

A red circular logo with the text 'WOMEN @WORK' in white, slanted, sans-serif font.

DECEMBER 2011



Pay Equity - historic win for social and community sector workers

2011 PSA Women's Conference

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Contributions and feedback are always welcome. Extra copies of Women@Work are available for your workplace on request.

Cover photo: ASU equal pay rally, Sydney, 8 June, 2011, courtesy of ASU



Linda Barclay-Hales
Women's Council Chair

Time flies when you've been fighting for your workplace rights, doesn't it?

Since Barry O'Farrell's arrival late March 2011 that's exactly what we've been doing. He and his Government came at us from all sides and we responded with the largest public displays of opposition seen in this state for decades. This makes you proud to be part of the union movement.

O'Farrell will try it all again next year and we need to respond once more as we did in 2011. I have no doubt that we will. But there has been an upside in amongst it all not just despite of the upheaval, but more importantly because of it. The Government's attacks have refocused our energies, sharpened our skills and strengthened our self belief and sense of purpose.

The last thing that Barry O'Farrell intended was to empower the PSA and the union movement generally - quite the contrary - but I believe that is exactly what has occurred.

2011 also saw the launch of the ACTU's campaign regarding insecure or precarious employment along with an inquiry into the prevalence and impact of that type of work on Australian society. Like a cancer, insecure work, that is, work of a non permanent nature, is on the march, creeping in and cementing itself as an accepted part of our industrial landscape. The PSA will be making a submission to the inquiry to make its voice heard on what is a crucial issue for women.

On another matter close to the heart of the PSA and Women's Council is of course equal pay. So it was hugely encouraging not to mention inspiring to see our first female Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, making a historic commitment to pay equity in the social and community sector workers' pay equity case.

The Domestic Violence clause negotiated by the PSA has been included in all of our awards and in October the ground breaking move was recognised with an Ernie award. Usually the Ernies are handed out for the worst in sexist behaviour but the PSA won a "good" Ernie for precisely the opposite. That is, furthering the workplace rights and protecting the welfare of women, who are the majority of domestic violence victims.

I would like to wish everyone an enjoyable break over the festive season and look forward to working with you all as a strong collective unit to protect our hard won workplace rights.



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PSA General Secretary, John Cahill and President, Sue Walsh with Sydney Credit Union CEO Ashley Jennings and Chair, Brian Nevin



Sue Walsh
PSA President

2011 – A YEAR OF PROTEST

There have been some great wins for women in 2011. Firstly, I would like to congratulate the Australian Services Union for its historic pay equity win for social and community sector workers.

On 10 November Prime Minister Julia Gillard announced that the Federal Government had come to an agreement with the ASU on pay increases for low paid community sector workers. (See full story page 9)

Social and community sector workers are some of the lowest paid in this country and are predominately women.

This is a great step forward for Australian women, and could not come at a more appropriate time with the gender pay gap the biggest in 28 years.

Earlier in the year, the Public Service Association was successful in securing Award entitlements that provide additional job security for women experiencing domestic violence.

Since these provisions came into place in February 2011, women experiencing domestic violence have reported they have received positive support from their agency. This has come mostly in the form of being able to access paid leave at an extremely difficult time in their lives.

The initiative is well embedded now and I believe continued gains will be made in terms of extending the entitlements to many new workplaces so that it will become an industrial norm.

We also faced many challenges with the election of the O'Farrell Government in March. It did not take long for this Government to show its true spots by attacking public sector wages, conditions and jobs.

The PSA came out fighting. In record time the PSA collected close to 18,000 signatures on a petition calling on the Liberal Government to stop its attacks. We took to the streets and we mounted a legal challenge to their anti-public servant laws.

In September, 40,000 public sector workers took to the streets to protest these unjust laws. This is by far the largest anti-Government protest seen in decades.

In these tough times, I am proud to be the President of one of the largest and strongest unions in the country.

The PSA will also join the ACTU's campaign to tackle the rising levels of insecure employment in Australia. Shockingly, Australia has the second highest rate of insecure employment in the OECD, second only to Spain.

The ACTU has launched an Independent Inquiry into Insecure Employment and is calling for submissions.

The PSA will be providing a submission to the Inquiry and individuals are able to provide submissions too.

Insecure employment is on the increase in the NSW public sector with 12.16% of the workforce employed on a temporary basis, and 6.42% employed casually.

Over seventy per cent of temporary and causal employees in the public sector are women.

However, the PSA has a strong record in campaigning for permanency. Only recently, the PSA won permanency for 7,000 long term temporary school and administrative support staff.

We have had a challenging and busy year. Next year we will continue the fight for wage justice, for jobs and for public services!



INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO INSECURE WORK

On 28 September, 2011 ACTU President, Ged Kearney launched the *Secure Jobs. Better Future* campaign to address the spread of casual, contract and other forms of insecure work in Australian workplaces. About 40% of the workforce in Australia is in insecure employment.

The ACTU defines insecure work as non-permanent forms of employment, including casual work, fixed term work, seasonal work, contracting and labour hire. Indicators of insecure work include unpredictable, fluctuating pay, inferior rights and entitlements, including limited or no paid leave. Irregular and unpredictable working hours, lack of security or uncertainty over the length of the job and lack of voice at work on wages and conditions.

Insecure work is a problem faced by workers around the world. However, Australia stands out for its high rate of insecure, casual employment. Spain is the only OECD country that has a higher rate of temporary employment than Australia.

On 24 October 2011 the ACTU launched an Independent Inquiry Into Insecure Work. The Inquiry will be chaired by former Deputy Prime Minister Brian Howe, with Paul Munro, a former Senior Member of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission as Deputy Chair.

The Inquiry will be open for submissions between 2 November and 16 December 2011. There will be public submissions in each state in February and March 2012.

Extent of Insecure Employment in the NSW Public Sector

The NSW Public Sector Workforce: A 2010 Snapshot and Snapshot Tables produced by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) shows the extent of insecure employment in the NSW public sector.

The DPC data shows that there were 322,542 full time equivalent (FTE) staffing positions in the NSW public sector in 2010. Temporary FTE positions numbered 39,202; this is in addition to the 20,629 casual FTE.

In terms of percentages, temporary employment in the NSW public sector in 2010 was 12.16% of the public sector workforce and casual employment was 6.42%. Health NSW and the Department of Education and Training made up the bulk of temporary and casual employment in the public sector.

The data also shows that women predominate in insecure employment in the public sector with 71.15% of temporary employees being women, and women making up 70.25% of casual employees.

In early 2011, the PSA sought information under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 pertaining to the extent of the use agency staff in the NSW public sector. The report was prepared by the Department of Services, Technology and Administration (DSTA) and showed that in 2009-2010 a total of \$385,246,021 was spent on agency contract staff.

This equates to approximately 568 FTE jobs, paid at the NSW public sector average annual total gross earnings of \$67,791. (Amount is from NSW Public Sector Workforce: A 2010 Snapshot and Snapshot Tables). Data supplied by DSTA shows that for the six month period from 1 July 2009 to 31 December 2009 a total of 3,246 temp agency staff were employed across the NSW public sector with a total of 1,990,225 hours worked by temp agency staff.

The Association will be providing a submission to the Independent Inquiry into Insecure Work.



NSW Police Force - Breastfeeding friendly workplace

The NSW Police Force has been accredited as a Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace by the Australian Breastfeeding Association.

Six lactation rooms at six locations across the NSW Police (Police Headquarters, SPC, Goulburn Police Academy, Hurstville Local Area Command, Gosford Local Area Command and PoliceLink Tuggerah) have now been accredited.

An official presentation of NSW Police's accreditation NSW Police took place on 4 November. Becoming a Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace is a great tool for the NSWPF to optimise recruitment and retention strategies and it demonstrates a commitment to equal employment opportunity, employee health and well being, workplace diversity and corporate social responsibility.



l-r – Natasha Pollock, Australian Breastfeeding Association; Assistant Commissioner Carlene York, Corporate Spokesperson for Women in Policing; Louise Duursma, NSW Branch State President of the Australian Breastfeeding Association; and Lisa Nelson, Industrial Officer, PSA

Superannuation increase means more Australians will be secure in retirement



Unions have welcomed the Labor Government's introduction of legislation to increase superannuation to 12%, hailing it as a reform that would provide real benefits to Australians for decades to come.

This is a historic reform that builds on our world-class system of superannuation — one of the Australian labour movement's greatest achievements, said ACTU President Ged Kearney.

"Millions of Australians will enjoy a higher standard of living in retirement as a result of the increase in superannuation to 12%," Ms Kearney said.

"These reforms will mean a great deal to working people and the economy for decades to come."

With the increase in superannuation to 12% forming part of a package that includes the Mineral Resources Rent Tax (MRRT), changes to company tax, and investment in new community infrastructure, Australia will be not only fairer, but stronger, Ms Kearney said.

"Given the challenge of an ageing population and research showing the current level of 9% super is not enough to secure a comfortable retirement, it is vital the Government's mining tax, infrastructure and super package is supported by all Parliamentarians," she said.

"Lifting compulsory superannuation to 12% will make a big difference to the quality of people's retirement. It will mean a \$500 billion boost to workers' retirement savings by 2035, with:

- An 18 year old worker \$205,000 better off in retirement;
- A 30 year old worker \$108,000 better off;
- A 40 year old worker getting \$56,000 extra in retirement.

"Australians already enjoy one of the best retirement income systems in the world thanks to the efforts of the labour movement in establishing it 20 years ago.

"Increasing national super to 12% and other Government moves to curb financial advice commissions, cut taxes on super and reduce fees by the commercial super funds will make super even stronger and deliver more financial security as the population ages.

"Women on lower incomes will be particularly better off. The changes will boost the superannuation of 2.1 million women earning less than \$37,000 by \$550 million in 2012-13 alone and deliver a 30 year old woman on average wages an extra \$108,000 — or \$2,900 each year of her retirement," Ms Kearney said.

Lactation Breaks - a winner



Dear PSA,

I had just started to get back into more full time employment, after having two children and I was enjoying the opportunity. A few months into my role as Administration Officer at Penrith Office I discovered that I was expecting another baby. I was happy to be having another child however I was concerned about returning to work whilst my baby was only 4 months old.

I spoke to my Manager Carolyn Place. She investigated the matter and discovered that the PSA had won lactation breaks for nursing mums during the day to feed my baby. Mrs Place came out to my worksite and discussed the matter with both myself and my colleagues who were in full agreement so a plan was put into place.

Having the opportunity of lactation breaks in my workplace has allowed me the privacy and the pleasure to continue to breastfeed my 4 month old son Cayden. It has also relieved the stress of enforced absence from my baby and allowed us to continue our daily bonding, especially during his first few months.

Lactation breaks at work has also allowed me to blend my home life with working life and has given me the freedom to feed my baby in a stress-free environment.

Thank you to the PSA for negotiating this historic win for all nursing mothers in the workplace, which maintains the dignity of motherhood.

*Regards,
Stacey Lowe (pictured left with son Cayden)*

2011 Women's Conference

PSA Women: step up the the challenge



The 2011 annual PSA Women's Conference was held on 13 and 14 September at PSA House, with the theme of *PSA Women: step up to the challenge*.

It's a most appropriate subject considering the myriad challenges facing working women in the public sector today.

Challenges such as the new state industrial relations laws, which threaten female-friendly working conditions (such as lactation breaks, carer's leave & domestic violence related leave) and limit pay rises to 2.5%; the issue of pay equity - we still have a gender pay gap of 18% which hasn't improved much since the early 80s; the sobering reality of women's retirement savings being only 37% of men's; and the challenges involved in changing the way society views and values "women's work" in traditionally low paid jobs. On a federal level there has been a historic decision in this regard, with the Prime Minister announcing an agreement with the ASU on pay increases for low paid community workers (see *story page 9*).

Delegates were addressed on these challenging topics by keynote speakers such as ACTU President, Ged Kearney; prominent social commentator and feminist Eva Cox; and the NSW Shadow Minister for Industrial Relations & Women, Sophie Cotsis. The following are edited transcripts of their speeches.

Ged Kearney

"We [as women] have made some advances. The pay equity case is of course incredibly important. But there is still a lot of work we have to do and the best way to do that and the best way we can get our issues out there is to talk together as women and come together like this because even though we now make up 50% of the total workforce there's still nearly an 18% gender pay gap which is amazing.

Women retire with 37% of men's retirement savings - that's less than half - yet we all know that women live a lot longer than men.

We have the highest rates in the OECD of dependence of women on part time and casual jobs and we know the impact that has on our careers and our savings.

And women of course are over represented in low paid jobs that are dependent on minimum wages. So feminising the IR agenda is critical.

The ACTU did a report on women in unions, we released it a couple of months ago. It had some very interesting statistics in it and showed that there's been huge improvements in ten years in women's role in unions and how they're perceived and the things that they have achieved.

We now make up about 54% of union membership and our density was much higher than men in 2010. 55% of all delegates are female.

So we're down there doing the hard work on the shop floor, recruiting and looking after each other but that's where it stops.

Women are not equally represented in leadership positions. Only 30% of elected or paid positions are women. So we've got a lot to do to encourage all of you and all of our female union members to actually think about taking up leadership positions in the union movement because once again, that's how we're going to make change.

I really believe women are the hope of the union movement. I think we are the ones who are really going to turn everything around.

The way things are going is really affecting women a great deal. So we are going to have to stand up and really fight.

It is beyond belief what your conservative government is trying to do in NSW, to get rid of public sector jobs and I actually honestly believe it is a blatant attack on unions.

The last real bastion of good full time permanent secure jobs is the public service and this is a blatant attack on that.

And the reason we have decent jobs in the public service is because we have fantastic unions like the PSA that keep fighting and keep strong.

So it's really important that we fight back and I congratulate you.

What you're doing here in NSW is fantastic and the rest of the country is watching."



Ged Kearney,
ACTU President

2011 Women's Conference

PSA Women: step up the the challenge

Eva Cox

"I had a conversation last week with a young feminist and she said, 'I was reading something of yours that made me realise that there's a connection between feminism and social justice'.

And I thought, why does she have difficulty in making that connection? And I thought, it's partly because feminism in the terms that we put it up in the 1970s is not working any more.

We are actually going backwards in a lot of areas because in the 70s feminism was about changing society.

By the time we got to the 1980s we had this thing called the 'Neo Liberal revolution'. I wouldn't let my students call it 'economic rationalism' because it's totally irrational.

So somewhere in the eighties and nineties we lost complete contact with the social relationships between us and we started moving much more into economic relationships.

And I was part of the movement that decided that we needed to keep selling feminism on the basis it was economically worthwhile; getting women into the workforce was economically good, child care was economically good, everything was sort of redefined in economic terms because it was the only thing politicians would listen to.

That in a way is where feminism lost its way. We pushed really strongly to get more women into top positions, we really focused on equal opportunity.

I was having a discussion before I started this talk and somebody said, "when we get critical mass it will all happen. No, it won't".

Women in a system do not change it because systems are very good at preventing change agents making their way through the system.

A lot of changes went through in the seventies and eighties but if you look at it very few have gone through since or the ones that have gone through since are tidying up on things that we actually won in those early periods.

We still don't have equal pay, we still have a pay gap that's similar to the one in the early 1980s.

Yes, we have more women in top positions but has it changed the culture of organisations?

No, the culture of organisations has gotten worse in many cases than it was when we started.

In the 1970s we thought shorter working hours was a [great step forward]. We'd gone down from a 40-hour week to a 38-hour week and the 35-hour week and then... we stopped.



*Eva Cox,
Prominent feminist and social commentator*

Then we went back up to a 50-hour week without anybody noticing. So now full time work is longer than it was in those periods and work has intensified.

I think we need to have a serious look at why the idea of changing society and changing the workplace and changing it so that we had a better match between those parts of what we do that have been allocated to the females, why most of that has not moved into the public agenda."

Sophie Cotsis

"The public sector is often thought of as being comparatively friendly towards female advancement.

It is perhaps true that historically, the public sector has often set higher standards in terms of eliminating gender inequality, creating flexible workplaces and ultimately, promoting women to leadership positions.

But like most institutions, the public sector still has a long way to go.

In 2010, only 28 percent of senior positions in the NSW public service were occupied by women.

Even if the current NSW Women's Plan target to increase this figure to 35 percent is achieved, women in the public sector would still be far behind.

But whatever targets are set, there won't be a diversity of women in public sector leadership roles if public sector workplaces aren't female friendly.

Female public sector workers need workplace protections to ensure they are not disadvantaged due to the demands which affect them uniquely or almost exclusively as women.

Prior to March this year, a number of protections had been secured. I'd like to highlight three.

The first is the right to lactation breaks, which helps new mothers make the transition back to the



*Sophie Cotsis
NSW Shadow Minister for Industrial
Relations and Women*

workplace.

The second is carer's leave. This seems, at first blush, to be a non-gender-specific right. After all, male carers have just as much access to (this) leave as female carers. But the fact is that women are far more likely to care for a parent, spouse or child throughout their lifetime.

The third is the right to domestic violence related leave. Again, it is certainly true that this can also be accessed by men. But as everyone knows, women are much more likely to become victims of domestic violence than men.

As many of you would be aware, these and other important protections for female public sector workers are under threat.

Under radical new industrial relations laws introduced by the O'Farrell Government, public sector workers must either make what the Government has called "employee-related" savings, or have wage rises limited to 2.5 percent, which is a full 1.1 percent below the current rate of inflation.

What this means is that public sector workers must either sacrifice conditions or agree to a pay cut in real terms. While the legislation quarantines certain conditions from being traded off – called 'guaranteed minimum conditions of employment' – guess what?

None of these protections I've just described – lactation breaks, carer's leave and domestic violence leave – are included. So once again, we see that this new state government – elected with overwhelming support from women – is actually selling women short.

If conditions like lactation breaks, carer's leave and domestic violence leave go, then it will be that much harder for women working in the public sector to climb the ladder. That modest 35 percent target for women in senior public service positions that I referred to earlier is a pipe dream at best."

NSW Government Pay Equity Audit falls short

In September 2011 the NSW Government released the NSW Pay Equity Audit Report 2011.

In May 2010 the then NSW Premier Kristina Keneally, announced that the NSW Government would "conduct a pay equity audit for the NSW public service to investigate whether there is a gender pay gap."

Whilst the PSA was pleased with this initiative, the Association was disappointed that the audit was limited to the public service, and not the whole of the public sector. The audit only covered those employed in Schedule 1, Part 1 of the Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002 (PSEM Act). This means a large number of public sector women have been excluded from the audit, for example school and administrative support staff, RTA staff, bus and train drivers, teachers, police officers, various health professionals, nurses etc.

Because of the very limited scope of the audit, Unions NSW, at the request of the PSA, organised a meeting with the then Minister for Women, Jodi McKay seeking to extend the pay equity audit to include all of the NSW public sector. The Minister met with Unions NSW, the PSA, and other public sector unions. The Minister did not agree to extend the scope of the audit to include the entire NSW public sector.

The audit was undertaken in relation to the approximately 66,000 employees in the NSW public service, as defined in the PSEM Act. There are approx. 322,500 employees in the NSW public sector.

The report compares 2010 data with 2007 and shows that in 2010 54% of the NSW public service were women compared to 53.3% in 2007.

The findings of the report include:

1. The gender pay gap for the NSW public service in 2010 was 6.7 per cent. In 2010, the average salary for women was 93.3% of the average salary for men. In 2007, the pay gap was 10.4%. This is significantly lower than the pay gap for the NSW workforce, which the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) reports as 14.8% in 2007 and 15% in 2010. (NB: Direct comparisons cannot be made between ABS data and Public Sector Workforce data because of the methodology used by the Public Sector Workforce)
2. The net increase in women employees was 1,609 between 2007 and 2010. The corresponding net increase of men was 522.

The report states that the factors contributing to the reduction in the pay gap in the NSW public service include:

- Women are accessing part-time work at higher salary levels
- Women are increasingly represented in more senior roles
- Women are earning salaries more equal to those of men in the senior employment levels.

The report also considers the pay gap within other categories:

- Age
- Employment status
- Agency
- Occupation
- Distribution across Salary Bands and Seniority
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- Disability

- First Language other than English

Limitations of report

As stated above the scope of the audit was limited. Instead of the pay equity audit being conducted for the entire NSW public sector, it was only undertaken in relation to the public service as defined under the PSEM Act. Therefore, excluding a wide range of lower paid public sector occupations dominated by women (for example, school and administrative support staff.)

Accordingly, the Association has reservations as to whether the findings in this report present a true picture of the pay gap in the NSW public sector.

For example, Education and Training data shows that women are being paid on average nearly 15% more than men. However, this data is particularly skewed and meaningless, because of the exclusion of some of the lowest paid women in the NSW public sector, that is, school and administrative support staff.

In addition the report does not make any recommendations as to improving the gender pay gap - particularly in agencies where the gender pay gap has been found to be higher than the NSW public service pay gap of 6.7%, or to be higher than the NSW workforce pay gap of 15%. Out of a total of sixteen agencies listed in the report, two report a pay gap of between 7 to 15%, and eight agencies reported a pay gap greater than 15%.

It is also questionable whether work of comparable value/s was being compared when determining whether there is a gender pay gap in the NSW public service.



Gender wage gap biggest in 28 years

The latest data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (Average Weekly Earnings Survey) shows that, in August 2011, the gender pay gap (based on the average weekly ordinary time earnings of full-time adult employees) was at 17.8 per cent.

The gap between male and female earnings has now risen to the highest level in records going back 28 years. On average men are earning \$13,213 more per year than women.



ASU Pay Equity Case

Historic Pay Equity Win For Social And Community Sector Workers

On 10 November, 2011 Prime Minister Julia Gillard made a historic commitment to equal pay for women, by coming to an agreement with the Australian Services Union (ASU) on appropriate pay increases for low-paid community workers represented by the Union.

The Australian Services Union and the Commonwealth Government will now make a joint submission to Fair Work Australia on the pay rates they believe are appropriate to address the gender-based undervaluation of community workers. The Equal Pay test case is scheduled for final hearings on 28th November 2011, 7th and 8th December 2011.

On average, Australian women currently earn 18 per cent less than men. The pay rates that the ASU will put forward provide on average a 20 per cent increase which will align with the pay rises awarded to Queensland community workers in 2009 in their Equal Pay Case.

About 80 per cent of social and community services sector workers are women, including counsellors, disability carers and welfare workers. They earn on average about \$46,000 per year.

The increase in their wages will be phased on over six years, with the federal government promising an additional \$2 billion in funding. The first pay rises will commence from December 2012.

Letter from the Hon. Julia Gillard, MP,
Prime Minister of Australia

To Members Of The Australian Services Union

Dear ASU members,

For too long Australia has undervalued ASU workers in the social and community services sector.

I was proud to announce the Labor Government is pushing the case for you to get a pay rise.

We're putting over \$2 billion on the table for 150,000 workers in your sector.

Alongside the ASU, my Labor Government will make a submission to Fair Work Australia that argues for rates of pay that fairly and properly value social and community sector work. We know most of you are women and that full-time working women earn on average one fifth less than men. That equates to women working seven weeks a year for free.

Frankly, it's just wrong.

That's why we're arguing for rates of pay that don't discriminate, so decades of inequality are brought to an end.

I would like to recognise your contribution to this announcement. Not just for your daily work in our communities, but also your struggle, through your Union, to run this Equal Pay case and to use Labor's Fair Work laws to have your work properly valued. You have sent me Kiss postcards and YouTube videos, you have delivered petitions with thousands of signatures, you have called, faxed and emailed. You have rallied in your thousands. You have fought for equal pay.

This equal pay case has only been possible through the introduction of Labor's Fair Work laws. Prior to the Fair Work Act all 16 applications for equal pay had failed because the test was impossible to meet.

When I abolished WorkChoices and created Fair Work Australia I hoped for an outcome like this. I hoped Labor's new laws would lead to a fair decision, based on fair evidence, that often people who work in female-dominated sectors had been underpaid for a long time.

This is an historic announcement for you and your colleagues and it's something only a Labor Government will deliver.

*Julia Gillard
Prime Minister*

SUZANNE HAMMOND

FEDERAL WOMEN'S OFFICER



Flexi-curity - Balancing on a High Wire

Over the last few decades we have been constantly bombarded with arguments that we need to have a more flexible industrial relations system and workforce. We have also accepted that women need to have more flexible work arrangements so that they can balance their work and family commitments. While we can feel satisfied that there have been improvements in working conditions for many women workers there is also a down side that must be addressed in order for women to enjoy fair wages and conditions and for them to have an equal share in economic and social well being of society.

Over the last few decades women's participation in formal work has increased. In 1990 62 per cent of Australian women aged 15-64 were in the labour force. In 2005 this figure had risen to 68%. While we herald this improvement we must remember that women have always worked, however, often their work was not recognised as 'real work'. Women often worked in the informal sectors of the economy and much of it was unpaid. This failure to recognise women's work such as domestic work and caring work was because these forms of work were often viewed as temporary and because of gendered notions of what work really was and how work was valued. While women's work has become more formalised and accepted as 'real work' much of it has been categorised as non-standard and is therefore channelled into less secure employment arrangements.

The Australian labour force has undergone a structural change with a sharp rise in casual and insecure forms of employment. Pursuing the mantra of greater flexibility has come at a cost for women in the modern labour market and this has implications for their work/life experience. We know that women's jobs are underpaid and undervalued but they are also less secure, they often don't attract rights and entitlements of more secure forms of employment. This leads to greater insecurity in work and post work life. Unfortunately women's lifetime work

experience means that they have less access to leave, less in retirement funds and are more likely to end up being reliant on welfare.

By international standards Australia has a very high proportion of its workforce employed on non-standard full time work arrangements. Now in Australia one in four workers is employed on a casual basis. This is about one quarter of the workforce. Casual worker numbers have grown from 15 per cent of the workforce in the mid 1980s to over a quarter of the workforce now. The highest numbers of casuals are found in accommodation and food services, and retail industry. About 28 per cent of women work as casuals compared to about 20 per cent of men. Twenty five per cent of women are without paid leave entitlements whereas 16 per cent of men are without paid leave entitlements.

When we delve into casual workforce statistics we find that many of these workers are wrongly employed as casuals. Many casual workers are long term workers and they work regular hours. Over a quarter of casuals work full time hours. About 65 per cent work the same hours each week, have the same pay and are long term in their jobs. Many of these workers are on short term renewable contracts and often these evade many employment entitlements. Many of these workers want full time hours and greater security. It is wrong to classify and employ these workers as casuals and it is wrong to use these contracts to undermine proper pay and conditions.

While we often think of the public sector as providing greater security, government policies such as privatisation, corporatisation and contracting out of public services has left many public servants with less security and removed many entitlements. It is estimated that about 20 per cent of public servants are now on short term contracts.

Public Sector Unions have long fought to have these less secure forms of employment recognised, paid

appropriately and attract the same entitlements as permanent workers.

The case of school support staff is illustrative of your union taking action to provide greater security for workers. Historically and nationally, school support staff were more likely to be women employed part-time on short term contracts and paid at lower levels of the classification structure. The PSA has negotiated with previous governments to have short term contracts converted to permanent arrangements and to have awards provide for rights and entitlements enjoyed by full time long term workers.

The Federal Office is working to have these employment practices and their effects exposed. We have made submissions to the recent Federal Governments Schools Funding Inquiry on the manner in which funding effects the nature and form of employment of non teaching staff in schools. We are also currently participating in and making submissions to the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into the schools workforce.

The move towards 'flexible' employment arrangements in Australia has produced a more casualised, less secure workforce. The casualised workforce has been used as a way to undermine pay and conditions. It is a problem that will disproportionately effect women workers. The current international and national trends to cut-back public services will exacerbate this problem. Our aim is to have flexibility for the requirements of a modern workforce but one which also has security -the notion of flexi-curity. Secure Work is a problem that your union and the ACTU are campaigning to have addressed. We suggest that you become active in securing your employment, checkout the ACTU secure work campaign www.actu.org.au, visit the website and get involved.

Suzanne Hammond
Federal Women's Officer
PSU/SPSF National Office

Workplaces victims of domestic violence

DOMESTIC violence is directly linked with widespread productivity issues at thousands of Australian workplaces, a national workplace study has found.

Nearly a third of employees included in the 2011 study identified themselves as victims of domestic violence, with half of those reporting that violence in the home was having a serious impact on their ability to do their job.

The impact on productivity included everything from being tired and late for work, to abusive and threatening phone calls, emails and even physical injuries that prevented them from working.

About one in five reported that domestic violence continued at their workplace, with abusive partners showing up, unwanted and unannounced.

These findings from the "Safe At Home, Safe At Work" survey were released at a national workplace conference held in Melbourne on 5 December 2011.

Study author Ludo McFerran says the research shows domestic violence is clearly a workplace issue that employers need to address.

"I think the survey demonstrates that this is already costing employers," she said.

"It's already having an impact on people attending work and being able to do their job when they get there."

An Access Economics report estimated the annual cost of lost productivity to domestic violence was around \$480 million.

The study was conducted between February and July of this year and involved 3611 online surveys, completed mostly by union members across the country.

About 80 per cent of survey respondents were women, many in the nursing and teaching professions.

And nearly half of victimised employees did report the abuse to their employer, but the survey discovered that few actually found the response from management was helpful.

ACTU President Ged Kearney said the survey will hopefully show employers how it is in their best interests to offer help to employees who are affected by domestic violence.

The PSA successfully negotiated domestic violence clauses earlier this year, with more than 260,000 NSW public sector workers covered by changes to their awards.

Ms Kearney said the survey results were "astounding", with so many reporting abuse.

"The last thing you want is for women to lose financial independence," she said.

"It compounds a very serious situation."

The study will be used as a baseline, especially for understanding the impact of changes in workplace entitlements in this area, as the survey is the first of its kind in Australia.

The results of the survey can be found by going to the Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse website

www.austdvclearinghouse.unsw.edu.au/PDF%20files/Domestic_violence_and_work_survey_report_2011.pdf



PSA Training

Feb	6 - 7	Mon & Tue	Women in the Union	Sydney
Feb	17	Fri	Dealing with Workplace Bullying	Sydney
Feb	20 - 21	Mon & Tue	Role of the Delegate	Sydney
Feb	28	Tue	Delegates module	Tamworth
March	5	Mon	Dealing with Workplace Bullying	Newcastle
March	6	Tue	Delegates module	Newcastle
March	16	Fri	Delegates Case Studies	Sydney
March	27	Tue	Dealing with Workplace Bullying	Western Sydney
April	13	Fri	Dealing with Workplace Bullying	Sydney
April	16 - 17	Mon & Tue	Role of the Delegate	Sydney
April	23	Mon	Delegate Case Studies	Western Sydney
April	30	Mon	Delegates module	Wagga

The PSA/CPSU Training Unit is looking at ways to improve the delivery of training courses.

Where possible and when there is sufficient interest, additional courses will be scheduled in local regions.

Members can register their 'expressions of interest' in attending PSA/CPSU training on the following website:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/traininginterest2012>

To register and for further details, please see PSA website:

<http://training.psa.asn.au>

Training Unit

PHONE (02) 9220 0984

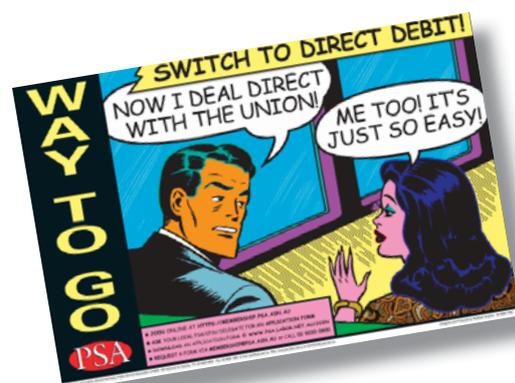
EMAIL training@psa.asn.au

WEB www.psa.labor.net.au



NEW! PSA posters

Contact PSA Communications Unit on (02) 9220 0908 or email communications@psa.asn.au for copies



Have you switched yet?

Have you made the switch to direct debit yet? We can't emphasise just how important this is to you and your union.

In the face of the possibility of payroll deduction being stopped under any future Coalition government in NSW, switching over ensures a stronger and more secure union.

It also means your employer won't need to know whether you're in the union or not.

The PSA complies with privacy laws and your details will remain confidential and secure.

Switch over in three simple steps:

1. Download the form from the PSA's website at www.psa.labor.net.au.
2. Click on "join PSA" - on the left hand side - and then download the "switch to direct debit form".
3. Fill it out and send it to the PSA. We do the rest.

Alternately your local PSA delegate or organiser can give you a brochure and form to fill out (reply paid).