



FSU REPS NEWS THE AGENDA

June 2010

This newsletter is aimed at keeping FSU Reps informed of union activities to assist you to carry out the critical role you play in the workplace. Please take this publication to work with you and display it prominently for everyone's information. The Agenda can be accessed electronically by visiting the FSU website at www.fsunion.org.au/News-Views/Publications.

FEDERAL ELECTION UPDATE

Whatever the name: **Never again.**



We can't go back to Workchoices

A message from the National Secretary

Australian voters will be heading off to the polls in the next few months for the 2010 Federal Election, and industrial relations laws will be a big issue again.

The Opposition Leader's comments post the Federal Budget leave no doubt that if elected the Coalition will re-introduce some of the worst elements of Workchoices to Australian workplaces. Unfair dismissal rights that we all fought

hard to win back would be watered down again under Tony Abbott's leadership, and individual contracts would be a core aspect of the Liberal Party's industrial relations policy.

Although the Rudd government hasn't delivered everything we expected, the industrial relations landscape is vastly improved on the industrial wasteland delivered by the Howard government. We can't afford to go backwards again.

The ACTU have relaunched the Your Rights At Work website for unionists, activists and concerned community members. I encourage all FSU Reps to visit the website at: www.rightsatwork.com.au, register, and access the information that is available. Much of it has been designed for easy distribution in the workplace. If you have a noticeboard, please display some of this information for the benefit of your colleagues. When discussing the federal election or industrial relations in your workplace, use the information available on this website to inform your discussions.

It is vital that FSU Reps take this message into finance sector workplaces, and do all that can be done to avoid a massive backward step. Whatever the name, whatever the Liberals' call it, we must say with one voice: Never again.

Your union has also provided a briefing paper to Government, and met with Ministers and staff, on issues specific to the finance sector.

The discussions have covered remuneration; everything from banning or capping STI's for executives and reducing the focus on sales targets for finance workers, to implementing key recommendations to improve pay equity in Australia; investment in Australian jobs and skills and greater transparency from finance sector companies engaging in off-shoring; closer scrutiny of the impact of mergers on employment levels, as well as the community impact.

Although there is no firm commitment from Government to address all members' concerns, there is definitely a willingness to listen and consider all that we put before them. The FSU will be in contact with other political parties in coming weeks to ascertain where each party stands on the issues that are important to you. Keep an eye out for FSU communications in the lead up to the election so you can find out how the parties respond.

Leon Carter
FSU National
Secretary

Better Banking Campaign Talking about it in the workplace



FSU has teamed up with New Zealand finance sector union Finsec on a Trans Tasman campaign to improve banking in both countries, for workers and customers. Predominantly, we want this campaign to highlight your issues, and for our federal government to be aware that there is a desire amongst the finance sector workforce and the community it serves, for a better banking and finance industry in Australia.

Over 5,000 bank workers and community members completed the survey over two weeks. So far, we've only released the results of the survey completed by 2744 bank customers. In June FSU and Finsec will release the combined results, at the FSU's Vic/Tas Branch Reps Conference.

The results of the public poll, conducted in conjunction with News Limited, reinforce the message that has been coming from finance sector workers for some time. Decisions taken by banks on interest rates, staffing levels, off-shoring of Australian jobs, and putting pressure on staff to sell more products is reflected in the public's perception of them.

Some key survey results:

91% agree that Bank workers should be paid for providing professional customer service, not just selling products

90% want banks to stop off-shoring Australian jobs

88% say if a workers' salary is tied to selling products, they'd be less likely to see their financial advice as impartial

87% think there should be a requirement for Australian banks to let customers know if personal data is being sent off-shore

81% of customers agreed that banks should balance their corporate interests with Australia's interests

59% were surprised that bank workers' salaries are tied to selling products

57% said they always have to wait in a queue

42% thought their bank was getting worse at showing a commitment to employing Australians

and 42% agreed with the statement: 'Customer service has gotten worse. The banks have closed branches, and have not hired enough people to help on the phone or online so I just end up waiting longer.'

Need more information?



Visit the Better Banking website:

www.better-banking.org

for more results, including tables of how your bank rates on these issues. Please visit the website and refer a friend so we can spread this story far and wide. There are blog posts on the website that you can comment on, and we've ranked banks based on the survey results so you can see how your bank (whether you work for one or bank with one) compares to the others. Hopefully, the information on the Better Banking website will assist you with conversations with your colleagues at work about the need for a better banking and finance industry.



Luke Baker
Bankwest - WA

I joined the FSU when I started working for Bankwest. I have always been a union member regardless of where I worked because I felt it was important to be able to ask for information from an independent source. Like most people I didn't think I would need to use the Union however recent events caused me to make that important phone call. I found I needed help in providing a response to the bank and didn't know how this should be done. The Union advised me to come into their office where an Advocate would be able to assist with writing my response. As I sat in their office I kept saying "not for a minute did I ever think I would be in this position where I would need to be sitting here". Over and over I kept thinking I wouldn't have a clue how to handle this situation and being thankful I was a member of the Union.

I love my job, love working for the bank and the support from the Union has been incredible in helping to make sure I am able to continue working for Bankwest. You never know when you may need the Union's help. I am so convinced about union membership I have volunteered to be a workplace Rep.

New membership fees from 1 July

The FSU National Executive, comprising the union leadership and National Enterprise Council Presidents elected by the membership, met in Melbourne recently and endorsed new membership fees from 1 July 2010.

The National Executive also approved a range of other budget measures, including expenditure reduction.

The fees will increase by a small amount per fortnight. On an annual basis the increase is 2.75%, which is less than CPI. The union will communicate with members in coming weeks about the fee increase, via our fortnightly e-newsletter FSU Online. Please ensure you download new membership forms from the FSU website, when you are recruiting new members in your workplace.

Anna Stewart Memorial Project

FSU state offices recently sponsored Reps from finance sector workplaces so they could participate in the Anna Stewart Memorial Project and develop skills to help them in their role as an FSU Workplace Rep. The Agenda spoke to two Reps sponsored by the FSU Vic/Tas branch, Maggie Powell from AXA and Yvette-Maree Marcell from ANZ.

Maggie's story

A friend and colleague did the course in 2001 and was totally inspired by it, which in turn inspired me to apply. I was hoping to gain confidence in dealing with union matters and to gain more knowledge. I am overwhelmed by the high standard of this program. I was surprised by how emotional and inspiring ASMP is. There is still hope in workplaces that things can get better, and we have a chance to make a positive change.

The best thing about the program was the strength I gained by being in a collective of women. It was great to be reminded that we're all the same and need the same things, regardless of where we work or come from, and to be part of a legacy that honours the dream and work of Anna Stewart.

If you're a woman and an FSU Rep you can't afford not to do this program. Besides being an absolute privilege, if you're serious about activism, you learn things here that you wouldn't elsewhere. The knowledge you gain is invaluable and the support from everyone is wonderful. There's a lot of work to do and the more women who put their hand up, the better. You won't be sorry!



Maggie Powell receiving her certificate after completing the Program presented by the Victorian Trades Hall President Kevin Bracken.

Yvette's story

I found the Anna Stewart Memorial Project not only rewarding in knowledge and experience, but in the fundamental outlook on the union movement itself. I have always been union, with strong family views for unions. However, my interest in becoming a rep came from a meeting held, by our Organiser, when ANZ One was announced. I, like many, were fearful for our future, and I found the wait intolerable and unacceptable. I felt I could help myself, and my colleagues by becoming more involved, and really be part of the bigger picture.

When I heard about the project, I looked Anna up online, and all the information about her wins was inspirational. I stand before it in awe. I started thinking about what she accomplished meant to me, and to Australian workers in general. I firmly believe we all make history each day, with each campaign, with each fight, with each victory.

I have come to realise it may not feel that way, it may not seem that way, but each footprint I/we make, we take ground, and offer hope to workers who often dearly need it. That, I think, is the greatest opportunity I can take, and the most rewarding gift.



What is the Anna Stewart Memorial Project?

The aim of the Anna Stewart Memorial Project is to increase women's involvement in the union movement through training. During the two week project women trade union members are placed with their own, and sometimes with another union. ASMP runs twice a year. If you are interested in participating, please talk to your FSU Organiser or contact the FSU office in your state, by calling 1300 366 378.

CBA Reps Win National Award

Fifteen FSU Reps working for CBA on the New South Wales Central Coast who successfully campaigned for fair treatment at work have been named joint winners of the ACTU Best Workplace Campaign Award.

The Reps were honoured at a ceremony in Sydney in April. The ACTU's annual awards recognise significant work and achievements by union members. The CBA Reps share the award with the high profile Gotta Love Sydney Ferries campaign. CBA National Enterprise Council President Louise Arnfield said the Reps were ecstatic when they heard the result.

FSU was proud to nominate these Reps for their outstanding work on behalf of their colleagues, and we congratulate the Award winners: Kim Anderson, Louise Arnfield, Jane Cassidy, Ann Collison, Joan Cornwell, Julie Dennis, Louise Engelshus, Joy Hall, Suzie Miller, Sally Proctor, Daniel Small, Alison Thom, Robyn Vingerhoed, Fiona Wright, Janne Writer.

National FSU Reps Training Dates for 2010

Visit <http://www.fsunion.org.au/Workplace-Representatives/Reps-Courses-2010.aspx> for more information and registration forms.

VIC/TAS

Metro dates for Introductory

- Tuesday 13 & Wednesday 14 July
- Wednesday 15 & Thursday 16 September
- Tuesday 19 & Wednesday 20 October

Metro dates for Advanced

- Tuesday 22 & Wednesday 23 June
- Wednesday 18 & Thursday 19 August
- Tuesday 16 & Wednesday 17 November

QLD

Making the pieces fit!

FSU Queensland will be conducting 2 day Reps Training Courses in Brisbane:

- Wednesday 18 & Thursday 19 August
- Thursday 21 & Friday 22 October

SA/NT

Advanced Reps Course

- Wednesday 15 September

NSW/ACT

The course runs for 2 days and aims to develop skills needed to deal effectively with resolving members' concerns at the workplace level.

2010 Course Dates (Lunch and course materials provided)

N.B. Courses start at 9am sharp & finish by 5pm on all days.

- Wednesday 30 June & Thursday 1 July
- Monday 16 & Tuesday 17 August
- Tuesday 21 & Wednesday 22 September
- Wednesday 20 & Thursday 21 October
- Monday 15 & Tuesday 16 November
- Tuesday 7 & Wednesday 8 December