

CFMEU Forestry & Furnishing Products Division National Newsletter Summer 2010



CFMEU FORESTRY AND FURNISHING PRODUCTS DIVISION

Recruitment campaign kicking goals



Kerry Wharley

The Union's campaign to increase membership is going great guns. A bigger and stronger Union puts us in a much better position to deliver improved wages and conditions for members.

This has been achieved with some outstanding work by our delegates. Special mention needs to be made of just some delegates who have done an outstanding job signing up members.

NSW District delegates Gerald Tory from Big River Timbers, Kerry Wharley from Boral Kyogle, Nestor Hertel from Sleep City and Andrew Conway from CHH Panels Tumut have all played a big role in delivering the highest growth ever in NSW.



Brett Kelly

In Victoria, AKD has two outstanding

delegates with Gillian Finnegan at Colac and Graham Angus at Irrewarra. Anthony Wilson from Carter Holt Harvey in Morwell is also doing great work.

In SA Neil Guidotto from Viridian and Fiona Downs from Bedford Industries deserve special mention for growing the Union. Pulp and Paper Workers District delegate at Kimberly Clark in Millicent, Brett Kelly, is also having a big impact in that workplace.

The Union can only get stronger if we continue to grow and while space prevents us from mentioning all our delegates here, they all deserve a big thank you for their efforts in building the Union and improving the working lives of members.



Gerald Tory



Andrew Conway

Don't Privatise SA Forests - Community Protest



Brad Coates speaks at the rally in Adelaide

The proposed sale of 84,000 hectares of plantation forests by the SA Government - currently managed profitably by Forestry SA - will lead to significant job losses in regional SA and cuts to social and physical infrastructure projects used to support communities and families in the region.

The SA Government's decision to forward sell the timber rights of plantations for three rotations was taken without

consideration of the social and economic costs for regional communities and families.

The CFMEU is active in the community campaign to demonstrate to Government the necessity to complete a comprehensive and transparent review of their proposal.

This has the potential to decimate regional communities throughout South Australia given the ability of the purchasing organisation to sell sawlogs and fibre overseas forcing mill closures and massive job losses.

The Government is selling workers and communities short with this proposal and the CFMEU calls for a halt in the proposed sale pending a socio-economic and cost benefit analysis of this activity.

Forestry SA currently returns about \$43 million back into general revenue each year and the Government plans to sell this revenue source for a quick cash grab to fund projects in metropolitan Adelaide.

For more information go to www.cfmeuffpd.org.au or www.dontprivatisesaforests.com.au

Michael O'Connor elected New National Secretary of all Divisions of the CFMEU

Following the resignation of John Sutton as CFMEU National Secretary (see page 5) Michael O'Connor has been elected unopposed to this position.

"I look forward to continuing to work hard for forestry and furnishing products workers and to also serve the union's construction, mining and energy members next year," Michael O'Connor said.

This decision was taken at the highly successful CFMEU National Conference held in Sydney in late October. The conference passed resolutions opposing the privatisation of State government owned plantations in South Australia and



Michael O'Connor Photo: Aaron Francis The Australian a resolution on natural forest logging that were both carried with the support of all divisions of the CFMEU.

Visit the Union's website at www.cfmeuffpd.org.au and click on 'News' to read the resolutions in full.

SA District News

UNION INVESTS IN GREEN TRIANGLE

The CFMEU has purchased a property at 1 Crennan Street, Mount Gambier, as a new home for the union.

The house has several offices and is located opposite Woolworths. The property has been upgraded for disability access and has a meeting room. (pictured below)



HERITAGE GLASS SHUTS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Through no fault of workers the Heritage Glass operation in SA has unfortunately closed down. Members are now back on the job at other companies. (pictured at right)



LIFE AFTER RETIREMENT

CFMEU life member Arthur Young was spotted in Port Adelaide recently with his grandson.

Good to see Arthur passing on his timber skills to the next generation. (pictured at left)



Tasmanian Members Back their Union in Majority 'Yes' Vote

CFMEU members across Tasmania have overwhelmingly endorsed the recently negotiated "Statement of Principles" between Tasmanian environmental organisations, the industry and the Union.

The outcome of the ballot managed by the Electoral Commission is a courageous example of workers engaging with the reality of the industry crisis and facing the future together.

97% of members who voted endorsed a restructure of the industry based on the Statement of Principles. The vast majority of the Forestry Tasmania CFMEU membership also voted in favour of this action following stop work meetings.

There was also a strong endorsement of the Unions "Log of Claims" to guide further negotiations, with 95% of voters endorsing the Union's position for a just transition for the industry's workers, families and communities.

94% of voters endorsed a future supplementary vote in which union members will choose whether to endorse the continued implementation

of the Statement of Principles at a later date and if the Union will remain a party to them.

Members appreciated the honesty of the Union's approach and most know the lie of the land with the state of the industry in Tasmania. They also know that their best chance of achieving a fair outcome is to operate collectively through their Union. The union sent a range of information to members about the crisis facing the industry and the reasons for the ballot.

This has sent a powerful message about why workers should be in the union, resulting in increased membership as workers want to have a say in the future of their industry and realise that the best way to do this is to join the Union.

National Secretary Michael O'Connor congratulated the Tasmanian members on the ballot outcome and called on the Federal Government to focus on the situation in Tasmania. He said;

"The turnout was good – traditionally union ballots of this type only attract approximately 25% participation, this ballot attracted more than double



A Union member leaves the polling booth after voting in the ballot.

that level. The Federal Government must understand the full implications of this outcome.

"The CFMEU and its membership will not tolerate procrastination on this opportunity for the Federal Govt to come up with a socially, economically and environmentally acceptable outcome in Tasmania from the ashes of the crippled industry.

"The workers endorsement of the Statement of Principles represents this opportunity and it must be taken. As a first step the Federal and Tasmanian governments should announce their mechanism to move into a plan of action."

CFMEU establishes National Women's Committee

Seventeen female CFMEU members from all Divisions (Construction & General, Mining & Energy and Forestry & Furnishing) attended the first CFMEU National Women's Conference held as part of the National Conference in Sydney in October.

Two things were clear to the women who attended the meeting. Firstly, despite different industries,

women workers experience many common challenges and secondly, as all good unionists know, we are stronger if we act together.

National Secretary Michael O'Connor said that the work of the Women's Committee is critical for the Union and he looks forward to working closely with the Executive of the Women's Committee to implement the changes endorsed by National Conference.



CFMEU Women's Committee Vice President Michelle Ingley-Smith

Employer's failure to pay redundancy 'shameful' says Fair Work Australia

Fair Work Australia has labelled an employers failure to pay redundancy to a Wood Machinist worker with 45 years service as "shameful" and "morally bankrupt".

The NSW District, lodged a dispute with Fair Work Australia against a NSW North Coast company who refused to pay our Union member his 8 weeks Award redundancy when he was retrenched in February 2010.

The member had commenced employment with the company in December 1965 and had a 45 year unblemished employment record.

The Company refused to pay his redundancy, claiming that they employed less than 15 employees at the time of retrenchment.

The Union brought the small employer redundancy provisions of the Timber Industry Award 2010 to the

attention of the company which provides for a redundancy scale of up to 8 weeks pay for employers with less than 15 employees. The employer refused to accept that the Award provisions applied to his company.

Fair Work Australia was scathing about the employer and directed that he pay the 8 weeks redundancy plus interest or face the consequences of the matter being referred to the Federal Magistrate with at least two Award breaches each carrying a maximum penalty of \$33,000 and costs being awarded against the company.

The case illustrates that we have strong and enforceable minimum Award conditions and employers can't get away with ripping workers off in their redundancy entitlements. Being a member of the Union is the only way to protect your entitlements and a strong Union is the only way to bring rogue employers like this to justice.

Boral Kyogle members recognised for their long term commitment to the union

NSW District Secretary Craig Smith visited Boral's Kyogle mill to make a presentation to long term members of the union in recognition of their strong commitment to the Union with membership of between 20 and 31 years.

The Union congratulates Tom Matthews, Brian Priestly, Alan Roberts and Bill Creighton and thanks them for their long standing loyalty to the Union.

The presentation was made at a BBQ held at the Kyogle mill which the Union put on for all members on site. This was a great initiative that came from delegate and New South Wales District Committee member Kerry Wharley. Long term union members are great role models for younger workers who have recently joined and were not around to see the struggles to achieve the hard fought gains that have been won to deliver the wages and conditions that currently apply at the workplace.



Above, left to right; Delegate Kerry Wharley, Tom Matthews, Brian Priestly, Craig Smith, Alan Roberts and Bill Creighton

CFMEU FFPD Financial Statements

The CFMEU FFPD Financial Statements for the year ended 31 Dec 2008 are now available on our website at:

www.cfmeuffpd.org.au/ourunion/topics/2368.html

Alternatively, go to the website and click on 'Our Union' on the left hand side of the page then click on 'Financial Statements' and then click on your District or Sub Branch to view the statements.

Employers try to cut your pay Your Union wins in FWA to defend and extend your rights at work

Joinery and Building Trades Award Win for glaziers

A NSW based employer association, Australian Business Industrial (ABI), applied to Fair Work Australia (FWA) to vary the Joinery and Building Trades Award to reduce conditions for Glaziers.

ABI were supported by the Master Builders Association, the Australian Industry Group, the Housing Industry Association and a number of employers in the glass industry.

The conditions they wanted to reduce were:

- Shift penalties
- Rates of pay for workers under the age of 21 (juniors)
- The mandatory 10 hour break after overtime.
- Changes to the classification structure which could have reduced the grade at which glaziers and glass cutters work.

Working together with the Construction Division the Union filed a joint objection to this variation. After some discussion with the employers we proposed alternative variations to the classification structure which were useful and clarified a number of aspects of the allocation of common glass workers tasks to particular classifications.

The Union called evidence from Bruce Ross (Victorian Organiser), Dave Kirner (SA District Secretary) and Terry Kesby (NSW Construction Division Organiser) to show that there were no grounds for the employers' case.

The Commission rejected the employers' application saying there was no evidence that the variations were necessary, and granted the alternative variations proposed by the Union.

Timber Award Win

The Union also brought a case to fix up a number of matters which had been overlooked by the Full Bench in the main Award Modernisation processes in 2009 in the Timber Industry Award.

The Union consulted extensively with industry to ensure that there were no objections and the Commissioner granted the variations sought by the Union. As a result workers covered by the Timber Industry Award have gained:

- Jury service top up pay
- Pay out of personal leave if you elect to do so
- Public holiday protections for workers who don't work a standard Monday to Friday week.
- Proper classifications for log truck drivers in the Harvesting sector of the industry.

Farewell John Sutton

CFMEU National Secretary John Sutton announced at the Union's National Conference that he will stand down from his position with the Union at Christmas.

John Sutton is finishing a 30-year career in the Union movement. He has served as CFMEU National Secretary for five years and is also a Vice President of the ACTU. Previously he was a long serving National Secretary of the Construction and General Division of the Union.

John has also served as the International President of the UITBB, the international trade union federation of building, wood, building materials and allied industries, with millions of members around the globe.

John served his apprenticeship in the union movement with the Building Workers Industrial Union (BWIU), one of the forerunners of the CFMEU.

"It has been an honor to lead one of Australia's most militant unions for such a long period and to serve building workers and the working class. After 30 years it is time for a change and I look forward to developing a new career after so long in leadership positions within the CFMEU," Mr. Sutton said.



Arnhem Land members in the Northern Territory



CFMEU members are working in Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory to build houses and furniture from locally sourced timber.

The project involves Yolgnu CFMEU members learning timber craft skills including harvesting, logging, milling, furniture making, truss and frame making and carpentry.

So far a bunk house and a residential dwelling have been completed. Several pieces of furniture have also been made involving Victorian furniture designer Damien Wright.

Mark Blackman, Tasmanian CFMEU FFPD Branch Vice-President is teaching members how to operate the Lucas Mill – a portable mill that can be set up on site.

The mill was set up and operated at the Garma Festival in August and attracted enthusiastic crowds keen to see the

process of go to whoa house building at the raw material and milling phase.

ForestWorks CEO Mike Hartman was at the Festival and ran a forum on indigenous housing in Australia and how indigenous workers can make their own with the right skill set and support.

Project supporters include Forestry Tasmania, Fairbrother Construction, the Gumitji Corporation and the CFMEU.



Union Delegate called racist for sticking up for jobs

Union delegate, Gerald Tory from Big River Timbers in Grafton (see front page) was doing what he does best - sticking up for workers - when he contacted Telstra to complain about local call centre jobs being sent offshore to the Philippines.

He was shocked when a Telstra employee called him back and when he explained his concerns, said "I think you're racist".

Gerald, who is of Indian background,

replied "Listen, I'm not a racist person, I've never been racist, I hate racism."

When he asked to speak to someone higher up to complain he was told that there was no one higher up available.

Gerald Tory has a witness who was sitting next to him when he made the call and the Union is fully supporting him as he pursues Telstra over this appalling allegation.



WA Recruitment Drive

CFMEU FFPD Assistant National Secretary Leo Skourdombis has been leading the Union's highly successful recruitment campaign across the country.

Leo has been working with WA District Organiser Paul Carter to raise the profile of the Union in Western Australia.

Leo and Paul are focussing on growing the Union so that we can deliver better outcomes for members.

Membership has risen significantly at Wesbeam and a new Enterprise Agreement was recently finalised.

The 'Right of Entry' for union officials to enter workplaces

and hold discussions with members is an issue that needs to be addressed at a number of sites.

The Union will be taking these matters to Fair Work Australia to ensure that workers are given the opportunity to meet with the Union in a more convenient and friendly environment.



Leo Skourdombis

PPW VISY Update

The CFMEU Pulp and Paper District has established a permanent sub branch in the Tumut region, in recognition of its growing membership at Visy Tumut.

Pulp and Paper District national secretary Alex Millar said;

"The decision to launch a sub branch at Tumut reflects the determination of the Union to ensure the workers at Visy have the same representation and rights as other workers in the pulp and paper industry," he said.

"Visy has had a pretty shabby industrial relations record at Tumut and used the now discredited 'WorkChoices' legislation of the previous government to the hilt.

"However we want to work with our growing membership base and the company to try and turn that poor legacy around.

"We look forward to increasing our presence on the ground in the Tumut region and working with and for our members locally to improve their situation."

"Unions are about working people banding together to improve their working lives. This new sub branch at Tumut is already helping to make that happen."



Pictured left to right are CFMEU Tumut sub branch Senior Vice President Jeff Pont, Junior Vice President Lex Smith, President Stephen Longobardi and Secretary Robert Burns, with CFMEU Pulp and Paper District National Secretary Alex Millar and District President Ken Fraser.

PHOTO: courtesy of the Tumut and Adelong Times

CONTACT YOUR UNION

National Toll free no: 1800 060 556

Visit the Union's website at: www.cfmeuffpd.org.au



CFMEU leads the way on skills

A new National Training and Skill Development Advisory Panel was launched in November with the aim of increasing workers' access to training, assessment and skill development across all Carter Holt Harvey (CHH) Australian sites.

Four unions, the CFMEU, AWU, CEPU and AMWU are represented on the Panel, along with ForestWorks, the timber industry training body.

National President Jane Calvert said;

"CHH are to be commended for their efforts, which includes a budget commitment to skill development.

"When the going gets tough, companies often lose sight of the importance of investment in skills; then they cry 'skill shortage' when the industry picks up again. It's great to see CHH holding steadfast."



National President Jane Calvert

First Super delivers strong investment returns

First Super has delivered strong investment returns for 2009-2010. Crediting rates have been set following completion of the annual financial accounts and audit.

These strong returns have been achieved at the same time as the First Super Board has taken a more defensive approach to investing your super, to reduce the risk of potential losses in the event of another financial market downturn.

The crediting rates for 2009-2010 are:

Balanced (default)	11.0%
Shares plus	13.9%
Conservative balanced	10.3%
Cash	3.4%



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CONTACT THE UNION ON FREECALL 1800 060 556 OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE www.cfmeuffpd.org.au

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