-day strike by workers at a firm which has manufactured scales for nearly 120 years has resulted in the first union agreement in the company's history and a huge win for workers.

The 16 field service technicians at Wedderburn Scales took protected action and went on strike when negotiations with their employers broke down after five frustrating months.

The workers have won improved on-call and overtime allowances and long service leave and redundancy entitlements.

They also received a wage rise, guaranteed apprenticeship places,

and a better classification structure for the skilled workers.

Alistair Thomas, AMWU Organiser for the site, welcomed the new agreement, and said it would deliver conditions and pay that are commensurate with the workers' experience.

"Most have worked here for 10 to 15 years or more, and deserve to be valued, not treated as though they're expendable and worthless," he said.

"Wedderburn just needed to show the workers some respect."

Wedderburn had not been a unionised workplace in its history dating back to the 19th century.

That changed when workers joined the AMWU in late 2014 in response to cost-cutting measures by the company, including denying workers reasonable requests for better conditions.

Shortly after joining the union, the members won majority support for an enterprise agreement to be negotiated.

AMWU member and Wedderburn worker Humphrey Caspersz said that the win demonstrated that the AMWU delivers for its members.

"Previously we had nothing; we never had an agreement before this. Now, after lots of hard negotiating, we've got everything in writing and we can go back to work with security and peace of mind that we are protected," he said.

The solidarity shown by the workers was remarkable, with one recently sacked delegate, Ian Millar, joining his ex-colleagues on the picket line all day, for the entire ten days.

Mr Caspersz praised the unity of his co-workers and the solidarity shown by the AMWU and fellow union members throughout the long struggle.

"We couldn't have done it without everyone sticking together and the support of the union."



Scales of justice: the workers at Wedderburn celebrate with AMWU officials after a one-day strike yielded a vastly improved enterprise agreement.



EYEBIZ DEAL FOCUSES ON QUALITY VISION



Ann Dwyer had a clearer view of how important the work of AMWU members at Sydney lens company Eyebiz Laboratories can be just a few days after they finished negotiating their new union agreement.

The AMWU delegate was talking with a friend about how the supplier to OPSM faces stiff competition from firms which fully import finished glasses when she heard a cautionary tale.

"My friend said she had ordered glasses for her two little ones, aged four and eight, from a well-known cheaper glasses store but after a while they were having terrible problems with seeing properly," she said.

"She took them to the eye specialist and he said the scripts were wrong, the glasses weren't made up properly, and perhaps the lenses weren't ground properly. It's the second time recently I've heard a similar story.

"In the end she went to OPSM and got new glasses for the children – the opposition might sometimes be cheaper, but when it's your eyesight, then good quality has

to be most important."

Ms Dwyer is among about 40 workers at Eyebiz Laboratories, where optical fitters carefully shape and fit lenses to order for frames, in contrast to competitors' cheaper glasses which are usually imported in their entirety.

Their work also includes turning

out big brand prescription sunglasses with high-quality lenses to combat Australia's glare, as peak summer demand approaches.

They supply OPSM and associated stores.

AMWU delegates at Eyebiz were pleased they had been able to

reach a three-year deal which will keep the Sydney operation competitive while giving them a wage rise well above inflation and closer consultation from management over a range of areas.

That includes consulting AMWU members over any workplace changes and working with the union to help members who have been on Workers' Compensation return to the job at an appropriate pace and time as they recuperate. Delegate P.K. Kumar said AMWU organiser Linda Everingham had helped the members reach an agreement which struck the right balance between improving on the last deal and considering the local industry is under pressure from imports.

"We compare our agreement with conditions of other workers in this industry and we are well ahead because we have the union," he said.

"We had very supportive officers, the union did the research and we believe we got a good result."



The eyes have it: some of our AMWU members at Eyebiz pleased with the new agreement they are set to vote on. Our delegates P.K. Kumar (bottom right) and Ann Dwyer (right) worked hard to achieve real gains for fellow workers.

SWEET RESULT FOR SACKED CONFECTIONER

Employers in future will be forced to think twice before they callously try to throw injured workers on the scrapheap after the AMWU won over \$250,000 for a Victorian member in a landmark damages case.

The union gained final agreement late last year from Cadbury (now Mondelez) to pay Edmund Dziurbas \$231,000 in damages for lost earnings after his dismissal by management at the company's confectionary factory at Ringwood in 2013.

That payment is on top of \$20,000 compensation earlier awarded to Mr Dziurbas by the Victorian Civil and Administrative tribunal for suffering and humiliation from Cadbury's actions.

Mr Dziurbas worked in production at Cadbury for 30 years, but in June 2013 he took sick leave to have a hernia operation.

He was feeling fine and ready to return when the management told him to take extra weeks off, on full pay, before coming back in.

In October 2013, the bosses called the 63-year-old into work and told him they considered he was no longer fit to do his job, which came as a huge shock to the outdoor enthusiast and regular bushwalker.

Shortly after his dismissal Mr Dziurbas used a pickaxe to break up a part of his concrete driveway and lay down a pipe, but this failed to convince Cadbury that he was fit and capable of continuing to work.

In a recent decision, the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal found Cadbury had failed to



Vindicated: Edmund Dziurbas and wife Wanda can look forward to a happy retirement after the AMWU secured him a proper settlement from Cadbury- Mondelez.

properly assess Mr Dziurbas's condition, what his job actually entailed, or to try to make adjustments to the job that would have made it any easier for him to keep working.

The case sets a strong precedent for recently introduced 'reasonable adjustments' provisions in discrimination laws. Employers must properly consider how jobs and workplaces can be modified to accommodate workers with injuries or disabilities.

Mr Dziurbas, who recently turned 65, will receive his payment early in 2016 after the AMWU and Mondelez finalised a consent order covering what he is owed for two years in lost earnings, plus his other leave

entitlements.

"I knew I was right all along, I was confident I was going to win with the AMWU's help," he said, with his son Bernie interpreting.

"I'm very grateful for all the work the union has done over the past two years. It's been there for me every step of the way."

AMWU State Secretary Steve Dargavel said: "Far too often employers take the easy option and sack workers with minor injuries or disabilities.

"This case shows this is not good enough. Workers deserve more."

JESSICA WINS TOP AWARD FOR YOUNG PRINT VISION

Earlier this year at a FuturePrint forum Jessica McAuley told **AMWU News** that she loves her digital print job and now she's proved just how much by taking out the industry's top apprentice award.

The AMWU member was recognised for the way she has embraced all aspects of the modern trade at Drum Print, a small but energetic firm at Mandurah, south of Perth. She took out the National Graduate Scholarship, awarded by the Lithographic Institute Association from a field of winners from all states over the past two years.

Ms McAuley impressed the interviewing panel with her passion – and planning

– for promoting printing to other young people as a great career with a bright future.

She plans to use her \$15,000 prize on a marketing course to help her eventually spread the

good word about the industry through schools and TAFEs, possibly via a non-profit company.

"A lot of the public don't know what we do, so not enough young people want to join the industry to help fill the gap as the older

people retire – there's a big age gap," she said.

Ms McAuley is among 220 apprentices recruited into the industry so far by the federally-funded FuturePrint program, a joint venture between the AMWU and employers.

Within weeks of her award she completed her digital printer apprenticeship, under two years since joining the FuturePrint program from school.

That's less than half the time it would have taken under the traditional apprenticeship system.

"Young, creative people tend to look at doing graphic arts and design but most haven't looked properly at printing. You can design the product for clients, then follow through in choosing the material, the colours and seeing through your design to appear in a finished product," Ms McAuley said.

"It's deeper than graphic

design alone."

She describes herself as a 'bit of a jack of all trades' at Drum Print, where she does digital printing, pre-press work, graphic design and liaises with the clients.

The firm designs and prints everything from business stationery to real estate brochures, but also has a wide format machine which Ms McAuley uses for poster prints and banners on vinyl.

AMWU National Print Secretary Lorraine Cassin said Jess McAuley personified the union's optimism for the future with her drive and maturity. Her success showed the value of the FuturePrint program.

"Jessica has a vitality which is infectious, a hunger to learn new skills and it's fantastic she wants to show other young people the potential print has for them," she said.



Future in print: Jessica McAuley hard at work at Drum Print in Mandurah.

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\$500

**JB HI-FI
VOUCHER**



Competition ends February 29



COMMUNITY HUB WHEELED OUT IN GLADSTONE

The generosity of our members in sunny Gladstone made it a natural choice for the AMWU to wheel out our first Community Hub, a grass-roots initiative to reach out and give practical help to local causes.

The idea builds on the work unionists have done for decades in their communities across Australia, by providing a support network for our members to organise activities and fundraise for their local sports clubs, schools, men's sheds and similar groups.

Each Community Hub will help AMWU activists build community support on industrial and government issues that affect everyone's day-to-day lives.

We couldn't think of a better occasion to launch the Community Hub than a recent AMWU Family Day at the Gladstone Marina, where members and their families turned out for a BBQ and fun activities.



Family Hub: State Secretary Rohan Webb (centre) with AMWU member Harry Kummerfeld, his wife Angie and their children at the union's Family Fun Day in Gladstone.

AMWU members working on the Curtis Island LNG projects have put in big time in recent years to raise funds for the local community. They have generated over \$60,000 for

local groups such as the Tannum Sands nippers, Gladstone Men's Shed and The Wallabies Junior Football Club.

AMWU Queensland and



Union family: AMWU delegates met in Gladstone the day after our Family Fun Day

Northern Territory State Secretary, Rohan Webb said he expected Gladstone would be the first of many Community Hubs across the state – and the nation.

"Our members and delegates in Gladstone have been working hard in recent years to try to make sure the wealth that has come out of the Curtis Island LNG developments flows into their community," he said.

"The Community Hub will help them put across our message in an effective way as Gladstone faces the challenge of construction on the island scaling down.

"It will be the means by which the AMWU is able to campaign

on issues that we share with the community like job creation and security. And it's an organising point to provide practical help to clubs, schools and charities."

Gladstone delegate Khan Goodluck said: "I believe that workers have a role to play beyond the workshop gate in giving back to their community. We all want a bright future for Gladstone.

"It's a support network for AMWU members in reaching out. We can help local groups and also raise awareness of issues like local content, apprentice numbers and the problem of labour hire in eroding permanent jobs."

THE CROWD'S ON OUR SIDE: BUILD ALL OUR SHIPS HERE

“The billboards are in a great position and they've got people talking even more about subs”

AMWU members have put in bigtime to drive home a simple message on billboards that resonated with the entire community: Subs=Jobs. Build them here.

The union's first effort to crowdfund a campaign on social media was our latest success, with members contributing over \$6000 towards three billboards on busy roads in suburban Adelaide and in the shipbuilding city's heart of Rundle Mall.

The Subs=Jobs theme was repeated with big November rallies of members in Perth and Adelaide, as well as a banner displayed in Parliament House in Canberra during a visit by shipbuilders to keep pressure on the MPs.

It's all paying off. The fiasco over foreign-built subs contributed to Tony Abbott's demise as PM and it's now

looking highly likely the \$50 billion sub build will re-surface in Adelaide.

The \$39 billion plan to advance the offshore Pacific patrol vessels and future frigates to 2018 and 2020 and set up a rolling build vindicated everything the AMWU has told politicians about the imperative for a long-term, continuous build to sustain the industry for decades to come.

But our AMWU shipbuilders will keep campaigning, making it clear that Build Them Here means ALL 12 submarines the Coalition promised Australians before the last election.

Speculation is rife it will again welch on it's commitment by announcing just eight subs - with the first few done overseas.

Some of our shipyard delegates from ASC turned out at our media event



Workers' convoy: Hundreds of union members, their families and community supporters took to the streets in Adelaide to again demand Liberal MPs ensure there will be a local build of 12 submarines.

when the billboard on South Road in Hindmarsh had just gone up, seen by thousands of Adelaide drivers over November.

“The billboards are in a great position and they've got people talking even more about subs – it's on everyone's lips, you'd be surprised. It's great we did the crowdfunding,” said delegate Mathew Premio, a mechanical fitter at ASC.

“Jobs are desperately needed across the shipbuilding industry.”

The crowdfunding campaign asked people to contribute to the cost of one billboard and within a fortnight beat the target, raising over \$6000. On average, supporters contributed \$40 each.

The billboards in November were a timely reminder to federal Liberal MPs from South Australia about their community responsibility.

They went up as lay offs at shipyards escalated nationally due to the lack of

government orders, with 350 more workers at BAE in Williamstown in Melbourne losing their jobs, while the workforce at Forgacs in the Hunter has also been reduced to about 100.

Forgacs looks likely to change ownership, with potential owner Cimvec looking at the finances.

AMWU Assistant National Secretary Glenn Thompson said it was vital that preparations for the new frigates and Offshore Patrol Vessels be brought forward.

The major Defence White Paper to detail how many submarines and other navy vessels Australia will order was delayed as the third Defence Minister in less than 12 months settles in.

Marise Payne is expected to release the White Paper early in 2016, with a decision on which of the three bidding syndicates – Germany's TKMS, France's DCNS or Japan's Mitsubishi-Kawasaki will be successful – not expected until later in the year.



Crowd pleasers: A crowd funded AMWU billboard in Adelaide, organised by ASC delegates including (L:R) David Coulthard, Matthew Premio, Glen Dallimore, Daniel Sweet. With them is AMWU economic consultant Tony Evans.

TAS SHIPBUILDERS SEE INDUSTRY POTENTIAL

AMWU officials have met workers from leading Tasmanian shipbuilder Incat to discuss how the island state can capitalise on the firm's recent wins in securing major commercial ferry contracts.

Tasmanian State Secretary John Short spoke with workers on how they believed skills and productivity in shipbuilding across the state could be enhanced to give manufacturing firms the opportunity to leverage off the success of Incat.

Recently, the Hobart company confirmed it had been engaged to build a 112-metre ferry for a Danish operator, following its success in winning \$50 million in contracts for six Sydney ferries.

This has laid the groundwork for Tasmania to bid for major work on the upcoming tender for 21 Pacific patrol boats for the Royal Australian Navy – a \$600 million opportunity.

Mr Short met with AMWU members and other workers from the company, where the workforce could grow from about 250 to as many as 400 due to the ferry contracts.

He called on the Tasmanian Government to be more active in joining industry in lobbying to win

the work or to co-operate in sharing it with the other states.

“We are keen to work with industry to improve skills and productivity. We want to give Tasmania a real chance at this project,” Mr Short said.

“A strong shipbuilding sector is the shot in the arm that Tasmania needs as the sluggish economy suffers from high unemployment and low consumer confidence. For every job we create in manufacturing, we create four in the rest of the economy.”



A Pacific Patrol boat design. Image: ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems



Blue water future: Tasmanian State Secretary John Short talks to Incat workers about the \$600 million Pacific Patrol boat opportunities during an informal lunchtime get together.

AMWU FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS - 2014/15



Until now, a hard copy of the audited AMWU Financial Reports has been mailed to members each year. To make the best use of new technology while maintaining full disclosure, we are providing this new financial summary and placing the full accounts on the internet at http://www.amwu.org.au/rules_and_elections. If you would like a free printed copy of the full Financial Reports, please call the AMWU Helpdesk on 1300 732 698 or email amwu@amwu.asn.au

HOW ARE THESE FINANCIAL REPORTS PUT TOGETHER?

Our financial year ends on the 30 September. At this point, the Union's external auditors scrutinise our accounts and provide a report on their compliance with Australian accounting standards and the Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act. Following their adoption by the National Council, they are made available to members and lodged with the Fair Work Commission. The same process applies to the accounts in each state.

WHAT INFORMATION IS INCLUDED IN THESE REPORTS?

The reports include: Income and expenditure; assets and liabilities; our key suppliers and commercial relationships; the members of our governing bodies; your representatives on the industry superannuation funds; salaries of highest paid officials and significant detailed information on the accounts of the Union.

HOW ARE MY DUES PROTECTED?

We have a proud tradition of good governance and financial management, supported by solid policies and procedures, and overseen by the National and State Councils, the Audit, Risk & Investment Committee and the Union's internal and external auditors. We have strict controls around credit cards, purchasing, conflicts of interest, and gifts

and hospitality. Our Union's Officers also attend Union Governance and Financial Training.

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR UNION DUES?

All AMWU membership dues are paid to the National Union and money is allocated to the State Branches according to budget policy. Your Union dues are listed as Contributions in our accounts.

A significant portion of membership dues go to support the Organisers and Staff whose job it is to provide industrial and bargaining support to members and to build the Union by encouraging new members to join. The Union also employs a number of legal, education, communications and policy specialists to defend the interests of members and a range of people to keep the union functioning in finance, IT and asset management etc.

Your dues also support a range of direct member services and products including the HelpDesk for industrial support, AMWU Care for 24 hour counselling, and a range of insurances such as emergency transport and journey cover where it's needed. The Union also allocates \$1.95p/quarter for each member to the Political Fund to ensure that we engage in national and state political debate on behalf of our members and to maintain our affiliation with the Australian Labor Party.

DOES THE UNION MAKE MONEY IN ANY OTHER WAY?

Yes, our Rules provide that when an Officer represents members on an external Board, directors fees are paid directly to the Union. The Union also earns money from financial investments in shares and property. In addition, the Union has a 49% share in Wageguard, an Income Protection firm, to ensure that these policies operate in the best interest of members. All income from this investment is used to fund products and services for members.

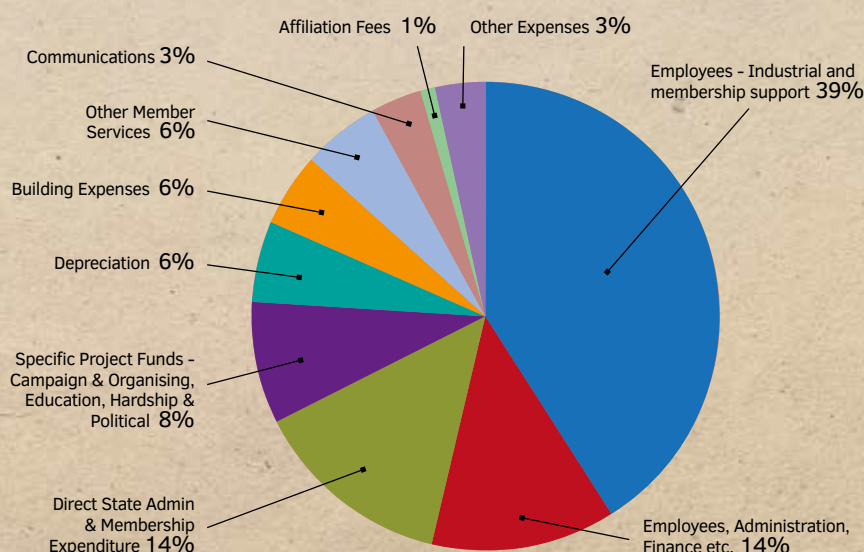
HOW DOES THE UNION MAKE DECISIONS ON INVESTMENT?

All investment decisions are taken by the National Council on recommendation from the Audit, Risk & Investment Committee. The investment portfolios comply with the United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment and all Officials and Officers are subject to the AMWU Conflict of Interest policy.

IS THE UNION IN A GOOD FINANCIAL POSITION?

The Union is in a good financial position, despite significant decline in some of the major manufacturing industries and a subsequent loss of members in recent times. Your National Council has been making prudent investment and expenditure decisions appropriate to the circumstances such that the National Union delivered an Operating surplus of \$5,876,860 for the 2014/15 financial year. A large part of this surplus is allocated for future spending on growth organising and campaigning, member services, hardship and education, and employee entitlements.

BELOW IS A GRAPH OF OUR EXPENDITURE FOR 2014/15:



For more information, please see the Financial reports at http://www.amwu.org.au/rules_and_elections

NATIONAL UNION SNAPSHOT 2014/15

Income from Members	\$41,930,315
Other Income	\$11,686,573
Total Income	\$53,616,888
Expenditure	\$47,740,028
Union Agreements in 2015	319
Assets	\$127,081,868
Highest Salary Paid	\$108,500

STATE SNAPSHOT 2014/15

	MEMBERS	EMPLOYEES
NSW	19,884	46
VIC	28,820	78
QLD	15,721	30
SA	7,181	22
WA	10,319	24
TAS	1,846	6
National		66
Total	83,771	272

“

The installation companies have accepted it as a new standard, to the extent we've had two other firms contact us wanting to get on board – one hadn't worked under a union EBA since 2006

”

DEFIANT SHEETIES WIN COOL CHANGE



Sheet metal solidarity: AMWU 'sheeties' first voted for action at Sydney Trades Hall, set on a campaign which won them justice on wages and conditions.

Sheet metal workers have delivered a new construction industry deal across Sydney that will see site allowances return to major projects for the first time in over a decade.

AMWU members recently finalised a deal involving the seven major employers, with some of the smaller contractors also signing on to the new NSW agreement prior to Christmas.

It re-introduces hourly site allowances and also delivers standout wage rises of 13 per cent over the next three years, defying the sluggish wage growth in other NSW industries.

NSW Assistant Secretary Steve Murphy described the deals as “an outstanding result” which puts over 400 sheet metal workers who install all air conditioning into new buildings on an equal footing with other

skilled trades in the state's building industry.

“The installation companies have accepted it as a new standard, to the extent we've had two other firms contact us wanting to get on board – one hadn't worked under a union EBA since 2006,” he said.

But it didn't come easily, taking more than a week of industrial action on major sites in the latter half of 2015 before pressured contractors came on board one by one.

AMWU members on major projects across Sydney walked off the job initially for a week, holding roving protests most mornings outside sites including the giant Barangaroo area and Darling Harbor's Exhibition Centre Project.

“We spent months planning our strategy to win wage justice and job security,” Mr Murphy said.

“Union members having the courage to take up the fight delivered this outcome. Our members have deservedly won added respect across the industry and we're determined to hold onto it.”

AMWU Consultative Committee member Steve Isberg said: “I'm pretty proud of our blokes, some bosses in companies were making threats, but in the end nearly everyone came out and we got the result by staying together.”

NSW organiser Fergal Eiffe said the wage result nosed above the construction industry average, a promising beginning to a joint approach with other building unions, the CFMEU and ETU, to co-operate on delivering industry-wide project agreements.

“We can say it is a very solid building block for even better agreements into the future,” he said.

MORNING GRIEF FOR ALCOA'S TOP BRASS



Wake up call: WA State Secretary Steve McCartney talks to the big early-morning rally outside Alcoa's WA headquarters late last year.

Alcoa executives overseeing ruthless cost-cutting had a shock recently when their early morning routine was disrupted by nearly 200 unionists outside the glitzy WA head office giving them a loud reminder on wage justice.

AMWU WA State Secretary Steve McCartney took to the Alcoa front steps, blasting it for wanting its workforce to pay for a 20 per cent cut in operating costs by trying to take a huge chunk out of their wages and conditions.

That's despite the company looking at it's best alumina profitability since 2007.

Our members, some attending with their family, were joined by other unionists in the Perth suburb of Booragoon to protest against Alcoa's race to the bottom in labour hire contracting. This is squeezing family budgets and compromising safety at its sites.

Maintenance contractors including Transfield, ALS and United Contractors who service Alcoa's five WA sites have told their workforces they expect a wage cut of at least 10 per cent to remain competitive to meet the aluminium producer's cost cutting demands.

Alcoa management itself has taken an

aggressive stand in early bargaining talks for its own workforce, including 600 AMWU members across its three smelters and two mines in outlying areas from Perth.

“Our members have worked for years, many for decades, to make Alcoa's South-West operations the most profitable in the entire world,” Mr McCartney said.

“Alcoa has made billions of dollars in profit over many years. They are still making huge returns right now but they are effectively trying to slice 20 per cent off what our members earn and we won't stand for it.”

AMWU organiser Simon Rushworth said

a key concern was Alcoa opening its maintenance contracts to new labour hire bidders, which were willing to strip back wages to the award base.

He said Alcoa's end game was a race to the bottom on wages for contract workers – which also includes AMWU members – to put extra pressure on its own permanent workforce.

Members were also concerned at the impact of rock-bottom maintenance deals on safety, particularly after this year's asbestos scare at its Kwinana refinery.

This would impact on all the company's smelters and bauxite mines in WA.



SMOOTH ROAD AHEAD FOR TRUCK WORKERS



Rolling out a good deal: AMWU members at Kenworth include our shop steward Garry Walsh, Paul White, Erwin Tromp (Deputy Steward) and Yvonne Walsh.

The AMWU has continued to power along in the heavy vehicle industry with new union-negotiated agreements at Kenworth and Volvo an encouraging sign of a smooth road ahead.

Completion of the deals with solid pay rises and improved conditions contributes to the bright future of truck manufacture, sales and

maintenance in Australia - provided governments provide sufficient industry support and road infrastructure.

Over 260 members at Kenworth's manufacturing facility in Victoria showed true grit in securing a four-year deal, providing pay rises of 11.75% over that time and back pay from July.

Getting there meant twice rejecting below-inflation offers and taking protected industrial action including a 24-hour stoppage - effective in getting the company to vastly improve the deal.

There is also improved RDO flexibility so members have more opportunity to bank their RDOs.

"There was reluctance about taking a four year agreement at first, but it's a positive in providing the stability our guys need to be able to plan for their futures," said AMWU delegate Garry Walsh.

"In 2016-17 car manufacturing will be just about gone, but this is a really good sign for us that Kenworth is here to stay."

Mr Walsh said the auto industry deserved better government backing, as another 28 parts suppliers relied on Kenworth for business.



At Volvo, the AMWU has also finalised a deal which brings about 450

members in truck repair, service and retail across NSW, Queensland and the Northern Territory under the one agreement.

The three-year deal includes pay rises averaging just under 3% per year, with a slightly larger increase in Queensland to offset past differences in pay rates with other states.

The union has also secured a clearer classification structure with fairer review processes.

AMWU National Assistant Vehicle Division Secretary Warren Butler, said the Kenworth and Volvo deals added to the recent agreements at Scania in NSW and Queensland.

"We have a strong presence which is helping members achieve deals across the truck industry, giving them the job security so precious in auto today," Mr Butler said.

"Now it's up to governments to provide both the infrastructure and the industry programs so we can create extra jobs and skills in the truck supply chain as car manufacturing winds down."

TRADE AGREEMENT A FREE KICK FOR BIG BUSINESS

The AMWU has joined global protests against the Trans Pacific Partnership to highlight the risk to Australians, including foreign corporations suing us for enacting laws which hurt their profits.

In Melbourne and Perth, community rallies which included unions urged crossbench and Labor MPs in Canberra to vote down the TPP trade agreement, which must be approved by the parliaments of all 12 Pacific rim nations.

The Melbourne protest was outside waste management multinational Veolia, which has used Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) provisions to sue Egypt's Government for increasing the minimum wage.

The ISDS provisions allow multinational corporations to sue a government in international trade tribunals if they think its local laws may disadvantage them commercially.

Under the TPP, the tribunals' rulings could override decisions of our courts and stop laws made by our elected Parliament in our national interest.

AMWU National Assistant Secretary Glenn Thompson said ISDS lawsuits against governments had exploded globally since 2007, doubling to 608 actions last year.

"This is about global corporates controlling government policy in relation to our people, it's about making sure global profits can't be hurt," Mr Thompson said.

"It's outrageous that a government in a democracy can negotiate an agreement (the TPP) that has such an impact on our country and does so in total secrecy."

He said conservative judges, the Australian Productivity Commission and business journalists all had misgivings about the TPP, in particular these ISDS provisions.

A new US study showed the partnership wasn't worth the risk, with



TPP a bad deal for democracy: AMWU Assistant National Secretary Glenn Thompson speaks at the Melbourne rally.

100 people

Australia getting a minuscule 0.5 per cent in extra economic output from it over an entire decade.

The AMWU has also kept the pressure on Canberra over the China Australia Free Trade Agreement's threat to local workers by helping to promote town hall forums across Australia.

While welcoming improvements to the Agreement secured by the ALP, the AMWU has continued to campaign with other unions for further changes to secure local jobs.

Queensland and NT State Secretary Rohan Webb addressed a meeting of over

in Gladstone. The AMWU believes too much still relies on the discretion of the Immigration Minister and no change will be effective without a dramatic improvement in enforcement.

"People were passionate over the threat to jobs from these trade agreements," Mr Webb said.

We've forced small concessions from the Government but unions must keep campaigning because CHAFTA is still seen as a dud deal.

Federal Member of Parliament Ken O'Dowd (National Party) was invited to debate Mr Webb but was a no-show, as were all other Liberal MPs invited to town hall meetings across Australia, except one.



BOOK REVIEW: LIVELIHOODS AND LIBERATION STRUGGLES

In an increasingly crowded market where a confusing mix of aid agencies and charities are competing for donor dollars, there is one humanitarian organisation that stands apart.

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA is in the social justice business, rather than charity.

For over 30 years, the Australian People for Health, Education and Development Abroad has carried our trade union spirit of solidarity and generosity to global areas of turmoil, providing real assistance for exploited workers and refugees.

It is aid with a political-ethical edge unique in this country, a compelling story of ventures into troubled African, Asian and Pacific nations now well-told in a book by journalist Dani Cooper.

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA was the vision of a courageous Australian nurse Helen McCue.

Out of the horror and death of a Palestinian refugee camp in war-torn Lebanon in 1983, she came home and quickly convinced then-ACTU President Cliff Dolan that the power of our movement should be extended to social justice offshore.

Without the gravitas and respect that Dolan carried among unions, the idea might have never gained traction.

The AMWU was an early supporter of APHEDA, later forming an alliance with Filipino sugar workers

post-Marcos and long active in Vietnam.

With the dynamic McCue as chief executive and Dolan as chairman, they overcame scepticism of some unions and got strong, discreet backing from the Hawke Government.

APHEDA's uniquely co-operative way has always won over the locals by making it a collaborative effort to empower the workers, farmers and women it seeks to assist.

That usually means trained-up, local activists taking over long-term programs that Australians begin.

It started by bringing out Palestinian nurses for training, funded microscopes for Eritrean health workers, and reached out to the African National Congress during apartheid.

APHEDA put a trainer into shattered Cambodia after the Pol Pot regime, gave media training to New Caledonia's Kanak dissidents, and aided recovery from war in Bougainville and the Solomons. It helped build a new nation in East Timor.

In the 21st century, it has tackled AIDS-HIV in South East Asia, is building knowledge over the scourge



of asbestos and is helping Pacific Island nations campaign on climate change.

The challenges seem greater as this Coalition Government cuts foreign aid to shamefully low levels, but APHEDA volunteers under Executive Officer Kate Lee still do the heavy lifting.

At Christmas, the team was seeking assistance to make sure Nepal's earthquake reconstruction work is safe and done by unionised workers on living wages.

Livelihoods and Liberation Struggles

shows why APHEDA's struggles deserve our support.

The AMWU is one of APHEDA's biggest supporters and we encourage members to get behind workers in our region by signing up to regular direct debit at www.apheda.org.au

The AMWU is giving away 20 copies of *Livelihoods and Liberation Struggles*. Please email news@amwu.asn.au with your name, address, membership number or mail to AMWU News, 2nd floor, 251 Queensberry Street, Carlton South, VIC 3053.

UNION NEWS IN BRIEF

STAR WARNS ON ASBESTOS



Australian movie star John Jarratt showed that the problem of asbestos can touch all parts of society when he opened the AMWU's Asbestos Awareness seminar in Adelaide recently.

The star of *Wolf Creek* took time out of his busy film and television schedule to make a plea to tradespeople and home renovators not to take shortcuts in asbestos checking and particularly disposal, which should be done by qualified removalists.

"I lost one of my best mates, Harold Hopkins, to mesothelioma – having the opportunity to warn people about the dangers of asbestos is very, very personal and important to me," Mr Jarratt said.

Actor Harold Hopkins died in 2011 after being exposed to asbestos as a carpenter in the 1960s, with Mr Jarratt also concerned he may have been exposed during

childhood in an asbestos-lined home.

AMWU SA State Secretary John Camillo said asbestos remained a huge industrial issue for AMWU members while it continued to be used in parts manufactured overseas, the latest threat being counterfeit Toyota brake pads imported from China.

The pads fit about 400,000 Toyota HiLux and HiAce vans sold in the last 10 years.

Our union has warned thousands of auto technicians, particularly those at workshops outside the official Toyota network, about the brake pads with fake company packaging (www.amwu.org.au/toyota_asbestos).

PLEDGE TO RENEW WA RAIL INDUSTRY More than 2500 people have so far signed on to the petition run by our WA rail delegates to get the Barnett Government back on the rails in setting up a local build for the state's future rolling stock.

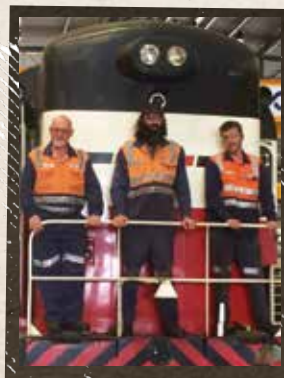
Our delegates in Perth workshops are working hard to get the WA Government to re-commit to a \$3.1 billion rail spend, which it has postponed after making the previous generation of suburban trains in Queensland.

The AMWU's concern is that the opportunity to train the next

generation of young people in trades to replace today's rail workers will be lost if the Government sends potential contracts for locomotives, wagons and suburban trains to China or India.

WA State Secretary Steve McCartney and national rail coordinator Finbarr Dowling led a delegation to the WA State Parliament, where Labor leader Mark McGowan and Labor MPs signed our pledge to put local rail manufacturing first.

The delegates from Gemco, Aurizon and UGL Rail also invited the MPs to visit the facilities and see the opportunity to expand capacity and jobs beyond locomotive and wagon maintenance and re-build.



Signing up: our Gemco members Ivo Krsticevic, Rob Cullen, Ray Facey

STATE AND NATIONAL CONFERENCES 2016

The AMWU National Conference will be held on 26 – 29 July this year. The Conference is the supreme governing body of the union. The meeting of the Union's elected conference delegates will be an opportunity to evaluate and develop the priorities of the union and to set the union's policy agenda for the next three years.

Agenda items for the National Conference should be marked 'National Conference' and sent to the National Secretary, AMWU, PO Box 160, Granville NSW 2142.

Submissions must be received by close of business on the 14 June 2016.

State Conference dates in 2016 have been set for:

NSW: Thursday 12 and Friday 13 May 2016

Closing date for submission of agenda items:

Thursday 31 March 2016

VIC: Monday 2 and Tuesday 3 May 2016

Closing date for submission of agenda items:

Monday 21 March 2016

QLD: Thursday 26 and Friday 27 May 2016

Closing date for submission of agenda items:

Thursday 14 April 2016

SA: Monday 16 and Tuesday 17 May 2016

Closing date for submission of agenda items:

Monday 4 April 2016

WA: Wednesday 27 and Thursday 28 April 2016

Closing date for submission of agenda items:

Wednesday 16 March 2016

TAS: Wednesday 18 and Thursday 19 May 2016

Closing date for submission of agenda items:

Wednesday 6 April 2016

Submission of agenda items for the State Conferences should be marked 'State Conference' and sent to the State Secretary care of the AMWU Office in your state.

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DELEGATE PROFILE

**KERRIN DOYLE****Dynamic Direct, Victoria**

At Dynamic Direct we handle the packing of mail-outs for some of the large industry super funds and unions, including the AMWU. Higher postage prices and erosion of Australia Post services are a big issue affecting us. On the shop-floor, the majority of members are women and I've been determined to give them an effective voice. I come from a union family from Port Melbourne. Dad was a delegate and Laurie Carmichael was his second cousin, so it's always made sense to me. Our previous delegate was also our supervisor, so people wouldn't speak up due to that conflict. In 2012 we had a great female AMWU organiser, Nadia Machlouch, who advised it was up to us if we wanted change. Everyone pointed at me and voted me in on the spot. I was shocked, but felt empowered to fight for members... I'd always had my say with management. I'm also the OH&S rep, so I

police that strongly. We have a lot of machinery and manual labour, so things like waste on the floor, pedestrians and forklifts, proper lifting techniques are important. Management doesn't usually fight on OH&S, but on fairness they can be difficult. Issues over job security with casuals, overtime and permanency are common.

Staying calm and being diplomatic is important when talking with management – I find it hard, but sometimes it's better to say very little. Dad advised me to take careful notes, keep a good diary – good advice. One of the best lessons from my union training is to 'think outside the box'. It works. When we shifted premises in Dingley they didn't bring over our lockers and the manager just kept stalling. So I told him we would keep all of our personal women's items sitting beside our machines –

the lockers arrived next day.

The union OH&S sessions, the delegate training and leadership course I've been to have been really affirming, just fantastic. A lot of women feel the union is a male thing and don't wish to speak up, but that isn't the way to be. I've met strong, enthusiastic women on every course I've done and it has shown me we can and must take a bigger role in our union. Recently I did the Anna Stewart program to develop women union activists. I saw how our union operates from the inside and even joined a Trades Hall community effort which highlighted the true lack of equal pay for women. (see pic) Meeting women from other unions made me realise that our female strength is building and we can learn from each others' stories.



AMWU Care
AMWU A counselling service for members
and their families **1800 206 316**

helpdesk
1300 732 698
Email: amwu@amwu.asn.au

