



# UNION NEWS

## AUSTRALIA THE PLACE TO GO & WORK

### Why

- Comparing directly with Australian wages and adjusting for purchasing power parity we see that in June 2009 the Australian average wage was 35% ahead of NZ.
- In June 2010 it was 41% ahead
- On top of this Australian workers receive 9% of income from their employers in Superannuation contributions



- \* This year we will vote on whether or not to keep MMP, at a referendum that runs alongside the general election
- \* The best way to improve MMP is to vote for it this year
- \* If most voters pick MMP it will automatically trigger an independent review of it
- \* MMP is a proportional system. The seats a political party gets in Parliament matches the votes they win at the election. A party that gets a quarter of votes, gets a quarter of seats
- \* Under systems like first past the post and supplementary member, a party can get fewer votes than its competitor yet still win an election

## UNION PROTECTS MEMBERS FROM AFFCO'S EXCESSES

APRIL 2011



The Union has now received a decision of the Employment Court ruling on the seniority entitlements of members of the Union.

The Court has found that Union members employed under the Collective Agreement are entitled to be laid off and employed based on their seniority. Workers on individual employment agreements cannot be retained, while workers with seniority under the Collective Agreement are laid off. The Union member's seniority will determine whether or not a layoff occurs.

As you know, AFFCO has laid off Union members when workers on individual agreements with shorter service have been retained. The Court ruling confirms that this is wrong.

AFFCO have written to all workers saying that seniority applies both to those on individual agreements and the Collective. This was rejected by the Court. There is no right of seniority in the individual agreements that were produced to the Court. The only workers with rights of seniority are those employed under the Collective Agreement. Affco's CEO Mr Simson's letter posted on notice boards is wrong.

Many Union members have been badly disadvantaged by the Company's practice. The Union always considered that the action of the company was unlawful. The Union will promptly bring wage claims for members of the Union who have been disadvantaged by the practice of the Company. We will not let our members lose pay due to the wrongful actions of the company.

The National Secretary of the Union Dave Eastlake said today: "AFFCO had been favouring workers not in the Union, and we believe encouraging workers to leave the Union. This decision will put an end to this discriminatory practice. This recognises long practice in the meat industry, with long serving workers being entitled to work ahead of new starters."

Workers, both Union and non-Union who are affected by this decision are welcome to discuss it with their Delegate or Organiser.

### YOUR WORK RIGHTS BEFORE APRIL 1ST

#### Access to any workplace by a union organiser is protected by the law

Workers have control over when and where they talk to the union. They have the right to talk to a union person at work at any reasonable time. Workers basic human rights are in their hands.

#### Employers are not allowed to talk to union members about claims in pay talks

Workers choice to be represented by a union to even up the power imbalance is taken very seriously

Employers cannot go around the union to chip away at the confidence of vulnerable workers

#### First 90 days 'fire at will'

Right now employers are able to have trial periods for new employees

Any new worker who is on trial at their job has the right to a fair trial - to know what is expected, to get training and to know the reason if they get sacked.

Workers have the right to go to court if they get sacked unfairly

#### If you take a personal grievance (PG) against being fired, the authority consider what a reasonable employer would do

An employer has to have a good reason to sack a workers. If they don't the first remedy is for the worker to get their job back

### YOUR WORK RIGHTS AFTER APRIL 1ST

#### Access to any workplace by a union organiser requires the employer's agreement

Employers have control over when and where their workers talk to the union.

Workers basic human rights are in the hands of their employers.

#### Employers can communicate directly with employees about claims in pay talks

Now it will be much easier for an employer to divide and rule in their workplace.

Employers will be able to go around the union to chip away at the confidence of vulnerable workers

#### First 90 days 'fire at will'

New workers can now be sacked for no reason in the first 90 days on the job

Everyone should be able to appeal against injustice. Workers sacked under this law have no rights. When this law only applied to small businesses 2/3 more people got hired and 2/3 more workers got fired. This law does nothing to improve the unemployment rate but it certainly increases the unfairness rate

#### Now its also mush easier for a boss to sack a worker

An employer can sack a worker with much less reason. Even if a worker wins a case, the first remedy is no longer for them to get their job back. Unemployment is rising and workers no longer have a right to a job

