

PPTEU

Journal



EDITION 02 SPRING 2022



DIVERSITY • SKILLS • SUSTAINABILITY



PPTEU SUPPORTING MORE
WOMEN INTO THE TRADE



LABOR BRINGING FAIRNESS BACK TO IR



THE STRUGGLE GOES ON

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PADDY MCCRUDDEN



I want to **thank all PPTEU members right across the country for the resilience and strength** you have shown over the past couple of years as we all dealt with the challenges of the pandemic. As we all know, COVID is still around, and the pandemic is not quite over. However, because we continue to take sensible practical measures on site to stop the spread, the day-to-day level of disruption has eased significantly.

One of the key reasons the Australian economy was able to weather the storm of the pandemic was because the construction industry found ways to keep going. There were disruptions and there were sacrifices made – but we designed the safe work protocols and created the solutions. We **worked collaboratively with employers** and enabled the life blood of the Australian economy, the construction industry, to find the way forward.

The Australian community have done a great job facing down the challenges of the pandemic. They have done an even better job in **throwing out the tired and stale Morrison led government**. Former Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating famously said that **“when you change the government, you change the country”**. Never has that statement had so much resonance as it does today.

And, as members will no doubt have seen in the media, the newly elected Labor Government has wasted no time repairing our international reputation and implementing its domestic agenda. Importantly the Government has also taken the first step on the road to scrapping the politicised and discredited **Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC)**.

This is a good start, and good news for our industry, good news for our union, but most of all, good news for our members.

The Labor Government promised before the election that it would scrap the ABCC, and Workplace Relations Minister Tony Burke described this first move as a “downpayment” on that commitment. The Minister also confirmed that legislation to terminate the ABCC will come in later this year.

Minister Burke has introduced an **interim Code which removes a series of restrictions**, including prohibited enterprise agreement content requirements that are not imposed on other workers. This means building and construction workers will now be able to freely bargain for agreements in the same way as other workers – including agreements that include clauses promoting job security, jobs for apprentices, and safety at work.

Throwing out the coalition and re-forming the Parliament into something that better reflects the Australian population was a very positive step forward for our country. Justice and fairness are back in fashion in Canberra and there is once again a positive and collaborative dialogue between unions, big business, and the Federal Government. And, significantly, after it was so coldly rejected by the former government – the Indigenous Voice to Parliament is back on the agenda.

In the coming months there will be state elections in both Victoria (November), and NSW (March next year). It is very important for our industry that Labor wins both those elections.

Only Labor appreciates the value of our Licensing and registration system. The Liberals always want to unpick our system and try and reduce our trades to a series of

skill sets. Labor has supported our registration and licensing because it recognises how important it is for public safety to make sure that only fully trained, qualified, experienced, and registered or licenced people work on the plumbing and fire protection systems in Victoria's public, commercial and residential buildings.

The Victorian Liberals even put the kibosh on moves by the Victorian Labor Government to finally clarify the laws around private plumbing work. We were supportive of the Government's amendments to allow the VBA to issue licences for private plumbing work on residential properties owned and occupied by the plumber or relatives of the plumber. The Libs blocked the move in the Upper House of Parliament.

As well as preserving our licensing and registrations, Labor has supported our Industry to train our own. We now own and operate five training centres across the three most populous states in Australia delivering world class industry training to our members. Labor's support of PICAC, which included financial assistance, has been a key reason we have been able to build world class training infrastructure, capable of delivering world class training by Industry for Industry.

As the whole country grapples with a shortage of skilled workers, the ability our industry has to train our own people at our own facilities has never been more important. We need to grow the number of workers with skills in plumbing and fire protection, and in new energy areas like hydrogen and solar. Through PICAC we have the facilities and training know how to make that happen.

Thank you to all members for your ongoing support and contribution, and I hope members enjoy this national edition of the PPTEU Journal.

SUICIDE IN CONSTRUCTION

Suicide. It is hard to talk about, hard to understand and very often, hard to foresee. Suicide is a particular problem amongst men, men who work in our sector, and young men especially. It is costing and ruining lives right across our industry.

The fact that suicide is a major problem in the Australian construction industry is not news. The construction sector is keenly aware of the confronting issues it has relating to men's health. It is, after all, **the industry with the highest rate of male suicide in Australia.**

BETWEEN 2001 TO 2018 THERE WERE 3621 SUICIDES BY MALE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS IN AUSTRALIA, AND 9918 SUICIDES AMONG EMPLOYED MALES IN OTHER OCCUPATIONS.

Sadly, the problem has existed for decades, and, even more sadly, it does not seem to be getting any better. Men in the construction industry are 53 per cent more likely to die by suicide than other employed males in this country. That's **more than 190 construction workers a year.**

In a sector with stringent health and safety regulations, research commissioned by the national suicide prevention group Mates in Construction found that **death by suicide in the sector is six times higher than death due to site accidents.**

Everyone who works in our sector has been touched in some way by suicide. Many of us have lost friends, colleagues, or family

members. All of us have **seen the emotional devastation left behind after suicide.**

So why does it keep happening? The answers to that question are complex, multi-faceted and vary from individual to individual. If it was easy to fix it would be fixed by now.

Organisations like Mates In Construction, the Incolink Blue Hats program, and others, do a great job and make a positive difference, but the problem is stubborn.

SPEAK UP

In a recent interview, Mates in Construction New South Wales CEO Brad Parker said "One of the big issues was that 93 per cent of construction workers who had committed suicide in the past had never sought professional help,"

"They either didn't know where to find it, they didn't want to, or— here's the big one—they weren't encouraged to."

"She'll be right" attitude costs lives

In a male-dominated culture, Mates in Construction case manager Kate Wilson said the "she'll be right" attitude played a part.

"There's a **stigma** for men talking to others about psychological stress and their feelings if they're not coping," Wilson said. "As we know, suicide can be due to multiple reasons with work and home directly overlapping."

The spiral can start from a **relationship break down**, or any kind of loss, from loss of a loved one through to financial loss through gambling. Wilson said this was the case for up to 80-90 per cent of the males she speaks to.

"Your relationship ends and next you've got unexpected **financial problems...** And suddenly you don't know which way is up," she said.

Wilson said a lack of **job security** was also a factor.



"It's the only industry I know where they work excruciatingly long hours only to work themselves out of a job—every six months," she said. "They work their heart out and then the job ends."

Meanwhile, the aim to complete large projects on-budget means project **delivery timelines** are not always realistic and can be prioritised over employee wellbeing.

We need to "normalise" the conversation about suicide

The **pressures on individuals** can be complex and significant. We never really know what somebody is dealing with. We don't know all the

answers, but we do know that talking helps a great deal, and a conversation can be a place to start, and a doorway to help.

Not much good came from the COVID pandemic, but one positive is that the topic of mental health had been brought to the forefront.

The more the topic of mental health and suicide is out there in the media, the more we can **continue to normalise the conversation**, the better. At the end of the day, you spend more time with your workmates than you do at home. It can be the small and seemingly insignificant conversations that mean the most to people.

HELP & SUPPORT IS OUT THERE

Mates in Construction **1300 642 111**

Lifeline **13 11 14**

Beyond Blue **1300 22 46 36**

Headspace **1800 650 890**

If you are struggling, reach out and talk to a professional. It might just be the most important call you ever make.



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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN

VICTORIA



EARL SETCHES



There has been plenty happening in Victoria these past few months, and we still have some important times ahead before 2022 is over.

Happily, we all worked together and threw out the insipid and small-minded Morrison government. **By electing Labor federally**, the people of Australia have voted for a return to fairness in industrial relations, the end of the anti-union Building Code, some real action on climate change, and a plan to create real and lasting jobs for Australian workers as the country transitions to its new energy future. And the skills of our members are going to be the key to unlocking and enabling that future.

The next **Victorian state election is in November**, so it is just around the corner. With all the focus on what the federal government does, with the ABCC and the Building Code etc, it is easy to forget that the **regulations made at State level are as important**, if not more important to our industry and our members. That is because the way the industry functions is regulated at a State level, and in Victoria, that means licensing and registration. **It is our licensing and registration system that underpins our wages and conditions**. It is what sets us apart from the rest because it is verification of our competency, skills, and training.

Our licensing and registration is **a precious and valuable thing**, and yet the Libs always attack it. They don't understand that plumbing and fire protection work is a series of interlocking skills and **layers of knowledge**. It is a trade, not a sequence of disconnected and fragmented skill sets. But that is what the conservative side of politics always try and reduce it to. We won't let them. And the best way to ensure that doesn't happen is to make sure we all get behind Labor at the election this November.

There are some major issues with the way our industry operates in Victoria,

and it is not perfect, but **overall it functions safely**. For example, we need the regulator, the VBA, to do more, especially in plumbing and fire protection. In our part of the industry, through our compliance certificates, we tip in about \$20M every year to the VBA, but we don't get much bang for our buck. This is a constant work in progress, and we hope and expect that a re-elected Labor government will address this issue.

One of the big emerging issues for our sector, and it is happening right across the economy, is a **shortage of skilled workers**. There is more work out there than there are skilled workers to do it, and so we need to grow the base. **We need more skilled and trained plumbers, fire protection and HVAC professionals**. We need to build our capacity by attracting and retaining **more women** into the skilled trades, providing more opportunities to **Indigenous Australians**, to people living in regional areas and to cultural groups who have not traditionally worked in our industry. This is something we are focussing on now, developing programs and **reviewing our traditional approaches** to recruitment and retention to ensure we make a career in our industry a possibility for more young and older Australians, regardless of gender, location, or background.

Something else that is very much in focus now, and will be in the months and years to come, is the future of gas in Victoria. As members will appreciate, the Victorian economy has run on gas for generations. Victoria is the biggest gas using State in the country and under our feet is one of the most sophisticated gas infrastructure networks in the world. Yet, as members may be aware, the future of gas, in all States, has come under serious threat as governments seek to de-carbonise their economies. As we have covered at length in the Journal before, we think there are some real issues when it comes to reducing or removing gas altogether from the energy mix. And, we think green hydrogen, which can be blended with natural gas and transported in the existing network, could be the key here.

There is a genuine buzz about **green hydrogen or renewable gas**, because it is starting to look like the real deal. It offers us a genuinely zero emissions way to transport energy.

The science behind green hydrogen or renewable gas production is relatively straightforward. All we need to do is take cheap renewable energy – which there is going to be plenty of – and use it to split water into hydrogen and oxygen. We then store the hydrogen in pipes, blend it with natural gas and pump into homes. Or, put it on trucks, ship it overseas, or send it by pipeline. Then use the hydrogen for transport, manufacturing, or electricity production.

Transitioning to hydrogen will require some **dedicated training**. We have the capability and skills to do this through our own training facilities at PICAC. Hydrogen is a great example of why the PICAC model is so important. Developing and delivering the necessary hydrogen related training and rolling it out in a timely and industry relevant way, would be very challenging if the central point of coordination and collaboration which **PICAC** provides did not exist.

Plumbers and gasfitters are the natural trade occupation to carry out the installation and ongoing maintenance of hydrogen products. But working safely with hydrogen requires specific skills and training. To enable hydrogen to be incorporated into Australia's energy mix, plumbers' gasfitting training can readily be – and is being – modified to accommodate hydrogen. **We are at the forefront of these developments**.

Thank you to all the Victorian members for all the work you have put in, especially through the past couple of years of the pandemic. Stay safe out there on site and let's make sure we complete a great year by getting Labor re-elected in Victoria this November.

***We kicked Scomo out!
Now let's get Labor
re-elected in Victoria!***



It was great to get rid of the Morrison Government in May. In **November this year** Victorian's will go back to the polls, this time to decide who will lead our State for the next four years. No doubt there are a range of views amongst members about the Government and people are of course free to like or dislike whoever they want. But if you want to put what is best for you, your family, and your industry first, there is no doubt Labor is the way to go.

ONLY LABOR UNDERSTANDS OUR INDUSTRY

Unlike the Liberals, who are always looking to break down our trades into a series of skill sets so they can drive down labour costs, Labor appreciates the value of our licensing and registration system. Labor has supported our registration and licensing because it recognises how important it is for public safety to make sure that only fully trained, qualified, experienced, and registered or licenced people work on the plumbing and fire protection systems in Victoria's public, commercial and residential buildings.

As well as preserving our licensing and registrations, Victorian Labor has supported our Industry to train our own. We now have three industry owned and operated training centres in Brunswick, Narre Warren, and Geelong. Labor's support of PICAC, which included financial assistance, has been a key

reason we have been able to build world class training infrastructure, capable of delivering world class training by Industry for Industry.

Whilst the Opposition in Victoria, such as it is, makes a lot of noise, it lacks any direction. By contrast, the Andrews Government gets on with the job. Victoria is in the middle of a massive state building infrastructure program – roads, rail tunnels, schools, correctional facilities as well as a huge health infrastructure agenda, building major hospitals in the suburbs and in key regional centres. We are a vital part of that program, with our members providing the badly needed skilled labour to ensure the plumbing and fire protection systems in those new buildings and facilities are safe and compliant.



POLICY AND REGULATION

In terms of Industry development, there has been a fair bit going on behind the scenes in Victoria. As members would no doubt appreciate, Victoria, like developed economies around the world, is seeking opportunities to decarbonise its economy, especially when it comes to energy. In Victoria, which is more heavily reliant on natural gas for heating and cooking than any other state or territory, the energy discussion has focussed on the future of gas. The Government had planned on releasing its Gas Transition Roadmap in July this year but has decided to hold it

back until after the election.

This is good news for our Industry, because it gives us additional time to make the case for hydrogen and in particular “green hydrogen” (produced using renewable energy with the only bi-product being water). Green hydrogen, otherwise known as renewable gas, can potentially be blended with natural gas, and used in the existing pipework and with existing appliances. We have been advocating strongly for the future energy mix in Victoria to include a key role for renewable gas.

AUTOMATIC MUTUAL RECOGNITION

The other big policy/regulatory type issue on the agenda recently, and one which could significantly impact our Industry if it is not well managed, is Automatic Mutual recognition (AMR). The theory behind AMR is straightforward enough. The rationale goes that to drive economic efficiency, we need to better enable workers to freely move about the country. The idea is that “skills are skills”, and people qualified to work in a particular trade or industry in one State or Territory should be able to have their skills and qualifications recognised in other states without needing to go through a whole lot of administrative hassle. That is,

their qualifications would be automatically recognised in the receiving jurisdiction.

However, there are similarities across Australian jurisdictions, but there are also some big differences. And it is those differences which are important in the context of AMR because they can bring risk because:

- a plumbing or fire protection registration or licence does not mean



exactly the same thing in every State or Territory. A plumbing licence in New South Wales does not mean quite the same thing or carry the same responsibilities and accountabilities as it does in Victoria etc.

- There are also major differences in the regulatory approaches adopted in different States, which adds a layer of risk and complexity when thinking about the practicalities of AMR.
- Victoria (unlike anywhere else in Australia) operates as a self-certification model, placing significant responsibility on the individual licenced person to certify to the quality, compliance and safety of their work.
- Despite having a nationally recognised training package delivering qualifications that are largely the same

in every State or Territory, differences exist between the defined scopes of work across jurisdictions.

These differences mean that opening the entire Victorian Industry up to AMR is too dangerous. This risk is greatly reduced if AMR applies only to registered practitioners (ie those working under the supervision of a Licenced practitioner).

That is the basis upon which we were able to successfully lobby the Victorian Government to ensure that until at least July 2023, AMR only applies to registered workers, and only in those categories where there is genuine like for like comparability across states (AMR does not apply to registration for gasfitting, fire protection or stormwater until at least July 2023).



Our system here in Victoria is not perfect, but in a big picture sense, it works. Our sector is safe and that's because we only allow skilled and qualified people to work in it, and we don't want to see that change.



VICAROUND



THE TRAPS



VIC AROUND THE TRAPS

2023 RDO

VICTORIAN CALENDAR

36 HOUR WEEK

MAY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

AUGUST

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

NOVEMBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

JANUARY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

MARCH

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

JUNE

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

SEPTEMBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

DECEMBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
31					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

FEBRUARY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

APRIL

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
30						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

JULY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
30	31					1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

OCTOBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

- Public Holiday
- Annual Leave
- School Holidays
- Lock Down Weekends
- RDO
- Picnic Day
- World Plumbing Day

Return to work on 10th Jan 2024

VICTORIAN SCHOOL TERM DATES

TERM 1: 30 January 2023 - 6 April 2023
 TERM 2: 24 April 2023 - 23 June 2023
 TERM 3: 10 July 2023 - 15 September 2023
 TERM 4: 2 October 2023 - 20 December 2023

PUBLIC HOLIDAY DATES

New Year's Day: Sunday 1 January
 New Year's Day: Monday 2 January
 Australia Day: Thursday 26 January
 Labour Day: Monday 13 March
 Good Friday: Friday 7 April
 Easter Saturday: Saturday 8 April
 Easter Sunday: Sunday 9 April
 Easter Monday: Monday 10 April
 Anzac Day: Tuesday 25 April

Queens Birthday: Monday 12 June
 Grand Final Eve: Friday 29 September
 Melbourne Cup Day: Tuesday 7 November
 Christmas Day: Monday 25 December
 Boxing Day: Tuesday 26 December

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN

NEW SOUTH WALES & THE ACT



THEO SAMARTZOPOULOS



Hello members.

With the Federal election run and won, our focus is firmly to NSW, where we **need to fix a series of problems with the way the Industry is operating and get Labor elected** next March.

In less than a year we get an opportunity to change the government at State level in NSW and it is vitally important that we do. In plumbing and fire protection, as well as the broader construction sector, the issues just keep accumulating – around quality and compliance, enforcement and insurance, integrity, financial viability and the government seems unwilling or unable to do anything about any of them.

In our part of the sector, plumbing and fire protection, the **same policy inertia** exists. We seem to have endless rounds of reviews and consultation processes about licensing and regulation “improvements”, but the improvements are hard to find and slow to eventuate.

In **Fire Protection** for example, an anomaly currently exists whereby a licence is required to install a fire protection system, and a thorough and comprehensive qualification is required to obtain that licence, yet no licence is required by those currently allowed to inspect, test and maintain those systems. It makes no sense from a risk management perspective, especially in the heightened risk environment created by the use of flammable cladding on a range of buildings in NSW. We continue to turn up and make the government aware of the high risks attached to this situation, yet it remains.

In **Mechanical Services**, we have a new **licensing system coming on March 1** next year. This means that work involved in the construction, installation, replacement, repair, alteration, maintenance, testing or commissioning of a mechanical heating, cooling or ventilation system in a building, which is associated with the heating, cooling or ventilation of that building, must be undertaken by a licenced practitioner.

Even though the legislation establishing Mechanical Services as a licenced stream

of work has been in place for some time, (and Mechanical Services has been defined in the Regs) the looming implementation date of 1 March 2023 has apparently **not been well communicated** to, or understood by, industry stakeholders. Stakeholders are now focussing on the scope of works for Mechanical Services (and, by implication, the scope of works for **Refrigerated Air Conditioning**) and identifying areas of overlap, and complexity which need clarification.

These issues of scope need to be worked through in detail, as do issues relating to the potential “grandfathering” of identified experience workers and contractors and a range of other practical implementation issues, such as the role and value of the ARC licence, if any. **Communications with stakeholders by the government about the changes has been virtually non-existent**, and we are calling on them to put a greater effort into preparing the sector for this important reform. The new arrangements need to be communicated to and understood by the sector.

THEO SAMARTZOPOULOS

That is just one example of why we need a change of government. We need a government that understands our industry. **We need a Labor government in NSW** because only Labor:

- understands and respect the value of your licence
- appreciates the link between good quality, complaint plumbing work and community health and safety
- knows that industry led training and the PICAC model of industry collaboration in training design and delivery works – for students, workers, and employers – and is key to our ability to adapt to a changing climate.

We also need a government that understands that the Industry is facing challenges and pressures on a range of fronts. We, like the economy as a whole, is challenged by a sort of **“COVID hangover”**. We are seeing steep increases in material prices, and supply chain blockages causing delays in stock availability. There is also a **lag effect with**

some jobs being slow to start due to pauses on developer funding during the COVID lockdowns.

On top of all this, most jobs that are in ground have copped the worst from **rain/floods** we have ever seen, which has further delayed the process.

The positive side to the current situation is we know there is a lot of work in Sydney coming up. Organisers are working with members on sites right across the Sydney area, as well as in the regions. As well as extensive civil works going on, we have **major health infrastructure jobs** such as Shellharbour Hospital, Bankstown Hospital and Royal Prince Alfred Redevelopment all worth around the \$500 million dollar mark in the pipeline.

Other major works in the pipeline include:

- Mirvac's \$2B Darling Harbour redevelopment
- Powerhouse Ultimo renewal
- The New Powerhouse Museum Parramatta (Lend Lease)

- Roberts Co & John Holland at Macquarie Park
- Aqualand North Sydney
- Western Sydney Airport (Multiplex)
- Liverpool Hospital
- One Sydney Harbour (Lend Lease)

And there are many more projects underway and coming up. The point I want members to take away is that there is **plenty of work about and demand for our skills has never been higher**. The delays are being worked through and supply chains are gradually unclogging so there should be plenty of work to keep us all going for a long time to come.

BRIAN WINDSOR



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE ACT?

Thankfully, after years of enduring a do-nothing Federal Government, the people of Australia said enough is enough and booted Scomo and his crew from office in May. We now have the chance, under Labor, to get on with the job of building a low carbon, high skill economy, one in which the skills of our members will be in high demand.

Moving forward, the **outlook for our members in terms of major works** underway or coming up in the ACT is very positive. Our skills, like many others in the economy, are in **high demand** right now and there will be no shortage of work opportunities.

As well as the huge amount of residential work in and around Canberra, especially in residential apartment buildings, there are **major public infrastructure** projects happening in, such as:

- \$500M job Multiplex are doing to expand the Canberra Hospital
- \$500M multistage War Memorial project
- \$300 Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) job in Woden

These are just some of the major works, with many others on the go or about to come on. As well as plenty of work, the other positive development coming down the line is that the **new EBA pay rates** kicked in from June 1 or July 1 (depending on which company EBA).

As has been well covered throughout the election campaign, living costs are on the rise so it is great that our members saw a **4 per cent pay increase** in their bank accounts in this Financial Year. This represents just reward for the skills, training, and qualifications of our members.

With great pay and conditions and plenty of work, it is no surprise that there are a growing number of **young people seeking to enter our great industry**. Happily, this year we have more first year apprentices beginning plumbing apprenticeships at the Canberra Institute of Technology than ever before, with **135 first years** enrolled.

Unfortunately, not all our members are as safe as they should be at work. Currently on the **Snowy Hydro 2.0 Project** – a huge public infrastructure project and the biggest renewable energy project ever undertaken in Australia – our members and members from other unions are being subjected to dangerous and unacceptable conditions. There have been numerous safety issues on site plaguing the project. There have also been **big issues off-site**, with power outages in the residential camp, **freezing conditions** and poor or **no heating** provided.

These conditions are not acceptable, and we will be working hard with the project managers and all the union safety reps to improve the situation – **quickly**.



MECHANICAL SERVICES WILL BE LICENCED WORK IN NSW FROM 1 MARCH, 2023

NEW LICENSING

Mechanical Services licensing will be introduced in NSW from 1 March 2023.

This means that from this date, a Mechanical Services licence will be required to do Mechanical Services work in NSW. The legislative changes, which were made in 2020, were prompted by the need for medical gases licensing but also include provisions that create a licensing framework for the broader Mechanical Services stream of plumbing.

Members will recall the legislation was introduced in response to two incidents in Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital in

2016. That's when medical gases were incorrectly piped in one of the operating theatres, leading to two babies being administered nitrous oxide instead of oxygen. One of the babies died, the other was left with severe brain damage.

WHY WE SUPPORT THE LICENSING OF MECHANICAL SERVICES WORK

We strongly supported the introduction of Medical Gas licensing, and we strongly support the regulation of the broader Mechanical Services stream of work.

When it comes to anything to with regulating our industry, our goal is ensuring that plumbing and related work – whether it be fire protection or HVAC or sanitary work – is undertaken by people with the training and qualifications necessary to do that work safely and effectively.

We are talking about dangerous work here – work which if not done correctly can, will and has, cost lives. **For too long this work has been regulated and licenced work in other parts of the country, but the people of NSW have been exposed to unnecessary risks.**

For over a decade in Victoria and Queensland, work on the mechanical heating, ventilation and cooling systems of their shopping centres, hospitals, schools, and all buildings has been done by licenced Mechanical Services plumbers. But not here in NSW – until now. It has been a “free

for all”, and this new licensing system puts an end to that and to the disparity between the most populous states.

We need to **keep modernising and updating the rules which govern our Industry** because the sector is growing and evolving all the time. Construction is a vitally important sector for the NSW economy. Construction in NSW is worth more than **\$60 billion** and is one of the biggest employers, behind the hospitality industry, generating more than 350,000 **jobs**. Plumbing, including Mechanical Services, is an increasingly big part of that. Property is also a central element of the family finances for millions of NSW families. A safe, well designed, and competently constructed built environment is also a vital part of the amenity, liveability and international appeal of NSW cities, suburbs, and regions.



WHAT WORK DOES A MECHANICAL SERVICES LICENCE THE LICENCE COVER?

For the purposes of the licence, the definition of Mechanical Services work is that which is in the relevant legislation, the NSW Home Building Act 1989 Schedule 1 of the Home Building Act). See below:

DEFENITION OF MECHANICAL SERVICES WORK

Mechanical Services and Medical Gas work —

(a) the construction, installation, replacement, repair, alteration, maintenance, testing or commissioning of a mechanical heating, cooling or ventilation system in a building, which is associated with the heating, cooling or ventilation of that building, and includes the following—

(i) any valve, regulator, register, pipe, duct, flue, tank, heating or cooling pipe or surface, boiler, burner, solid fuel heater, coil or other item that is used in the system,

(ii) in the case of a cooling tower, any water pipe, valve, pump, automated dosing device or automated bleeding device or any other mechanical component that affects the cooling tower's cooling water flow rate or wastewater disposal,

(iii) roof sheeting and roof flashing that is necessary for the purpose of any work described in this paragraph or paragraphs (b)–(d), and

(b) medical gasfitting work, and

(c) the installation, commissioning and any incidental design work that is associated with the installation and commissioning of—

(i) any part of a single head split system,

or

(ii) a ceiling cassette system, or

(iii) an add-on condenser unit for a ducted system, that is associated with the heating and cooling of a building, and

(d) any design work that is incidental to, or associated with, any work described in paragraphs (a) and

(b), but does not include the following—

(e) gasfitting work,

(f) any work on a cooling tower drift eliminator,

(g) any treatment of cooling or heating water,

(h) any cleaning of a cooling tower,

(i) disassembly or reassembly of a flue terminal for the purposes of cleaning a solid fuel heater

(j) the connection or disconnection of a system referred to in paragraphs

(a)–(d) from a water supply other than disconnection of the system from a water supply at an isolating valve adjacent to a mechanical component of that system.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO BE LICENCED IN MECHANICAL SERVICES?

To be eligible to be licenced in Mechanical Services in NSW, from 1 March 2023 you will be required to have successfully completed either a Certificate III in Plumbing (Mechanical Services) or a Certificate III in Plumbing.

You will also need to have successfully completed two key medical gas units from the Construction, Plumbing and Services Training Package and be able to demonstrate that you have at least two years of experience in mechanical services and medical gas work obtained before, during or after the completion of that qualification.

WORK IS ONGOING

As members know, there is some overlap between the various streams of plumbing and related work, and **different licence classes have different scopes of work and different training pathways.**

When it comes to Mechanical Services work, there is some overlap with work done by non-Mechanical Services trained practitioners, such as those with a Refrigerated Air Conditioning (RAC) licence.

There are **some intersection points, and some areas overlap between the two streams of work, but there are also some clear delineation points.** Installing, maintaining, and servicing refrigerated air conditioning systems is something clearly within the domain of RAC licence holders. And, the construction, installation, replacement, repair, alteration, maintenance, testing or commissioning of a mechanical heating, cooling or ventilation system in a building is clearly Mechanical Services work.

But we know that the way the Industry functions is not always as straightforward as lines in legislation. **The challenge with differentiating between the scopes of work is that oftentimes they are performing different types of activities on the same or interrelated components as part of the one overarching system.** For example, a mechanical services plumber may have the

training, experience, and competency to install a piece of plant or equipment (e.g., a chiller) but not test, fault find, or repair it, which would be the role of a service technician (air conditioning and refrigeration).

In some cases, both occupations may have the competency to perform similar activities (for example, installation or replacement) on the same piece of equipment, just at different stages of the life of an asset (e.g., during the construction process versus services and maintenance).

We, along with other stakeholder, are working with the Office of Fair Trading with a view to **clarifying any identified “grey areas”** relating to the Mechanical Services scope of work.

With the Mechanical Services licensing architecture in place, we will also be seeking opportunities to work collaboratively with the Department of Fair Trading to **develop recognised regulatory pathways for more skilled workers.** Workers who are a key part of the trade, yet who are not seeking or do not need a full Certificate III level qualification. Duct installers are a case in point, as are some sheet metal workers and others.

The more skills are recognised, and licensing pathways developed, the more confidence the community has that the buildings they live and work in are safe.

2023 RDO

NEW SOUTH WALES CALENDAR

36 HOUR WEEK

JANUARY						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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FEBRUARY						
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MARCH						
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APRIL						
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MAY						
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JUNE						
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JULY						
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AUGUST						
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SEPTEMBER						
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OCTOBER						
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NOVEMBER						
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DECEMBER						
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- Annual Leave (optional)
- Flexible RDO
- □ Designated Long Weekend
- Public Holiday
- World Plumbing Day
- Picnic Day
- Scheduled RDO

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Autumn Holidays: 10th April 2023 to 21st April 2023
 Winter Holidays: 3rd July 2023 to 14th July 2023
 Spring Holidays: 25th September to 6th October 2023
 Summer Holidays: 20th December to 29th January 2024

PUBLIC/PICNIC HOLIDAY DATES

New Year's Day: Monday 2nd January
 Australia Day: Thursday 26th January
 Good Friday: Friday 15th April
 Holy Saturday: Saturday 8th April
 Easter Sunday: Sunday 9th April
 Easter Monday: Monday 10th April
 Anzac Day: Tuesday 25th April
 Queen's Birthday: Monday 12th June
 Labour Day: Monday 2nd October
 Picnic Day: Monday 4th December
 Christmas Day: Monday 25th December
 Boxing Day: Tuesday 26th December

2023 RDO

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY CALENDAR

38 HOUR WEEK

JANUARY						
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FEBRUARY						
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JUNE						
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AUGUST						
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SEPTEMBER						
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OCTOBER						
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NOVEMBER						
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DECEMBER						
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- Public Holiday
- RDO
- Canberra Day
- Reconciliation Day
- World plumbing Day

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Autumn Holidays: 7th April 2023 to 23rd April 2023
Winter Holidays: 1st July 2023 to 16th July 2023
Spring Holidays: 23rd September to 8th October 2023
Summer Holidays: 16th December to 29th January 2024

PUBLIC HOLIDAY DATES

New Year's Day: Monday 2nd January
Australia Day: Thursday 26th January
Canberra Day: Monday 13th March
Good Friday: Friday 7th April

Easter Saturday: Saturday 8th April
Easter Sunday: Sunday 9th April
Easter Monday: Monday 10th April
Anzac Day: Tuesday 25th April
Reconciliation Day: Monday 29th May

Queen's Birthday: Monday 12th June
Labour Day: Monday 2nd October
Christmas Day: Monday 25th December
Boxing Day: Tuesday 26th December



NSW & ACT ARO



FOUND THE TRAPS

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN

WESTERN AUSTRALIA



BRIAN BINTLEY



THE WORKING MEN AND WOMEN OF WA DESERVE A BETTER DEAL

Dear members,

Thank you for the opportunity to give an update on how things are going in Western Australia.

Like union members and their supporters right across this great country, we were **very pleased to see the back of Scott Morrison** and his cronies earlier this year, and to see Labor assume control in Canberra. It simply had to happen if the country was going to have any chance of recovering from COVID and dealing with all the challenges we face – from climate change to skills shortages.

The national government sets the tone for how politics is conducted in this country, and we are very **encouraged by the collaborative and inclusive approach** being adopted by the Albanese Government in its first few months in office. We were also very happy to see that it has already taken steps towards abolishing the ABCC.

We are less encouraged by what is happening on the Industrial Relations front here in the West. WA is in the best financial shape of any Australian State or Territory, yet workers in this State are being left behind. Some workers in the economy, like our skilled members, who are well represented and have good pay and conditions are doing alright. But others in our great State, especially those in the public sector, are doing it very tough as the cost-of-living pressures continue to mount.

That is why, in August, the **PPTEU joined in solidarity** with thousands of WA health workers, police, teachers and other public sector workers and rallied at the WA Parliament demanding a better

deal. The rally (see photos on adjacent page) was the culmination of six weeks of escalating industrial action, as public sector workers, their unions and other unions denounced the state government's wages policy.

WA's public sector workers want a 5 per cent pay rise, and Premier Mark McGowan is offering 3 per cent, describing his government as 'very generous'. **We do not think it's a very generous offer, or a fair one.** As Unions WA Secretary Owen Whittle said when addressing the rally:

"Workers deserve more. We can't pay the bills with thanks or a pat on the back, we deserve a real pay rise. We are living in the wealthiest state in the country... we are seeing budget surplus after budget surplus from the state government. There is money for everything, except for the workers who keep our state running and our community safe."

The attitude of the Labor government in WA to workers is disappointing to say the least. It comes at a time when **attracting and retaining workers in key sectors has never been more important or more challenging.** There is a nationwide shortage of skilled workers across all major sectors of the economy, including the construction trades. We are going to need about another 50,000 workers to meet the demand in WA (mining, infrastructure, energy, the care economy etc), but the government seems to be doing very little to look after the workers it has, let alone attract new ones.

In our industry, and right across the economy, we believe **the solution lies in training up our own people**

rather than relying on skilled workers from overseas. We recognise the value skilled migrants can bring to the WA economy but **importing skills cannot be the only solution.** We need to attract more young people, older workers, women, and people from regional WA into our trades, and train them up right here in WA.

Keeping a close eye on the future of our trades is very important, but **our core business is ensuring that our members receive the best pay and the safest conditions** we can deliver for them. That is why we are continuously on the lookout for new members, and seeking to sign up new companies to Enterprise Agreements.

And we are having success. We recently **signed Agreements** with Christopher Contracting Plumbing & Drainage (CCP&D), Chubb Fire Protection (Perth) and with Wormald Service Fire Protection. Votes are coming up for Agreements with ARA Fire Protection and National Fire Solutions;

Negotiations are underway with Chubb Fire Protection (Bunbury) and Veolia Plumbing and Gas (Alcoa Alumina mine site, Pinjarra and Wagerup). Further negotiations will be starting in January 2023.

Thank you for taking the time to read about your union in WA. Please stay safe, continue to follow the COVID rules at work and at home, and ensure your vaccinations are up to date. And please, as always, remember to **keep an eye out for your mates.** Mental health and suicide are major issues for our industry, and the best thing we can do for our mates is to check in on them and offer a friendly ear where you can.



WA AROUND THE TRAPS

2023 RDO WESTERN AUSTRALIA CALENDAR

38 HOUR WEEK

MAY

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AUGUST

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NOVEMBER

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JANUARY

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MARCH

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JUNE

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SEPTEMBER

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DECEMBER

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FEBRUARY

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APRIL

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JULY

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OCTOBER

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Public Holiday
School Holidays
RDO

- *The RDOs are required to be set each year for the State Building Trades (Construction) Industry Award.
- The RDO calendar may also be adopted by business's covered by the Building Construction (General) On site Award 2020 – (modern award).
- When New Year's Day falls on a Saturday or Sunday the next following Monday is also a public holiday.
- Easter Sunday was established as a public holiday in Western Australia in February 2022.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN

QUEENSLAND



GARY O'HALLORAN



For the first time since 2013 we have a Federal Labor Government! This is a massive win for workers, and we are already seeing positive change.

The new federal government is completely defunding the ABCC with a view to then abolishing it through legislation! The ABCC denies workers the right to a safe workplace. It also stops Union and employer representatives from easily meeting on worksites and prevents the ability to go to the FWC to determine many disputes.

We look forward to being able to effectively represent workers' rights on site, and ensure they go home to their families at the end of the day, with the support of our new Labor government.

This year we have been revamping our Youth Crew and PPTEU Women groups, engaging with our members, educating and learning from them. We had a massive turn out to our first Youth Crew meeting earlier this year, and it was great to see so many of our young members getting involved with the future of their union, we look forward to seeing what they can achieve!

Our PPTEU Women have been regularly meeting this year, building a network in our industry and we are committed to giving them the

platform and support they need moving forward. Our new relationship with the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) is already benefiting our industry, helping to develop programs to assist our members in educating and supporting women in our industry.

Wrapping up EB9 this year, with EB10 negotiations kicking off in the second half of 2022. We've already had several general meetings with members, but if you missed these don't worry, we have dedicated EBA Log of Claims meetings coming up in Brisbane, Gold Coast, and the Sunshine Coast. Make sure you keep an eye out for these so you can have your say.

The Hydrogen Centre of Excellence is moving full steam ahead, and our team is on the forefront of developments in Hydrogen training and technology. Our Program Manager Rian Kelso attended the Australian Hydrogen Conference in May and spoke to Hydrogen development experts from all around Australia. We are committed to ensuring our Hydrogen Training Centre will be the safest, most state of the art, so our members receive the best possible training for the future of this industry.

Congratulations to John Thompson our newest Life Member. We awarded John with his badge and certificate at the Brisbane May Day

celebrations this year. We got to hear a little of his experience on the tools and in our union for the last 47 Years. Our Union is lucky to have members as committed and invested as John Thompson. A union is only as strong as its members.

Thanks to all our members and their families who marched at the Brisbane May Day celebration this year. We had such an amazing turn out. Our union was recognised as 'Best Contingent' for the second time in three years! We're a small union marching alongside massive groups like the QNMU and ASU, so being recognised like that just goes to show how much of a difference member's showing up and sticking together makes.

Our Union is doing everything it can to look after you. Getting out to site, keeping your entitlements protected and helping members get trained. Contact your organiser or the Union Office if you need a hand.

It is only by sticking together that we can look after each other, protect what we have and continue the gains we have fought so hard for. Breaking from solidarity will only cost us all!

LIFE MEMBER: JOHN THOMPSON



Life Membership is the highest honour the PPTEU can confer on a member for services rendered.

John Thompson is only the 10th member in Qld to receive this honour.

Congratulations John, the PPTEU has been built on your commitment and dedication to our union.

Thank you for your service.

2023 RDO

QLD/NT CALENDAR

36 HOUR WEEK

JANUARY

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SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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SEPTEMBER

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OCTOBER

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NOVEMBER

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DECEMBER

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- EBA RDOs
- Industry RDO
- Public Holidays
- School Holidays
- Brisbane Holidays



WOMEN

This year we have had the privilege of building our PPTEU Women group, connecting with the ladies in our industry, learning from our tradeswomen, and apprentices.

We have so far held three meetings and we're lucky enough to have our national network getting involved!

We look forward to growing our network and finding new ways to support our members in this space as we continue to meet monthly with our PPTEU Women.

We have also been developing our relationship with the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC), an amazing not-for-profit organisation run by a passionate team of women in the construction industry.

We already teamed up with NAWIC to host the Women on Tools Breakfast, at the PICAC Beenleigh Training Centre, where we heard from; Hon Shannon Fentiman, Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Melissa McMahon, Member for Macalister, CEO and QBCC Commissioner, Ms Anissa Levy, Sheree Taylor, NAWIC Chapter President and Qld Chapter President, as well as women in the construction industry.

Take a look here:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=jXZspFSVzFM



PPTEU **YOUTH CREW**

We have been revamping our Youth Crew Program this year, and what a kick-off!

The first meeting was held in April and was a great start, a huge number of under 35's attended, and we look forward to many more meetings, with the next one scheduled for 28th of July. The Youth Crew Committee also met for the first time in June and were excited to see the youth crew develop with their leadership.



GREEN HAT PROGRAM DOING IT FOR AARON!



In an emotional show of solidarity, more than 300 workers on Lendlease's Kingscliff Tweed Hospital site stand behind a photo of Aaron Fryer who at 17, is one of the youngest to die on a construction site in Australia.

Holding the photo is a Plumber of 35 years, Byron Davies. He knows the Fryer family and for him, ensuring Aaron is remembered 10 years on from his tragic death, is deeply personal.

Just five weeks into his Plumbing Apprenticeship in Sydney 2012, Aaron died when he was struck by an unsecured excavator bucket.

It was later revealed in Court not only had the operator failed to insert the safety pin in the quick hitch to prevent the bucket coming loose, but that this was common practice to save time.

Every Memorial Day, on 28 April, Byron and his fellow worker's in conjunction with the site Safety Committee stand with Aaron – and share Aaron's story.

Ten years on, Aaron remains one of the youngest to die on a construction site in Australia and his face is a powerful reminder that young and inexperienced workers need to be looked after and supervised.

LENLEASE APPLAUDED FOR GREEN HAT INITIATIVE

In an industry first, Lendlease have introduced the use of green hard hats on the Tweed Hospital site – one of the largest projects in New South Wales.

Ian and Justine Fryer applaud the move and want to see the initiative rolled out Australia-wide.

Aaron's motorcycle racing colour was green, so the poignancy of the initiative is not lost on them.

It is their wish that Green Hats for Aaron be part of Site Induction – believing that his story will save young lives.

Industry officials back the move including Plumbers' Union Representative Luke Barden who says; *"the time has well and truly come for significant and purposeful*

changes that can give some meaning to Aaron's senseless and avoidable death."

Retired Workcover Trainer and TAFE teacher of more than 30 years, Ian Anderson agrees:

'It is vital that we can easily identify our most vulnerable on-site; see if they are supervised and if they are in an unsafe environment.

'There are huge benefits being able to quickly identify young, inexperienced workers on building sites and I have no doubt that had Aaron been wearing a green hat, he may still be alive today.

'As a trainer, I can see how talking about Aaron's story and wearing green hard hats would be hugely beneficial in saving young lives.'

Lendlease Safety Manager, Matthew Smith, says that while not all Lendlease sites have implemented the green hats policy, he can see the benefits and hopes to see more sites taking up the initiative.





QLD AROUND



THE TRAPS





Industrial Relations

FEDERAL LABOR'S IR AGENDA IS RESTORING FAIRNESS FOR WORKERS



For the last ten years we have seen the federal Coalition government pass one piece of legislation after the next, that chipped away at conditions, workplace rights and the ability for unions to represent their members both in the workplace and in the industrial commission. The Coalition deliberately designed a system that keeps wages low and tied unions up in red tape.

The new Federal Albanese Labor Government in its first two weeks in office backed in an 5.1% increase to the minimum wage for low-income workers, in a submission to the Fair Work Commission.

The commission handed down its decision in the annual wage review on Wednesday, granting a 5.2% increase to the national minimum wage and 4.6% for award workers. The decision sets the pay of at least 2.7 million

Australians on the national minimum or awards and will come into effect from 1 July.

This is the biggest increase workers have seen in their pay packets in 12 years.

The Labor Government has also announced that it intends to introduce paid family and domestic violence leave legislation during Parliament's first sitting, after Parliament returns on July 26.

It affirmed that Labor's broader IR legislative changes, including bargaining reforms and measures to tackle wage theft, will be informed by its September jobs summit – ahead of the October budget – with a view to introducing them by the end of the year.

The IR bill is likely to include gig economy reforms, after Labor pledged in the lead-up to the March federal election to empower the FWC to make rulings on the pay and conditions of gig economy workers in “employee-like” forms of work.

With its commitment to deliver “same job same pay” measures for labour hire workers also on the table at the September talks, the Government indicated it is willing to delay these changes if more consultation is needed.

Labor pledges to make changes to rebalance Fair Work Commission.

The Fair Work Commission is supposed to be the impartial third party that workers go to when they can't sort things out with their employer.

What most workers don't realise is that currently they have a 65% chance of appearing in front of a commissioner from employer or Coalition background.

Shadow IR Minister Tony Burke has said in a interview that the Albanese Labor Government will “actively and deliberately return” the Fair Work Commission bench to balance, after 28 consecutive Coalition appointments.

Of the 46 appointments that the Rudd/Gillard government made, which were balanced, from people from both sides of the negotiating table, only 16 of those remain.

Most workers won't even notice this change happening in the background. However, it's just like your home insurance. For most people they never have to use it and it doesn't change your day-to-day life, but when you do you want it to give you fair value and cover you for what you need.

STATE LABOR IS IR REFORM

For our members who work in local government or for a state government department the Palaszczuk Government has introduced to parliament the Industrial Relations Amendment Bill 2022.

This Bill is the result of a 5 year review of the Industrial Relations Act 2016 conducted by former Industrial Commissioner John Thompson and former Attorney General Linda Lavarch. It also emanates from public calls from Queensland Unions to introduce stronger laws to protect workers against sexual harassment.

The wide-ranging Industrial Relations Amendment Bill 2022 beefs up legislation to prevent harassment in the workplace, places renewed focus on gender pay equity, modernises employment leave standards, allows setting of minimum pay rates for courier drivers, and clarifies the status of registered unions as well as protecting workers against sham entities misrepresenting their ability to represent workers.

NEW LABOR GOVERNMENT STRIPS ABCC OF KEY POWERS



In late July this year, the newly elected Federal Labor Government took a significant first step towards meeting its election promise to kill off the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC).

Workplace Relations Minister Tony Burke used his powers to the maximum to strip back the ABCC's powers to the bare minimum.

The Government promised before the election that it would scrap the ABCC, and Workplace Relations Minister Tony Burke described this first move as a “downpayment” on that commitment. The Minister also confirmed that **legislation to formally terminate the ABCC will come in later this year.**

Members will recall that the ABCC was **set up by the former Howard government** to “combat lawlessness” and improve productivity in the construction industry. It was then **shut down by the Gillard Government** in 2012, before the Coalition’s Abbott government tried and failed to get support to pass legislation reviving the ABCC in 2015.

The body was **ultimately restored in 2016**, after then Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull used the legislation to trigger a double dissolution election.

Our great union, together with our construction industry brothers and sisters at the CFMMEU and the ETU, has been **bitterly opposed to the ABCC since it was raised from the dead by the Turnbull government in 2016.**

The ABCC is a completely **politicised and discredited** organisation, which spent time harassing building industry workers and the unions which represent them. It had become obsessed with trivial things like union stickers on hard hats and flags on building sites and was much more concerned with fining unions and individual unionists than it was with improving productivity in the sector.

Minister Burke described the ABCC and the Building Code it was there to police as “ridiculous” and said it had been “set up by the Coalition “to discredit and dismantle unions

and undermine the pay, conditions, and job security” of workers. Hear hear!

There is no doubt that the Opposition and some employer groups will run out all their tired old lines about how without the ABCC we will see “militant unions running amok.....a fall in productivity.... rising costs... blah blah....

Not only is that argument old and stale, it is also just flat wrong. History shows that the ABCC did nothing for productivity and has been one of the least successful regulators in Australian history.

The whole rationale for restoring the ABCC back in 2016 was productivity. The then Coalition government insisted that restoring the ABCC would lead to an improvement in productivity. In fact, the very name of the bill re-establishing the ABCC was the “Building and Construction Industry (Improving Productivity) Bill”.

But, unlike the Opposition, productivity data collected by the Productivity Commission doesn’t lie. In the decade leading up to 2016 productivity was growing at about 2 per cent per year.



Since the ABCC was revived in 2016, productivity stalled and then started going into reverse. Productivity fell by 2.4 per cent in 2017-18, 2.5 per cent the following year and in 2019-20, the last year before the pandemic hit, productivity under the ABCC fell by a further 2.6 per cent. So, this **argument that somehow the ABCC is essential to productivity is a complete rubbish.**

Building workers should be subject to the same rules as other workers. It’s simple. But since the Coalition brought in the Building Code, “construction employers and workers on government-funded building jobs have been subject to restrictions that don’t apply to people in other industries.

Minister Burke has introduced an interim Code which removes a series of restrictions, including prohibited enterprise agreement content requirements that are not imposed on other workers.

This means **building and construction workers will now be able to freely bargain for agreements in the same way as other workers** – including agreements that include clauses promoting job security, jobs for apprentices, and safety at work.

We applaud this move from the Labor government and look forward to the legislation scrapping the ABCC once and for all being passed later this year.



THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE MAKING A WORKCOVER CLAIM

When you have been injured at work, you need to remember that WorkCover claims can help you secure the medical treatment and financial assistance you need.

WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN MAKING A WORKCOVER CLAIM

1. IT'S ILLEGAL FOR YOUR EMPLOYER TO TELL YOU NOT TO MAKE A WORKCOVER CLAIM.

2. PROVIDE AS MANY DETAILS OF YOUR WORKPLACE INJURY AS YOU CAN

When you inform your GP of your workplace injury, they'll take a history and note what happened to you. It's crucial to provide your doctor with accurate details of the incident, even if those details seem unimportant at the time. If there are any issues about the cause of your injury at a later date, your GP may need to know exactly how the work injury happened.

If you need any time off work, you should also ask your doctor for a WorkCover certificate, also known as a certificate of capacity.

3. A WORKCOVER CLAIM WON'T WORK AGAINST YOU

Some injured employees feel guilty or anxious about making a WorkCover claim. They worry that taking action will give them a bad reputation, cause their employer to reduce their work hours, or cost them their jobs. If your employer is discriminating against you in such a way, remember that the law can assist you. The fact is that if you've suffered an injury at work, you're entitled to make a workers' compensation claim. Taking the time to rest, heal and receive medical treatment on your doctor's advice is likely to be better for you in the long run.

4. YOUR EMPLOYER IS INSURED FOR WORKPLACE INJURY

We spend a lot of time at work, so a lot of injuries occur in the workplace. As a result, the law requires employers to have WorkCover insurance. This is a no-fault scheme, so in making a workers' compensation claim, you're not saying your employer is to blame; you're simply saying that you've been injured at or from work and you need time off or cover for medical expenses to recover, or both. Again, your employer's insurance covers these requirements—it doesn't come out of your employer's pocket.

5. GIVE MAURICE BLACKBURN A CALL

If you suffer an injury at work, seek legal advice at the earliest opportunity.

It's best to seek advice even if WorkCover accepts your claim, because you may be entitled to other rights or substantial compensation.

Whatever WorkCover's assessment of your claim, give Maurice Blackburn a call to find out whether you're entitled to anything else. It costs nothing to find out where you stand.

For more information about how Maurice Blackburn Lawyers can help you on a no win, no charge basis, visit www.mauriceblackburn.com.au or free call 1800 810 812





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QLD MEMBERS

www.ppteuqld.com/wagesinformation



Ups and downs are a normal part of investing

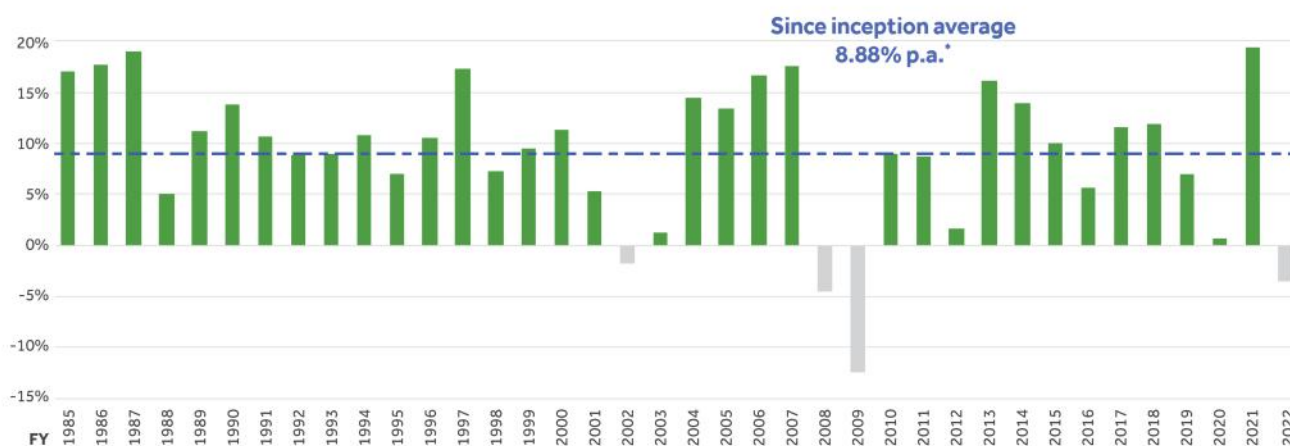
This year, we've seen investment markets respond to a range of global issues such as, rising inflation, the Russia/Ukraine crisis, and fresh waves of the Covid-19 pandemic.

These market conditions have led to a challenging year for all super funds, including Cbus, with investment returns lower than in previous years.

While drops in performance can be uncomfortable, it's important to remember that super is a long-term investment, and that ups and downs happen.

Over our 38-year history, we've delivered strong long-term outcomes for members. As the graph below shows, this is only the fourth negative financial year return for the Fund and the first since the GFC.

Growth (MySuper) investment option



We've been through difficult times before, and together, we've gotten through them, and this time will be no different. When looking at your investment options, it's important to consider your long-term goals and that changing to lower risk investment options or making frequent switches can, over the longer term, leave you with lower retirement savings.

Cbus is one of Australia's top performing industry super funds with strong returns over the long-term and we're here to help. If you're unsure about anything, please contact our Advice Services team:



Email advice@cbussuper.com.au or call **1300 361 784** 8.30am to 6pm (AEDT/AEST) Monday to Friday

* Since inception in 1984 to 30 June 2022. Over the past 38 years, the Growth (MySuper) option has returned 8.88% on average. The Growth (MySuper) investment option crediting rate is based on returns minus investment fees, taxes, and until 31 January 2020, the percentage-based administration fee. Excludes fees and costs that are deducted directly from members' accounts. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance.

The information in this flyer only considers performance and doesn't take into account your specific needs. Before opening an account with Cbus, some other important things to consider include fees and charges, investment options, insurance options and any existing benefits associated with your current super fund. You should look at your own financial position, objectives and requirements before making any financial decisions. Read the relevant Cbus Product Disclosure Statement and Target Market Determination to decide if Cbus is right for you. Call 1300 361 784 or visit cbussuper.com.au for a copy.

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* The Cbus default Growth (MySuper) option obtained top quartile performance ranking over 7, 10, 15 and 20 years from the SuperRatings FCRS SR50 Balanced (60-76) Index Survey, for the period ending 30 June 2022. SuperRatings is a rating agency that collects information from super funds to enable performance comparisons – visit superratings.com.au. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance.

This information is about Cbus and doesn't take into account your specific needs. You should look at your own financial position, objectives and requirements before making any financial decisions. Read the relevant Cbus Product Disclosure Statement, Target Market Determination and related documents to decide if Cbus is right for you. Call 1300 361 784 or visit cbussuper.com.au for a copy. United Super Pty Ltd ABN 46 006 261 623 AFSL 233792 as Trustee for Cbus Super Fund ABN 75 493 363 262 offering Cbus and Media Super products