



AUSTRALIAN SERVICES UNION

# ASU

## **St Vincent de Paul Society State Council moves to make big changes to your Conditions of Employment.**

The November meeting of the State Council of the St. Vincent de Paul Society made some significant decisions that could have serious implications for your employment conditions. At the meeting, the Society's State Council determined that it would introduce a new Workplace Dignity Policy and a new Internet Use Policy.

***In addition, the Society decided to introduce uniform "contracts of employment" and to commence the process for a State wide Enterprise Agreement for all employees.***

These are big changes and could have serious implications for your conditions of employment.

### **What the Society is doing.**

Following these decisions, the Society has proceeded to do a number of things.

These include:

- Introduced new letters of appointment (which they call contracts of employment) for both new and existing staff.
- Introduced new policies in relation to workplace dignity and internet use.
- Attempting to commence discussions about a new Enterprise Agreement by asking you to talk to an employer representative.

### **Letters of Appointment.**

If you are an existing member of staff, you do NOT need a new letter of appointment. If your new letter, in any way, changes your existing conditions, then you will be agreeing to these changes if you sign the letter.

Of most concern are:

- The suggestion contained in the letter that the employer can unilaterally change your ordinary place of work.
- The salary clause that suggests (wrongly) that this one rate of pay will over-ride your Award entitlements
- The termination clause – this matter is covered in your Award and does not need to be in a letter of offer
- The Medical Examination clause which is a fundamental breach of human rights and privacy.

### **New Policies.**

Employers often introduce new policies – there is nothing new in this. You need to be aware, however, that once the employer introduces a new policy, that policy may become part of your contract of employment.

When new policies are introduced, employees need to be sure that they have been consulted about the new policy. Your Award protects your right to be consulted and it is unwise to simply sign a new policy without being consulted.

You may be bound by these new policies and may risk your job if you breach them.

### **A New Enterprise Agreement.**

Currently your conditions of employment are covered by a State Award. WorkChoices does NOT apply to the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Your Award sets out a full set of wages and conditions, and provides for a 3.5% wage increase in July 2007 and 3.5% again in July 2008.

Your wages and conditions are protected by the SACS Award so there is no need to bargain for a Collective Agreement. There is, however, nothing to stop the Society and the Union negotiating an agreement for St. Vincent de Paul Society. In case this happens, we need to be *ready*. This is the only way to ensure a fair and just outcome.

***Note. At Centacare ACT the employer recently rushed through a new Agreement and in doing so attempted to reduce the penalty rates of staff.***

## **Three easy things for you to do to get organised!**

1. Every member of staff needs a copy of this newsletter. Please copy and pass it on.
2. Every member of staff needs to fill in the attached survey. (Fax to 9698 8936)
3. You need to elect one representative from each worksite to form a “Negotiating Committee”.

### **What Happens Next?**

The results of the surveys will be gathered and the Negotiating Committee will put together a list of the things that you want changed at the St Vincent de Paul Society.

This list will be brought back to workplace meetings before the Negotiating Committee meets with the employer and their representative (their union – CCER) to discuss and resolve all of these issues.

If you have any questions ask your delegate or give the ASU office a call on 9310 4000 to talk to your union organiser.

**Australian Services Union | Sally McManus Secretary | Phone 9310 4000 | Fax 9698 8936**



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