

AEU Women can take ACTION:

Contact your union's Women's Officer to find out about activities in your state/territory.

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Bronwyn Croghan,
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- For more information about major political parties' Federal Election policies for women;
- To find more about how the Federal Government's work laws affect women; and
- For other material about the AEU's public education campaign

go to: <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/E07/election.html>

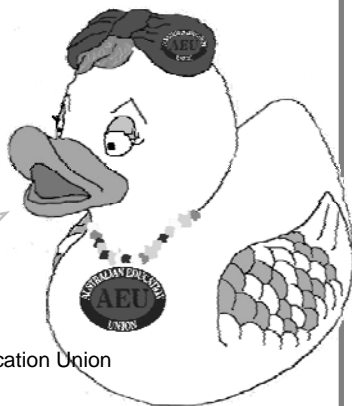
Help build community support for the message that, NO Government can get away with removing fundamental rights at work.

- To get more involved with the community campaign for better rights at work;

go to: <http://www.yourrightsatwork.com.au>

- Spread the word to other women about how damaging these workplace laws are and how to get rid of them
- Encourage other women to become members of their unions and fight the changes.
- Circulate this and other flyers to your colleagues, friends, and families.

It took so long for women to get decent pay and working conditions – let's fight to protect them!



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AEU Women

refuse to be sitting ducks!

The Howard Federal Government's workplace changes have already impacted severely on women:

1. Women make up 60% of employees in highly award-regulated industries.
(ABS 6306.0 - Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, May 2004)
2. Women are more likely to be concentrated in jobs affected by the minimum wage which has recently been set and is an effective drop in wages for the most vulnerable workers.
(LHMU, 05 July 200)
3. Increased power by bosses to enforce individual contracts and AWA's is already widening the pay gap between males and females.
(ABS 6306.0 - Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, May 2006)
4. AWAs are less likely than collective agreements or an award to offer family flexible work arrangements.
(DEWR, Agreement making in Australia under the Workplace Relations Act - 2002 and 2003)
5. Fear of being sacked without unfair dismissal rights is encouraging bad and discriminatory behaviour in workplaces. Workplace complaints to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission have doubled since *Workchoices* was introduced, with significant increases in sex and disability discrimination.
(HREOC, 30th March 2007)

These laws disadvantage women in our communities, in particular our students, our friends and our families:

- younger women;
- women from cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds;
- indigenous women; and
- women with disabilities.



Women in public education...

have had some protection to date, being employed either in State industrial relations systems or by having Labor Governments honouring a collective agreement process.

AEU members in TAFE, through Skilling Australia's Workforce Act, already have laws forcing AWAs to be offered and other workplace reforms to increase the power of managers and decrease job stability.

The Howard Government has also shown its determination to override State/Territory education policies in the past (flagpoles, A-E reports, 'performance pay') with the threat to withhold Federal funding to public education.

Minister Bishop has stated (The Age, 21/09/2007) that individual contracts (AWAs) are a likely way to introduce performance pay.

"There are a range of options, from a bonus paid to salary packages, to teachers being employed under AWAs, which provide flexibility for performance-based incentives," Ms Bishop said

When asked if she would insist on performance-based pay as a condition of federal funding, Ms Bishop said:

"Clearly that always is an option."

A re-elected Howard Government, with an unfettered notion of a mandate for their changes, is likely to relish tying Federal Government funding to public education to the whole gamut of their unfair workplace conditions. In this new context, it would be hard to see how State and Territory Governments would stand to resist that pressure.

With a re-elected Howard Government you may find yourself on an individual (AWA) workplace agreement.

Opposition parties have committed to removing *WorkChoices* and restoring an award safety net, an independent umpire and rights of unions to represent their members.

ask yourself:

- equal pay

Which educators in subject/shortage areas, would benefit from confidential pay offerings to attract and retain them?

With a focus on male teacher numbers, which schools or sectors might use AWAs to attract and retain men?

- work and family conditions

With an ageing workforce how long would paid maternity leave continue as it stands?

How long before it and other family flexibilities might be traded away for higher pay or superannuation entitlements?

Which individuals would 'kick up a fuss' to request paid maternity leave if offered an AWA without it, on a take it or leave it basis?

- discrimination/harassment

In workplaces encouraged to be secretive and distrusting (even competitive), with unfair dismissal rights removed and employment precarious, who would claim, report or stand up against sexual harassment or bullying?

- promotion

How would women fare in attempts for promotion, in a similar environment where cronyism, not merit becomes the norm?

And how do educators ensure profession-wide quality through individualised agreements?

your rights at work
worth voting for

Remember the union won improvements for women members in public education which may be threatened:

- Equal Pay
- Paid parental leave
- Accrued sick leave
- Long Service Leave
- Holiday Leave Loading
- Allowances
- Work and Family provisions
- Superannuation benefits

Other threats include:

- Ill-conceived 'Performance Pay' imposed
- Increased Professional Development pressures
- Loss of statutory vacations of up to 4 weeks
- Increased use of individual contracts
- Greater casualisation of the educator workforce, already predominantly female
- Threat to permanent employment status
- Principals/Managers hiring and firing of staff
- Educators able to be dismissed without proper process or recourse

Let's not give John Howard the satisfaction of forcing us back to the conditions of the 1950s!



Beware of a re-elected Howard Government...

