

1. EBA7 – The issues that matter most to members
2. EBA7 – Where to from here?
3. Staffing practices on Barcode Sorter pose OHS risks
4. CWU takes industrial action in Royal Mail
5. ACTU tax research says average workers ‘ripped off’
6. New ACTU TV ad
7. Eager to help the Liberals, business groups throw millions at ads
8. Young workers ripped off by restaurant chain under IR laws
9. Melbourne workers sacked without redundancy pay for ‘operational reasons’
10. Young workers ripped off by restaurant chain under IR laws

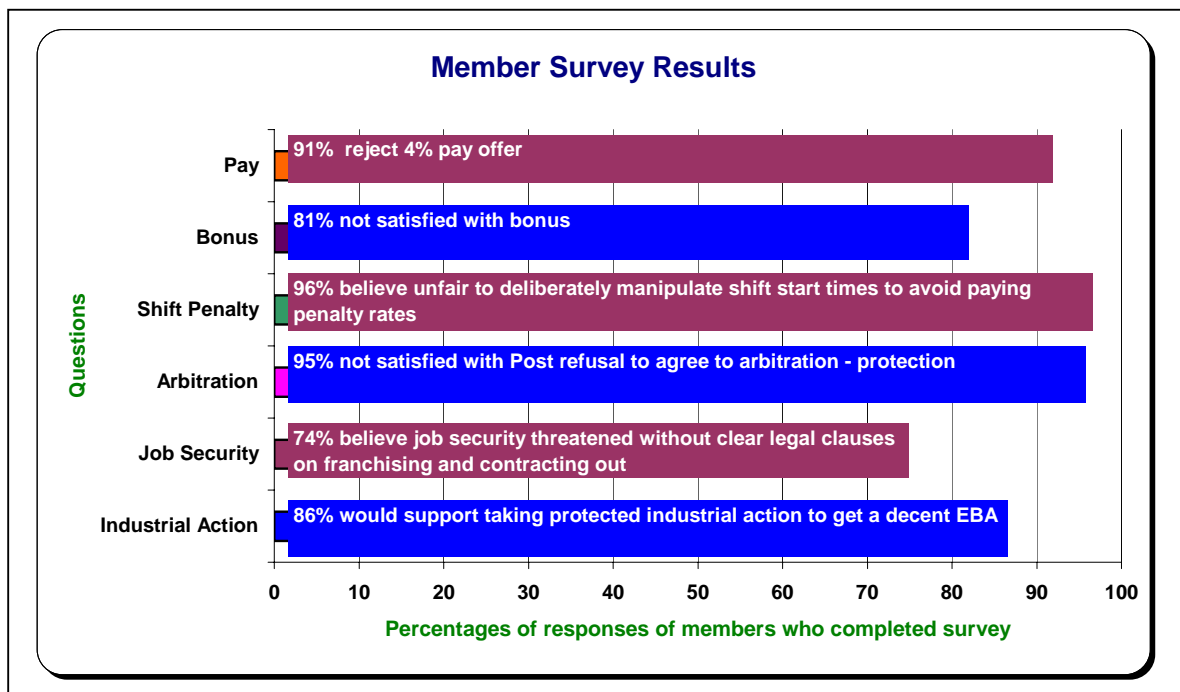
EBA7 – The issues that matter most to members

Members have sent a clear signal through the CEPU member survey about what matters most to them in EBA7.

Thousands of CEPU members have completed and returned the EBA7 member survey. Hundreds of other CEPU members have had their say on EBA7 through completing the survey on line.

We have also had a terrific response to the SMS reminder to members issued last week and to our telephoning of members to better understand the issues that matter most to them.

The strong views on pay, shift penalties, arbitration, job security and industrial action as shown in the graph below have been heard by the union.



EBA7 – Where to next?

Clearly it's time for Australia Post to start listening and to deliver on pay, full arbitration-protection, penalty rates and job security.

The Divisional Executive of the CEPU met on 3rd July 2007 and authorised the Divisional Secretary to call Australia Post back to the negotiating table to fix the outstanding issues in EBA7.

The Divisional Executive also authorised the Divisional Secretary to take the necessary steps to implement industrial action if Australia Post managers refuse to genuinely bargain or improve their offer.

At the same time the CEPU is calling on the Managing Director of Australia Post to block senior executive pay increases or bonuses until after EBA7 is voted on by members. When it comes to senior executive salaries, they've had more than enough!

Staffing practices on Barcode Sorter pose OHS risks

In Western Australia it seems management have decided it is okay to operate the Barcode Sorter (BCS) with one person. Indeed management at the Perth Mail Centre (PMC) have admitted that a manager sometimes runs the BCS by himself for up to 15 minutes or so.

With typical Australia Post management 'flair' the PMC manager has also issued an edict that when people are rostered on the BCS the first person to arrive should start the machine without waiting for the others. Furthermore, if people stand around waiting for others to arrive before starting the BCS then they will be placed on a code of conduct.

Clearly, the behaviour of PMC management is not in line with the safe operating procedures on the BCS. And the issuing of codes of conduct for following safe work practices is completely out of order.

If the PMC management are desperate for something to do then may be the union can find a couple of mail officers willing to swap jobs, on the proviso that management first learn how to operate the BCS in a way that does not jeopardise their own or others safety!

The union has raised the matter with local and state level managers.

CWU takes industrial action in Royal Mail

Postal Workers in the United Kingdom are embarking on the first national strike in 11 years.

The reasons for the strike are pay and changes to working conditions.

Royal Mail's business plan is to cut postal services and also cut the pay and working conditions of all the postal workers. Royal Mail's pay offer is only 2.5% against annual inflation of 4.5% which represents a real cut in the living standards of UK postal workers.

UK postal workers have now had enough and over 70% voted in favour of taking industrial action to protect their future.

Royal Mail has failed to negotiate seriously with the union and has left little option open to the CWU but to take industrial action.

The first of the strikes took place on 29 June for 24 hours. Picket lines were mounted outside sorting offices and mail centres from early morning crippling deliveries and further strikes are planned over the next two weeks if no agreement is made.

CEPU members are encouraged to send messages of support to Billy Hayes, General Secretary, CWU by email to jbaldwin@cwu.org

A click "n" go message has also been set up at the following address:

<http://www.union-network.org/uniindep.nsf/ProtestCWUJune07?openforum>

This form takes just a few seconds to complete and will go directly to the CWU & UNI Post and Logistics Global Union at the click of a button.

The CEPU has already sent a letter of support to the CWU.

ACTU tax research says average workers 'ripped off'

The Howard Government's tax changes since 1996 have delivered \$23 a week in tax cuts to average employees, compared to \$140 for high income earners, according to research released by the ACTU on 3 July 2007.

The research accounts for income tax changes since 1996, bracket creep, the GST, changes to the Low Income Tax Offset, but excludes welfare changes such as family assistance, the ACTU said in a statement.

Low and middle income taxpayers are receiving 35% of the value of the tax changes since 1996, compared to 65% for higher income earners, the report said.

Typically, the Howard Government's tax policies have been driven by looking after high income earners, like Australia Post senior executives.

New ACTU TV ad

A new [ACTU advertisement](#) in the unions' IR campaign was aired on television last week, highlighting the failure of the Government's new fairness test to apply to an estimated 350,000 employees covered by Work Choices agreements lodged before May 7.

Retiring ACTU Secretary Greg Combet said, "The TV ad has been specifically designed to speak to, and on behalf of, the so called 'Howard battlers' who are amongst those who feel most betrayed by the Work Choices legislation."

He said ACTU research showed people were asking how they could trust the fairness test changes after the Government previously said Work Choices was fair from the beginning. The ad features former Spotlight retail worker Annette Harris, who last year refused an AWA which removed penalty rates, overtime, and meal allowances - in exchange for an extra pay rate of two cents per hour. Up to 1,500 Spotlight workers are on AWAs originally defended by the Government.

The commercial can be viewed on the [ACTU website](#).

Business groups throw millions at pro WorkChoices ads

The Howard Government has been accused of using tax payer funded research for a pro-WorkChoices ad campaign by big business. John Howard's chief pollster, Mark Textor, is helping big business mount an advertising campaign to support WorkChoices.

It was reported in Workplace Express that a leaked strategy memo shows the TV, billboard and internet ads will rubbish unions and applaud WorkChoices. Some anonymous business figures are concerned the ads sound 'more like a Liberal Party strategy than a business campaign'.

Once again the Howard Government shows its contempt for ordinary Australians with its last minute anti union/ anti workers ads. But the union movement is ready, having run its campaign against the Howard's industrial relations changes for the last 2 years and we will continue to do whatever it takes, until we succeed.

Melbourne workers sacked without redundancy pay for 'operational reasons'

NINE long-serving employees of a Melbourne factory were sacked last week without redundancy pay, with their employer Pele Curtains, claiming they had been laid off for "operational reasons".



Despite having worked at the business for between 11 and 21 years, the employees were given just 15 minutes notice of their sackings. They are estimated to be owed up to \$10,000 each for redundancy pay and long service leave.

One of the employees, Denise Schumacher, told the *Age* newspaper that she had worked as a machinist for the company for 11 years. She is separated from her husband and supports two children, aged 14 and 10.

"It's really a humiliation," the *Age* quoted her as saying of the way she was sacked. "I don't know how I'm going to support my kids right now."

Under WorkChoices, companies employing over a hundred staff can avoid unfair dismissal claims if they cite "operational reasons" as the cause of lay-offs. Since the laws were introduced, several companies have also tried to use the "operational reasons" clause as a way of avoiding paying their employees redundancy and other entitlements.

'Operational reasons' was also the reason sighted by retailer Priceline when it sacked employee Andrew Cruickshank in Melbourne recently only to immediately advertise his job with a 25% salary cut. Mr. Cruickshank has gained the right to have case heard again by the Industrial Relations Commission.

The women's union, the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union's Furniture Division, is seeking to recover the entitlements of the workers in the Industrial Relations Commission.

The Office of Workplace Services has also initiated an investigation into the legality of the company's actions, with findings expected later this week. But as CEPU members will remember, in the high profile Cowra abattoir case, where 29 workers were sacked and offered their jobs back with a 30% pay cut - the Government's workplace watchdog found such actions to be legal.

Young workers ripped off by restaurant chain under IR laws



In a move reminiscent of US-style conditions where café and restaurant employees work only for tips, a media report last week reveals how a restaurant chain is using AWA individual contracts to systematically rip off scores of young workers under the Federal Government's IR laws.

The Daily Telegraph reports that young workers, many of them students at a nearby university, are paid around \$13.50 an hour with no extra penalty rates for working at night, weekends or on public holidays.

The young workers are required to arrive for their shift on time but are not paid until the manager decides the restaurant is 'busy' enough for them to start their shift. The workers also must supply a \$50 float from their own money and if any customers leave without paying their wages are docked for the shortfall in takings.

ACTU President Sharan Burrow said "The media report contradicts the Minister for Workplace Relations Joe Hockey who dismissed a NSW teachers' union report on the negative impact of WorkChoices on students."

The *You're gold ... if you're 15 years old* report found employers are incentivised to hire young workers on Australian Workplace Agreements (AWAs) because they are not required to pay Sunday and holiday rates, pay trainees, offer free meals or regular breaks.

'Although AWAs have been promoted as a two-way agreement between employers and employees, negotiation isn't really an option for young workers', the report said. 'Young workers also believe that some employers have restructured or suppressed workforce growth temporarily in order to remain below the WorkChoices threshold of 100 employees', it said.

"Young workers have lost important rights under the Howard Government's IR laws. They have no protection from being sacked unfairly in small and medium sized businesses and they are expected to individually negotiate basic conditions like rest breaks, overtime pay and penalty rates one-on-one with their boss. It is a recipe for unsatisfactory working conditions and young people being taken advantage. It is not good enough for the Government to only respond to these problems when they are brought to public attention through the media. And it is not good enough for the Government to deal with these issues on a case-by-case basis.

AWA individual contracts are bad for young workers and they should be abolished," said Ms Burrow.