

ASU Union Active

SA+NT Branch News June 2006



DON'T PANIC - GET ORGANISED!



ASU SA + NT Branch Secretary
Andy Dennard

John Howard's highly complex work laws have been in place barely two months and are proving a nightmare for both employers and employees. There are numerous examples of employees being sacked for no reason or minor misdemeanors or to be rehired on lesser wages.

Through the media Unions have highlighted examples of workers being required to sign individual contracts which cut their take home pay and conditions. We have the farcical situation of John Howard and his Industrial Relations Minister Kevin Andrews expressing mock shock and horror that employers are actually using these laws to disadvantage workers!

Many employers in ASU industries like Local Government and Community Services are just plain confused. Are they covered by the laws or not? Do they have to use the new laws or not? Will they be fined if they agree to conditions that the Howard Government doesn't like?

These are nasty anti-worker laws specifically designed to reduce the wages, conditions and job security of workers. It will predominantly be the young and unorganised or weakly organised workers who will feel the pain first but over the long term if left unchallenged it will affect all Australians.

Continued/-2

Cover Photo L-R: Northern Territory Organiser, Lucio Matarazzo and NT ASU Branch Councillor Maria Paterakis flying the ASU flag at Darwin's May Day event 2006



Active Strong United



cont/-1

Employers do not have to use these laws against their workers and if your employer is telling you they do they are either being deceived by their advisors or they are deceiving you.

ASU members do not have to meekly accept these laws being imposed in our workplaces and industries or in our community. There is nothing stopping us from continuing to use collective power to raise issues with employers and negotiate those issues with them as we always have done; complex industrial instruments do not alter our ability to do this, as long as we stay strong.

We are already working with ASU members in workplaces such as the City of Onkaparinga and TAB to stop the laws being used in the current round of bargaining to take away conditions or stop fair wage increases. At the City of Playford a 'Memorandum of Understanding' has already been reached to ensure the new laws do not affect their current agreement.

We are working with the State Government to organise industry forums for Local Government and Community Services to discuss how we can stop the new laws adversely impacting on workers in those industries and we are continuing to develop plans in all industries to ensure we are as well organised as possible to continue to maintain and improve wages and conditions.

We are also working with SA Unions and the State Government to look at legislative and other tools to protect SA workers from these laws.

We are participating in the broader community campaign being run by the ACTU with the ultimate goal of over turning these anti-workers laws. For upcoming events see 8.

Hundreds of members have attended sessions conducted by Branch Secretary Andy Dennard and Branch Assistant Secretary Katrine Hildyard on the Howard Government's changes and how we will deal with them together as Union. Members who have attended these sessions in their workplace or at their Union Office have left motivated to build power to secure their wages and conditions despite the laws. If you haven't attended a session and would like to call your ASU Office.

don't panic get organised

Don't despair, don't panic! Get organised and participate in your Union's plans to secure you and your family's future by working together to defeat these new laws.



ACTIVE LG MEMBERS TAKE IT TO THE TOP

ASU Onkaparinga Council members took an important step towards securing existing and negotiated entitlements by gathering together to protest outside the May Onkaparinga Council Meeting. ASU Secretary Andy Dennard addressed the meeting saying "congratulations for standing together - just hours before this Council Meeting news of this protest in the media and in Onkaparinga Council achieved a positive result; with your CEO committing to preserve all existing entitlements."

An Elected Member spoke to the meeting and reassured Onkaparinga staff that information about their issues was being circulated to Council and that a number of elected members believe in fairness and are prepared to work alongside staff towards it.

Workplace Representatives (WPRs) and members attended in good numbers. ASU WPR Jenni Feckner said that "the CEO now knows how importantly we view his earlier commitment to protect existing workplace conditions and to honour the outcome of six months of Enterprise Bargaining negotiation."

Talks continue. Congratulations to those members of Council who stood alongside staff. Working together workplace reps are confident we will win. Stay tuned for further activities at Onkaparinga.

See also Charles Sturt Win/.. Page 8

Photo Above: ASU Member, Allison Houghton protests with 100 ASU and other Union and community members on 2 May 2006.

New Subscription Rates 2006/2007...

BUILDING A STRONGER ASU

I support this increase. Our need for Union is greater today than in the recent past and the only way Unions and therefore workers can survive is by working together and making sure our Union is properly resourced'

Marilyn Perry, City of Unley



Increase to Grow...

In accordance with the motion passed unanimously at the July 2005 Workplace Reps and Activists Conference endorsed by the April 2006 Branch Council Meeting ASU subscriptions will increase from 1 July 2006 by -

\$1-30 per member per week (tax deductible) if paying by payroll deduction (PRD) or quarterly account; or \$1-00 per week (tax deductible) if paying by direct debit, credit card or annual account. This is in line with your Union's policy to encourage members to 'make the switch' from payroll deductions.

As directed by the 2005 Workplace Reps and Activists Conference \$1-00 per week of that increase (or the entire increase for Direct Debit and Credit Card payers) will go into an ASU SA + NT Growth Fund. Resources from this fund will be specifically directed towards providing staff and other resources to build power in workplaces and industries through growing and activating membership.

The Conference recognised that 'we cannot grow stronger by getting smaller' and that more than ever we must be strong, relevant and powerful if we are to successfully deal with the increasingly hostile environment created by the Howard Government's new industrial relations legislation.

Please note the dollar amounts of the salary band widths have also increased (see table below) so please check that you are in your correct band. If you believe you are in an incorrect band please contact the ASU Membership Department on membership@asu-sant.asn.au or call our helpful membership services officers on 8363 1322.

'we cannot grow stronger by getting smaller'

Linda White, ASU National Assistant Secretary at the ASU SA + NT Branch Conference July 2005

'More now than ever strong unions need resources to provide the strength on the ground so we (members) can organise to maintain and improve our working lives. I support this fund. We need to be stronger in these tough times.'

Grant Evans, RAA



It's About Your Union's Future...

The Howard Government's new industrial relations legislation has made it easy for employers to stop payroll deductions of Union fees; it is only one step away from abolishing them altogether, as part of their continuing attack on the Union movement.

Additionally in campaigns for wages and conditions having an employer able to identify exactly who is or isn't a Union member is not beneficial to that campaign.

It is quite unusual for any organization to receive membership fees through a third party. Employers can also charge commission for collecting fees through payroll deduction meaning some employers actually receive a portion of your Union fees!

In accordance with the motion passed at our April Branch Council meeting we will no longer be accepting Payroll Deduction as a form of payment for new members joining as from 1 July 2006.

It is now urgent that members switch from paying fees by payroll deduction to paying fees by direct debit or credit card. Don't wait until it is too late - email your Union today at membership@asu-sant.asn.au or call our helpful membership services officers on 8363 1322. and get a form to **make the switch**.

Credit Card, Direct Debit or Annual Account 06/07			
Band	Salary Range	\$ week	\$ month
1	0-11,500	3.55	15.38
2	11,500-22,000	5.65	24.48
3	22,001-27,000	6.80	29.47
4	27,001-33,000	7.90	34.23
5	33,001-43,000	9.55	41.38
6	43,000-55,001	10.60	45.93
7	55,000-65,500	11.70	50.70
8	65,501 +	12.75	55.25

PRD or Quarterly Account 06/07			
Band	Salary Range	\$ week	\$ month
1	0-11,500	4.05	17.55
2	11,500-22,000	6.15	26.65
3	22,001-27,000	7.35	31.85
4	27,001-33,000	8.40	36.40
5	33,001-43,000	10.05	43.55
6	43,000-55,001	11.15	48.32
7	55,000-65,500	12.20	52.87
8	65,501 +	13.25	57.42



to lead and grow

introducing...



Sue Fenwick has joined the ASU for two years (on leave from the LHMU) as a Lead Organiser. Sue will be working with Community Services, Airlines, Finance and Call Centre Organisers.

Sue is an experienced Lead Organiser and was Assistant Secretary and Organising Director at the LHMU prior to joining the ASU Organising Team.

“It is a challenging time for the ASU and the Union movement but one that is full of potential and possibilities” said Sue. “An opportunity to work with ASU members to build power in their workplaces and industries was too good to miss.”



Laura Thomas commenced with your ASU in April as a Growth Organiser and will work closely with Organisers and Workplace Representatives in talking with potential members. She comes from a similar role in New Zealand and previously in Australia.

Laura says “I’m very motivated to work with members to improve membership involvement and numbers. In a more deregulated industrial environment like NZ and now Australia, the power balance between workers and management is critical. It is when everyone is working collectively on issues they care about, that the best wage and condition outcomes are achieved.”



Sovanna Soy Project all about Young People, Unions and Getting Involved

As part of the SA Unions Sovanna Soy Youth Project, Anna Kennett and Alex Hargrave recently undertook a three week paid placement at the ASU office. The project involves young Union members - or students interested in Unions - working with their Union to learn more about Union activities.

Anna and Alex have written about their involvement and the ongoing ASyoUth project.

“We worked on developing a collective agreement and calculating an underpayment claim for ASU members involved in a long term dispute and got out there on the job with members and talked about becoming stronger in their workplace.

We wanted to learn more about being Union and expand our existing skills and were thrilled to meet other young Union activists. Activists we met included a painter, a Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance Organiser and several education workers. Where else but on a Union project would you get that kind of diversity!

During our placement we developed ‘Project ASyoUth’. We telephone surveyed approximately eighty ASU members under thirty to measure their knowledge of the Howard Government’s industrial relations changes and to determine their interest in being actively involved in Union activities. Through the survey we observed a need for clear information to young Union members to assist in developing their knowledge of the changes.

We have been given the opportunity to continue our work on the youth participation strategy for your Union. Our first goal is to set up an organizing committee to develop a young member network. Events in the pipeline include a young members’ BBQ on Sunday 4 June, a Your Rights at Work information session and the creation of an ‘Activist Information Kit’ for young activists.

Many thanks to the fantastic ASU team for their ongoing support of the project and young Unionists. The leadership, organizing, administrative and industrial teams all went above and beyond the call of duty to provide friendly assistance.”

Branch Assistant Secretary Katrine Hildyard welcomes Anna and Alex to the team at ASU in an ongoing capacity. Katrine said “It is wonderful to see Anna and Alex’s commitment to Union and we are very happy they are keen to keep activating young ASU members.”

If you would like to get involved in ASyoUth or would like to attend the BBQ on 4 June please contact Anna and Alex at the ASU office on Friday afternoons on 8363 1322.

The Sovanna Soy Project is an initiative of SA Unions in conjunction with the ACTU Organising Centre and is an integral part of the U-Who project. It provides Unions with the opportunity to develop young union members as activists through a three week internship to work on organising strategies and campaigns in the union office.

Photo at Top L-R: Anna Kennett and Alex Hargrave with ASU SA + NT Branch Assistant Secretary Katrine Hildyard and Secretary SA Unions Janet Giles



AUSTRALIA WIDE ACTION! ASU MEMBERS GAIN SOLID RESULTS AT NCR

ASU members working as technicians at National Cash Registers (NCR) are spread all over Australia in small groups with little or no contact with each other yet they still managed to act collectively and win some real improvements in their collective agreement.

Starting with a petition to NCR signed by all NCR employees across the country the drive for an improvement in wages and conditions through a collective agreement was initiated by the very small group of Adelaide-based NCR technicians.

These members worked with ASU Workplace Reps around the country; this has left a solid network of active members. A log of claims was drafted by members and presented to NCR. All issues were legitimate and reasonable and were asked for to provide some protections against the Howard Government's new legislation, the increases in costs of living and potential down skilling or down sizing.

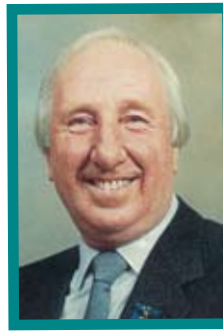
NCR said they really wanted to do an agreement with staff but not their Union! NCR (perhaps conveniently) forgot that the Union is the members. NCR only commenced bargaining after the workers showed them through their collective strength that they were serious.

NCR's counter offer was insulting, removing all but the most basic conditions and imposing some impossible requirements. Action was co-ordinated across the country and proceeded despite threats and intimidation of ASU members by management to remove cars, telephones and laptops and to bring in contract labour. Despite management's efforts stop-work meetings were held; 100% of membership took action in the participating states.

Two SA members on a training course in Sydney rang their manager to inform him that they were participating in the action and shouldn't be paid for the rest of the day even though they were staying at the course.

It is examples of solidarity like this that wins campaigns!

NCR finally made an acceptable offer. This positive outcome was the result of all ASU members at NCR staying Active Strong and United with the support of the local and national ASU offices. Congratulations to ASU members at NCR.



HARRY KRANTZ - TRIBUTE TO A UNION LEGEND

We were saddened to learn of the death of union stalwart Harry Krantz on 30 March of this year.

Harry was Secretary of the SA Branch of the Federated Clerks' Union (one of the Unions that now form part of the ASU) from 1941 to 1984 interrupted only by 4 years wartime service with the Australian Army. As secretary of the FCU he had a major role in rescuing white-collar workers from virtual serfdom in the 1940s. He was instrumental in establishing the first SA Clerks Award in May of 1942, which set minimum wages and conditions for clerical workers in South Australia.

Harry established a number of firsts and was a leading light in the fight for equal pay for women in the 50s, 60s and 70s. He saw the FCU grow from 20 members in SA to more than 6000 members. Harry was renowned for being a tough but fair negotiator and an accomplished advocate before the Industrial Court and Commission.

Harry was awarded the Order of Australia Medal in recognition of his tireless work toward improving the lot of tens of thousands of South Australian workers and their families and they have a lot to thank him for. After his retirement Harry still took a keen interest in the affairs of the Union and was regular visitor to the ASU offices in Kent Town until a couple of months before his death. He was extremely proud of his Union and we are extremely proud to have known Harry Krantz

Rest in peace comrade.



JILL WESTTHORP FINAL FAREWELL

Jill Westthorp, long time Union member and ASU Workplace Representative from Kidney Health passed away on 11 March this year following a long battle with cancer. Many will remember Jill, as she was working at your ASU office last year as Member Organiser on the 'Make the Switch' campaign.

Jill was a true Unionist, full of fire and she often said how much she enjoyed her various active Union roles at Kidney Health and most recently working with our wider membership. Jill is survived by her 12 year old son Alex. We give Alex our deepest condolences.

Strong Unions. Need Women.

Energy in Energy

The ranks of ASU Workplace Reps (WPRs) in the energy industry have been swelling with new WPRs at AGL and ETSA Utilities.

Michelle Epton has joined long term WPRs at AGL Dave Sedgwick and Rob Wilson. WPRs at AGL are working hard to raise their Union's profile at AGL with lunch time and after work meetings for members and others interested in joining on topics such as the proposed new classification structure and the Howard Government's industrial relations legislation.

ASU WPRs Bob Belcher, Lenka Cook and Mike Giuffreda have been working at Marleston to raise ASU profile and get members prepared for bargaining negotiations in 2007.

WPRs across the industry met with the Energy Division Committee on Tuesday 11 April to develop a long term and winnable plan to build Union power in the energy industry.

There are many opportunities for members in the energy industry to step up, take a leadership role and become 'Union Proud' in their workplace. Use your Union energy!





Alice Springs - Breaking News

Stephen Weber (*above*) one of your ASU Membership officers from the Adelaide office, has moved to Alice Springs with his partner. This has opened up an opportunity for us to have a satellite office in the Alice. Steve will be providing Membership services for the Adelaide office and later in the year will be working with NT Organiser Lucio Matarazzo Organising (part-time) with members and potential members.

When you see Stephen around, please make him welcome!



L-R: Pam Morgan, Rachael Uebergang, Christine Schubert and Lucio Matarazzo at the NT Industrial Relations Commission March 2006

Collective Approach Works!

In March ASU members at the Northern Territory Working Women's Centre and at Carers Northern Territory successfully completed collective bargaining negotiations with their employers. Their agreements were certified in the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC) prior to the Federal Government's new industrial relations being proclaimed.

NT ASU Official Lucio Matarazzo said that the two agreements certified in the AIRC in Darwin are good agreements and he congratulated the ASU members on working together to achieve the good outcome.

"By building collective strength in your workplace and industry prior to bargaining you will continue to be able to negotiate all of your issues with your employer." said Lucio.

NT Website of Interest - Northern Territory Workplace Advocate
Visit - <http://www.nt.gov.au/ocpe/ntworkplaceadvocate/index.shtml>

The Northern Territory Workplace Advocate was established by the Northern Territory Labor Government and commenced operating on 2 May 2006. It is essentially an information, consultation and advisory service designed to assist Territory workers, employers and their representatives in relation to work-related matters, and to promote fair and productive workplace practices in the Territory.

Union Life AFTER Bargaining at ADELAIDE BANK!

Over the past five months ASU Adelaide Bank Organiser Charles Wright has been busy meeting ASU members in suburban branches.

ASU Members are approximately nine months into a three year collective agreement with the Adelaide Bank. Charles has been talking with members about the importance of having an active and engaged Union membership and more ASU Workplace Representatives to lead the way on issues.

ASU members have welcomed the visits and have been happy to talk about their issues and how they will continue to negotiate them with their employer despite the Howard Government's new industrial relations legislation attempting to hinder them doing this.

ASU member Francesca Hawker decided after Charles' visit to take the step of becoming an ASU Workplace Rep.

"There is no point sitting on the sidelines; issues occur at the workplace at any time not just every three years; therefore if ASU members are serious about maintaining and building upon their terms and conditions they need to be actively engaged in maintaining their collective strength by supporting their ASU Workplace Reps and asking others to join their collective" said Francesca.

The discussions that Charles has had with ASU members and other staff has led to a formation of a survey which is currently being circulated and will provide valuable information on how we can work together to maintain conditions and build upon them.



Community Services POSITIVE STEPS

Community services workers are finding out about the positive developments in their sector. Staff at Uniting care Wesley Adelaide (UCWA) and Centacare have been talking with ASU Organisers on the job.

At UCWA two new ASU Workplace Representatives (WPR's) have stepped up to their new role and several contacts have been identified.

At Centacare the response from management has been very welcoming and staff members have been active participants during the meetings. Your ASU is campaigning with the Liquor Hospitality Miscellaneous Union (LHMU) right across the community services sector and together we have been involved in all Centacare inductions with new staff discussing the importance of being an ASU member.

Staff are acknowledging that while working conditions at Centacare are favourable on the whole, this is certainly not the case across all non-government community service organisations. They also realise that the fight for fair wages and conditions needs to be an industry-wide approach. It's inspiring to see how many workers at Centacare are thinking about the 'big picture'.

Although there is still plenty to be done – it is great to see members getting involved and making the commitment to working towards securing better conditions and wages, not just in their workplace - but across the whole of the Community Services Sector.

If you work in a Community Services organisation and would like to know more about the ASU Community Services Industry Plan and how to get involved - please contact Organisers Ros Gumbys or Robyn Rutgers on 8363 1322.

industrial matters

Bullying Stopped!

Bullying and intimidation can take many forms and in some cases what might appear to be a trivial situation can cause considerable stress and anxiety for an individual worker.



In a recent case an ASU member working in a small community organization was being subjected to throw-away comments such as “You won't be working here for long” and “There's going to be changes around here and your job will go”. These comments were made by a person higher up in the organizational structure than the ASU member.

The member became ill from worrying about what might happen to her position – she lived and worked in a regional area where job opportunities were limited. The member became too frightened and/or ill to attend work and considered making a WorkCover claim – which would have been a legitimate thing for her to do.

The member contacted her Union office for advice and decided that before going down the WorkCover path, she would see if an approach by the Union office would assist. It did! The Chairperson became involved and the ASU member is now back at work with the strong assurance that the offending comments had no authority and that ongoing, secure employment was assured.

Our message for members is that you do not have to put up with bullying; take action before it affects your health.

Over 45?

Make sure you receive all of your entitlements...

In a recent incident an employer gave a member two weeks' notice of termination; the employer opted to pay the employee two weeks' pay instead of requiring him to work out the notice.

When the member received his termination pay, he was confused over how the termination pay had been calculated and whether or not he had received his full entitlement. He contacted his Union office; we checked the calculations and found that he had not received the additional weeks' notice to which employees over 45 years of age with two years or more continuous service are entitled. The employer alleged they were unaware of this additional award entitlement and immediately provided the additional amount.

Whilst it was only a week's pay, it was better in the ASU member's pocket than the employer's. Your Union has worked hard recently to improve severance pay entitlements; there is now an additional 4 weeks pay for workers over 45 with 10 years or more continuous service.

Always check that all of your entitlements are included in your termination

Thank You...

We often receive feedback from our member's regarding cases we have run on their behalf - we usually do not pass on this feedback, this one however is heartening in these bleak industrial times...

“Thank you for all your hard work in helping me about my case. I am very happy with the outcome. In future...I will let [people I work with] know, whatever their position is, Union will always stand up for you if you are a Union member.”





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don't panic get organised

cont from 2 / ... CITY OF CHARLES STURT

ASU and AWU Workplace Representatives (WPRs) and members at City of Charles Sturt successfully influenced elected members to toss out management recommendations that would have seen several members lose their jobs and others lose their job security.

Management had recommended that a community service provided by the City of Charles Sturt be contracted out. WPRs lobbied elected members and ensured they knew the pitfalls of contracting out. They argued that staff employed in the programme provided a high quality service to vulnerable aged members in the community and that this was at the heart of what Local Government should provide.

Members, WPRs and Branch Assistant Secretary Katrine Hildyard attended the Council meeting where the recommendation was being put and after hearing from WPRs, and Katrine elected members unanimously voted to throw out the recommendations and put the provision of quality service to the community first.

We thank elected members at Charles Sturt for their support and congratulate members on being Union and acting together to win.



UNION events



worth fighting for

National Week of Action – 26 June to 1 July

Get ready for the national week of action !

Cross-Union Delegates Seminar

Monday 26 June at 12.30 - 2.30 at the Town Hall, Adelaide

Speaker - **Greg Combet**

Please register to attend. Contact Gail Dean 8363 1322

or email union@asu-sant.asn.au

Ecumenical Church Service

5.30 Tuesday 27 June St Peter's Cathedral

Venue and time to be confirmed - Check our website for updates and changes www.asu-sant.asn.au

Your Rights at Work Protest Rallies

Wednesday 28 June

City - Victoria Square 12.30 pm

Check our website www.asu-sant.asn.au closer to the date to confirm times

Noarlunga - outside Kym Richardson's (Lib MP) Office 7.30am

Modbury - outside Trish Draper's (Lib MP) Office 10.00am

Munno Para - outside David Fawcett's (Lib MP) Office 3.30pm

ASU Member Education 2006

Jun	22 -23	Collective Bargaining
Jul	3 - 4	Effective Grievance Handling
Jul	24 - 26	Workplace Reps (WPR) - Stage 1
Aug	14 - 15	Advanced WPR: Industry Campaigning
Sep	21 - 22	Advanced WPR: Activists as Educators

For more information about these courses or to confirm your registration please contact Gail Dean on 8363 1322 or email union@asu-sant.asn.au

Your Rights at Night

(worth listening to)

SA Unions Radio

Thursdays 6.00pm – 7.00pm

Radio Adelaide 101.5FM



SA UNIONS

Each week the dynamic team of presenters will pack the one hour program with info about your rights at work, Union campaigns and activities and other social issues. Will also feature local bands and political music and interviews with local Union and community identities. Tune in to 101.5FM for Your Rights at Night.

Authorised by Andy Dennard, Branch Secretary & Katrine Hildyard, Branch Assistant Secretary Australian Services Union SA + NT Branch

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Active Strong United