

ACTIVE STRONG UNITED

AWA'S GONE!

SAFETY NETS RESTORED



Local Union members in Grafton campaign against WorkChoices. This marginal seat was successfully won by Labor.

THE RUDD LABOR GOVERNMENT HAS BEGUN THE PROCESS OF RIPPING UP WORKCHOICES. ON FEBRUARY 13TH THE NEW LABOR GOVERNMENT INTRODUCED LEGISLATION INTO THE PARLIAMENT THAT BEGINS TO WIND BACK WORKCHOICES.

In phase 1 which starts immediately, the Government will:

- Abolish AWA's
- Restore the 'no disadvantage test' for all new agreements
- Protect the conditions of workers who were forced into the Federal system by WorkChoices
- Remove the rights of employers to unilaterally terminate agreements
- Stop the Fair Pay Commission from reviewing wage and classification structures, and,
- Set out a process for the Industrial Commission to begin to make new Awards for the future.

From the 1st July when the Senate changes occur, the Labor Government will then move to make the rest of their changes. Until 19 February, the Liberals and Nationals had refused to

accept the decision of the Australian people and were attempting to cling to the unfair system of AWAs. However, in another backflip, the Coalition has now decided that they will support the Labor party and get rid of AWAs. The Liberal and National Party's position continues to vacillate. They declared WorkChoices was dead but continued to defend AWAs to the death. Now they support abolishing AWAs! The Opposition is still intent on proceeding with a Senate Inquiry, a tactic that will delay any further decisions until April. The new system proposed by the Labor party will offer all Australians a more secure working future. ACTU President Sharan Burrow has said that the Rudd Government's new approach will "restore rights stripped away by the previous government and create a stronger, more humane safety net in all workplaces".

YOUR IT TEAM

INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY
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Canon Australia Pty Ltd

Committee Member

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Konica Minolta Australia

FROM THE SECRETARY



I had the privilege of being in Canberra, with ASU members, on the lawns of Parliament House for the Apology to the Stolen Generations on 13 February. That was a wonderful and amazing event and such an important step forward for our country.

I then lined up for the Public Gallery in Parliament House with ASU members and Sharan Burrow, President of the ACTU, to watch Julia Gillard and the new Labor Government table laws which are the first part of abolishing WorkChoices. This was the first set of laws introduced into the new Parliament. It was fantastic to see Greg Combet (previous ACTU Secretary), Bill Shorten and all of the new Labor members we helped get elected into the Chamber, take up their seats and wave to us.

Much to the anger of some, we clapped and cheered when Julia Gillard announced they intended to abolish AWAs. The Liberal and National parties said they would oppose these changes, despite the clear decision of the Australian people on 24 November. So we began a campaign to pressure them. It only took a week before they backed down and now agree that WorkChoices is dead and that they will support AWAs being abolished.

Whilst only 9% of the population are on AWAs (quite a coincidence this is the same popularity rating for Brendan Nelson), the vast majority of these contracts have taken away hard won penalty rates and overtime. It is fantastic to see them go and a tribute to our campaigning.

Meanwhile, the Labor Government in NSW continues their disastrous mismanagement of the State with their latest plan to privatise electricity. It is clear from where this has occurred internationally and in other States that prices have gone up and jobs have been lost. Auckland suffers regular blackouts as a result.

The proposal comes from a Government who would rather blame workers for problems than take responsibility to fix them. The best example of this is our Railways. ASU members in RailCorp are usually the first scapegoat when years of under-investment and incompetent management lead to train delays or money wasted on private contractors.

The Lemna Government has so far to go if they think they are even to have a chance of being re-elected next time around; another reason to thank God we got rid of John Howard! At least now we have a good chance of securing fair laws nationally to protect us into the future.

—Sally McManus

WORKERSCOMP

INJURED — WORKERS COMPENSATION — WHAT SHOULD I DO?

GETTING INJURED AND HAVING TO GO THROUGH THE WORKERS COMPENSATION SCHEME CAN BE SCARY AND CAN CAUSE SOME PROBLEMS IF YOU'RE NOT FAMILIAR WITH WHAT TO DO. THERE ARE SOME GOLDEN RULES YOU SHOULD FOLLOW:

GOLDEN RULES:

- 1 Contact your delegate or union representative.
- 2 Register the injury/incident, **no matter how small**, in the appropriate register.
- 3 As soon as possible give **notice to your employer** (usually to your manager or supervisor) – notice can be in writing or verbally. Talk to the OH&S officer.
- 4 As soon as you are able, to **record it in your diary**.
- 5 **See your own doctor** (even if you've been to casualty or been seen by the company doctor). You are fully entitled to see and choose your own doctor if you need treatment. Get a Work Cover certificate.
- 6 You have a right to nominate **your own rehabilitation provider** – (contact Workers Health Centre 9749 7666, they provide services to workers members in all industries).
- 7 You have the right to **choose your own treatment provider** – physiotherapist, dentist, psychiatrist, etc.
- 8 You have the right to **choose your own legal representative if needed** (contact the ASU of 02 9310 4000 for information and referral)
- 9 **Comply with the Return to Work Plan.**
- 10 **Comply with the insurer's Injury Management Plan.**

TOPICAL TIPS:

One of the main problems reported to the ASU Office by members involves a failure to get along with the Rehabilitation Provider nominated by the insurance company or employer. **It is important to remember you can nominate your own rehab provider.** They help write your return to work plan, often access your workplace and attend meetings with your doctor (related to the return to work plan). We suggest that you contact the Workers Health Centre (02 9749 7666) for advice on this matter. If you have problems call the union on 02 9310 4000.

Another problem often reported by members is clashes between your doctor and the insurance company and/or the rehabilitation provider. You should listen to your doctor. They know you and they know your health and history. Your doctor has to sign off on any Return to Work Plan. This is often where the conflict is.

An important question that reoccurs is 'What happens to my pay while I'm waiting for Workers Compensation?' Your employer should treat your Workers Compensation Certificate as a Medical Certificate (take a look at the one you have and you will see that this is what it is called). This means you should be paid sick leave until the insurance company gives you provisional liability. Your sick leave should then be re-credited to you.

HOW TO CONTACT US

PHONE SYDNEY 9310 4000

OUTSIDE OF SYDNEY 1300 784 278

SYDNEY 39 - 47 RENWICK STREET REDFERN NSW PO BOX 1865
STRAWBERRY HILLS NSW 2012

NEWCASTLE PO BOX 2268 DANGAR NSW 2309

LISMORE PO BOX 1056 LISMORE NSW 2480

ACT PO BOX 1012 DICKSON ACT 2602

MEMBERS PREPARE TO FIRE THE CANON

ENTERPRISE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS ARE THE WAY WORKERS LOCK IN PAY, CONDITIONS AND ENTITLEMENTS AND CAN GENERATE RIGHTS. ANYTHING THAT IS NOT CAREFULLY DETAILED IN AN AGREEMENT IS LEFT TO MANAGERIAL PREROGATIVE. CANON MANAGEMENT PROMISED TECHS THEIR PERFORMANCE SYSTEM WOULD BE FAIR, HOWEVER THEY REFUSED TO COMMIT IT TO WRITING IN THE EBA.

The Canon EBA is testament to the fact that EBAs can be exploited by the employer. The EBA enables the company to change performance targets each year, effectively giving Canon the ability to set pay for workers. Because of this, when the EBA was negotiated in 2006 NSW ASU members voted against the EBA. Unfortunately because of votes from non-union members, the EBA narrowly got up.

Canon's EBA gives total power to the employer who can move the goalposts when making decisions about pay. Workers at Canon have recently been issued with a new 'balance scorecard' which increases the calls per day required and reduces the weighting for machines. This is despite numerous redundancies of staff late last year.

The ASU believes workers deserve "locked in" pay increases. Giving employers total control of the goalposts and cutting costs after promising the world to workers is not on. Workers need to lock in across the board pay increases at least reaching CPI increases. If employers want performance based increases on top of this – that's fine.

Canon members are not going to take this lying down.



In a fiery meeting in Melbourne, members in Victoria have already roasted management. Canon members in NSW are getting organised to fight because they deserve much better.

KONICA MINOLTA BEGINS EBA NEGOTIATIONS

ASU MEMBERS FROM KONICA MINOLTA HAVE STARTED THE BALL ROLLING, BEGINNING MEETINGS TO DISCUSS THEIR PENDING ENTERPRISE BARGAINING AGREEMENT. THE CURRENT EBA EXPIRES ON THE 4TH JULY 2008.

The next EBA will determine important parts of their working conditions including rates of pay and allowances.

A meeting was held on Monday 11th February where Konica Minolta members elected representatives to negotiate with management and campaign to obtain their conditions.

ALL KONICA MINOLTA ASU MEMBERS ARE URGED TO BE INVOLVED IN DISCUSSIONS BY ATTENDING FUTURE MEETINGS

Konica Minolta members will use the bargaining process to protect their conditions and to raise the standards in the IT industry. In the meeting they decided to campaign to obtain:

- A 5% pay increase each year of the agreement,
- A rostered day off,
- A walking allowance of \$12,000 – equal to other companies,
- An increase of all allowances by CPI,
- Training to be conducted on paid time.

It is really important that all ASU members make decisions together and work as a group in this process to make sure that we get the outcomes that we want and deserve.

All Konica Minolta ASU members are urged to be involved in discussions by attending future meetings. Make sure you take notice of any bulletins so that you can have a say in who should be our delegates and representatives in the process and what the EBA should contain.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS – RETURNING TO WORK AFTER INJURY



ONE OF THE MOST COMMON INJURIES IN THE IT INDUSTRY IS BACK INJURIES. THE UNION UNDERSTANDS HOW TERRIBLE IT IS TO GET INJURED AND OFTEN COMES ACROSS ISSUES FACED BY PEOPLE RETURNING TO WORK. ANYONE WITH AN INJURY SHOULD KNOW WHAT THEIR RIGHTS ARE. HERE IS A GUIDE TO KNOWING YOUR RIGHTS.

WORKERS BACK AT WORK ON SUITABLE DUTIES

- The worker's treating doctor must sign off on any return to work plan
 - If workers require treatment i.e. physiotherapy, etc., this should be included in the return to work plan. The worker should be given adequate time to attend treatment.
 - Supervisors cannot request that a worker go outside of the requirements of the return-to-work plan. The worker must follow the return-to-work plan, however, if there is an issue, seek assistance from your Union Representative.
 - Workers are entitled to make-up pay while they are back on suitable duties. The make-up pay has to take into account penalty rates and overtime.

REPORTING INJURIES

- A worker has an obligation to report all injuries when they occur. It must be reported to a manager or someone with the authority to deal with the issue.
- An injured worker must go to a doctor and obtain a NSW Medical certificate within 24 hours of the injury and provide it to the employer.
- Medical certificates should always be current and constantly updated.
- An injured worker must record ALL correspondence.

KEEPING DOCUMENTS

- An employer has 3 days to report the injury to WorkCover.
- Once it is reported, the worker will be contacted within 7 days by the employers insurer.
- Be religious in documentation! WORKERS SHOULD PHOTOCOPY ANY DOCUMENTS THAT ARE BEING HANDED UP. Once your doctor clears you, you are entitled to return to work to suitable duties.

RETURN-TO-WORK OBLIGATIONS – SUITABLE DUTIES

Under the Law, the employer must

- Provide an injured worker with suitable duties, unless the employer can prove it is not possible.
- Not dismiss an injured worker within 6 months of the injury.
- Have a return-to-work program, which complies with WorkCover guidelines and has been agreed to by the union. It is important for you as a Union Representative to ensure that the union has agreed in writing to the program and that you have been involved in the selection of rehabilitation providers for your workplace.

WHAT ARE SUITABLE DUTIES?

Suitable duties:

- Must be consistent with the worker's medical condition i.e. what they are able to physically do.
- Are provided when a worker is not able to return to their normal job.
- Must be meaningful and not demeaning.
- Must take into account their age and location (i.e. where the person lives, travel time, etc).
- Could include parts of the worker's usual job.
- Could be in a different area, i.e. closer to the worker's home.
- Could be a special project, for example an opportunity for an injured worker to undergo refresher training, etc.
- Could be with another employer close to home.

It is important to remember that suitable duties are temporary and should help the worker recover. Suitable duties are outlined in a return-to-work plan.

Your doctor must approve your return to work plan. In addition your Union Representative can refer you to a specialist rehab provider if necessary, who will assist you with your return-to-work plan.

RETRAINING

If an injured worker is not able to return to their pre injury occupation, they may require retraining or upskilling (e.g learning computer skills) for another job. Priority must be given to **retraining or upskilling** with the original employer and prior to looking outside at other employment options. This is organised by their rehabilitation provider or the employer's return to work coordinator. The insurance company covers the cost of retraining.

WHAT'S GOING ON OUT THERE?

LABOR HITS THE GROUND RUNNING – LIBERALS STUCK IN THE PAST

The new Labor Government has hit the ground running and moved immediately to implement its key election promises. This is a very good beginning and one that members who worked so hard to defeat the Howard Government would expect.

◆ SIGNING THE KYOTO PROTOCOL

Within 10 minutes of being sworn in late last year, Kevin Rudd signed the Kyoto protocol leaving the USA as the only developed nation not to have signed. This allowed Australia to again participate in the global negotiations and initiative to reduce greenhouse gases in order to tackle climate change.

◆ SORRY

The first substantive act of the new Parliament was apologising to Australia's stolen generation. The gesture had been sought for so long, and in the end proved not so hard to make. White Australia has now acknowledged our past injustices toward Aboriginal Australians in the context of reconciliation. This is something of which we can all be very proud and offers hope for a new beginning for both indigenous and non-indigenous Australians.

◆ ABOLISHING WORKCHOICES

Crucial to Rudd's victory was his promise to axe WorkChoices. The initial IR bill titled 'Workplace Relations Amendment (Transition to Forward with Fairness)' abolishes AWAs, which strip workers of their pay and conditions and restores the "no disadvantage test" for all Agreements. Later in the year Rudd is set to bring the rest of his industrial relations overhaul into Parliament, but will face a tough battle in his aim to restore unfair dismissal laws, give new rights to workers to bargain collectively and set up a new independent umpire and fair IR system.

◆ THE RIGHT TO ADVOCATE

In a move to restore the voice of NGO's the Federal Government plans to legitimise 'advocacy' reversing the disgraceful silencing of some organisations through funding agreements. Labor plans to rewrite government contracts with the non-profit sector to rip out gag clauses. This is an important step forward and directly affects many ASU members.

◆ HOMELESSNESS ENQUIRY ESTABLISHED

In December, Rudd instructed all Labor parliamentarians to visit a homeless service in their community. He then made the first move towards addressing the homeless crisis which is affecting 100,000 Australians. The enquiry intends to dramatically reduce the number of people with nowhere to live within 5 years.

◆ PACIFIC SOLUTION DECLARED DEAD

The first step to dismantling the Howard Government's inhumane, socially divisive and destructive Pacific Solution has been to close the detention facilities and stop Australia's offshore processing of asylum seekers which geographically removes them from the purview of Australian courts and Australian law. These are important first steps in returning decency to our nation. The last people were removed from Nauru in January.

◆ SOCIAL INCLUSION BOARD TO BE ESTABLISHED.

A social inclusion board including business and community leaders is set to be established bringing economic and social policy together to reduce disadvantage. The board will lead consultation in the community and advise the Government on building a more socially inclusive society.

◆ HEALTH

The Government has moved to immediately cut hospital waiting lists and has secured an agreement with the State and Territory Governments that injects an additional \$150 million into the Health System.

◆ LONG TERM GOALS

One of the limits of Australia's three year election cycles is that Australian politics tends to focus on short term goals. Rudd has taken the first step to curbing this limitation by planning the Australia 2020 summit on April 19 and 20, where ideas about the country's future will be put on the table from a gathering of 1000 of the "best and brightest".

At the end of the first three months the Government gets an "Excellent". A good beginning...but just the beginning.

Low cost banking for ASU members



Members Equity Bank offers ASU members:

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*CANNEX Credit Card 5 Star rating, November 2007. [†]Money Magazine, Best of the Best 2008, Gold Winner, Best Investment Account. [‡]Money Magazine, Best of the Best Awards 2008, Bronze Winner, Cheapest Personal Loan, Bank category Applications are subject to credit approval. Fees and charges apply. Terms and conditions available on request. This is general information only and you should consider if these products are appropriate for you. Members Equity Bank Pty Ltd ABN 96 070 887 679 AFS Licence: 229500. 82553 AD18 Awards/0108



FIRST STATE SUPER

FSS Trustee Corporation
ACN 118 202 672 AFSL 293340



What's the most important thing to working Australians? Their ability to earn an income!

So how do you make sure this valuable asset can be protected?

What are you doing to protect your ability to earn a wage in the future? Staying fit and healthy? Exercising and eating well? Checked that your insurance cover will be enough to look after you if something happens?

Statistically there is a good chance the "something" will happen! A working person between the age of 20 and 50 has a one in three chance of being off work for at least three months due to a disability (*Insured Lives IAD89-93 Table. Institute of Actuaries*).

Insurance provided through super funds is often an economical and convenient way to financially protect yourself. It's economical because super funds purchase insurance on behalf of many members, so the premium rates can be more competitive. And it's convenient because it is generally easier to apply, and insurance premiums are automatically deducted from your super account.

A better insurance deal for First State Super members

First State Super has looked at the insurance needs of members, the need to financially protect members if they become disabled and common problems members experience when applying for insurance.

Responding to the needs of members, First State Super has revamped its insurance arrangements to provided access to greater levels of insurance cover at attractive rates. From 1 December 2007 members can look forward to a range of competitive and flexible insurance features.

Across the board there has been an increase of **between 5% and 64%** in Death and Total and Permanent Disablement (TPD) insurance cover, depending on your employer's insurance category and your age. This cover now **continues to age 70** (it was age 65).

Most employer-sponsored members of First State Super (generally, those working in the public sector) are provided with automatic basic cover for death and TPD insurance. This level of basic cover has increased from **one** unit of cover to **three** units of cover (conditions apply), and accordingly, the premium went from \$5 each month to \$15 each month.

Important note: Insurance cover and the payment of any claim are subject to acceptance by the insurer. Insurance benefits are only payable under First State Super if payable under the applicable policy issued by the insurer to the Trustee. This communication contains general information only and does not take into account your specific objectives, financial situation or needs. It is therefore important, before deciding whether to become a member of First State Super (or, if you are already a member, to continue your membership) that you consider the First State Super Product Disclosure Statement (PDS) having regard to your own situation. The PDS is available by visiting our website or by calling us. The information contained in this document is current as at January 2008. Prepared by FSS Trustee Corporation ACN 118 202 672, AFSL 293340, RSE L0002127, the trustee of First State Superannuation Scheme RSE R1005134.

Let's look at the improvements in action

For someone whose employer category is Government Trading Enterprises/Light Manual

Insurance before 1 December 2007

Automatic death & TPD cover at age 45 at 1 Basic unit

Amount of cover	\$22,100
Cost per month	\$5

Insurance from 1 December 2007

Automatic death & TPD cover at age 45 at 3 Basic units

Amount of cover	\$97,800
Cost per month	\$15

Increase in automatic cover is \$75,700 for a cost of \$10 per month

No hassle special offers

Fantastic offers are available to many existing members and new employees as they join First State Super. Employer-sponsored members can apply for a **Start Up Bonus unit** of cover, giving a maximum of 4 basic cover units, and/or **Start Up Bonus income protection** cover up to a maximum amount depending on their employer's insurance rating, conditions do however apply.

There's even something for those working in a low risk job but with a high risk employer. Say if you're an accounts person working for a transportation organisation you may be pleased to hear that you can apply to have your additional insurance (new and/or existing) assessed at occupational rates. And if you earn over \$80,000 a year you can apply for a Basic Plus rating to apply to **all your insurance**, including income protection.



More information

For more information contact First State Super Customer Service on 1300 650 873 or visit www.firststatesuper.com.au

www.firststatesuper.com.au

Income 01_08