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Queensland and Northern Territory



Electrical Worker



Also inside:

- Contracting/Construction Industry EBA 2012 Campaign - Pages 19-21
- May Day Round Up - Page 10
- Spotlight on Chris McGaw - Page 7
- Get the facts on Bowel Cancer - Page 19

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Contents

- 4 Secretary's Report • *Peter Simpson*
- 5 Overseas Workers
- 6 Important Notice for ETU Members
- 6 Strategic Lead Organiser • *Keith McKenzie*
- 7 Spotlight on Chris McGraw • *Andrew Irvine*
- 10 May Day Roundup
- 12 Frontline News - Energex Negotiations
- 14 One Union • Many Stories • *Bill Bijoux*
- 16 ESI Update • *Trevor Gauld*
- 18 ESI Contractors Update • *Wendel Moloney*
- 18 International Worker's Memorial Day
- 19 Construction Industry Update • *Chris Lynch & Mark Bateman*
- 19 Get the facts on Bowel Cancer
- 20 Contracting/Construction Industry EBA 2012 Campaign
- 21 Major Projects Update • *Peter Ong*
- 23 Construction Campaign Profile • *Damien D'Arcy*
- 24 News in Brief • *Andrew Irvine*
- 25 Honorary Members Group • *Gordon Abbott*
- 25 Koch's History Snippets • *Tony Koch*
- 26 Railways QRN & GOC's Update • *Jason Young*
- 27 Global/International News • *Ports of Auckland Dispute*
- 27 Global/International News • *International Solidarity*
- 30 General Trades Update • *Garry Rogers*
- 31 Apprentices • *Scott Reichman*
- 32 Toowoomba Report • *Dan McGaw*
- 32 Gold Coast Report • *Beau Malone*
- 33 State & Local Government Report • *Scott Reichman*
- 33 Far North Qld Report • *Stuart Traill*
- 34 Sunshine Coast/Wide Bay Report • *Dan Bessell*
- 35 North Qld Report • *Wal Giordani*
- 35 Mackay Report • *Glenn Hall*
- 36 Northern Territory Report • *Michael Haire*
- 38 Members Benefits
- 39 Boltman's Crossword
- 39 ETU merchandise



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FROM THE SECRETARY

PETER SIMPSON

Election Bloodbath

A lot has been happening since the last Journal and with the massive election result for Newman, there's a lot more to come in the next three years. While the Newman government's review of electricity will present some opportunities and pitfalls, their talk about preventing union officials from accessing sites over safety issues will create some serious challenges for our membership and our industry as a whole.

I don't think there were too many members that were happy with the Bligh government. It sold out its principals, its members and in turn our members during its last few years in office. The sale of our assets, the position that now leaves our QRN membership in, their lack of consultation or indeed respect for the trade union movement and its membership pretty much sealed their fate, as we predicted and warned it would some three years ago.

On a more positive note I was pleased to hear the new Labour leader Anastacia Palaszczuk during her Brisbane Labour Day speech, apologise unreservedly for selling assets. That apology coupled with the fact that the vast majority of the people who sold us down the river no longer call George Street home will start mending some bridges. It is pretty evident already that the new Newman government doesn't particularly like workers, (job cuts in the public sector, new IR laws that restrict rights and support for multinational miners against workers at BMA) show clearly it will take the ball up for its traditional support base, big business and the Clive Palmer's of the world. Labor's challenge now is to stop listening to business and start listening to its traditional support base, the working people of Queensland!

May Day

May Day was a huge success across Queensland and the Territory, Brisbane numbers were huge with hundreds of members and their families taking the time to come out and celebrate the day and support **their** Union. A union is only as strong as its membership, if May Day is any indication, we aren't travelling too badly.

Contracting Campaign

By the time this edition hits the deck, we would have held our round of meetings to endorse the *Contracting Industry Log of Claims*. This year's campaign is extremely important, given that we were caught in the crossfire between NECA and the ECA last time around, smack, bang in the middle of the Global Financial Crisis.

This year, whilst things aren't as good in Commercial Construction as we would have hoped, there is still a lot of scope to recoup some ground, and this will be our driving force this year, 2012 ETU EBA, it really is UP TO YOU!

We recently pledged our support to our NSW Comrades when NECA planned to lock out the employees of all major contractors in NSW. The Queensland Branch, the Victorian Branch and the NSW Branch stood shoulder to shoulder in a rare show of solidarity against NECA. I'm pleased to report that this played a part in NECA changing their minds on the lock out and our NSW branch stitching up a deal. In our upcoming campaign it'd be nice to be able to deliver that again, firstly though, we need to show we can back ourselves in this campaign.

Overseas Labour

There has been a lot of concern of late about the Gina Rinehart announcement of 1700 foreign jobs for a project in Western Australia. Please take the time to read the article on page 3 to see how we are responding to this issue.

Half Way

We're half way through 2012, so far it's been a challenge, with the likes of the Hastie Group falling over, attacks on our membership at QRN, the Electricity Industry Review Panel and numerous other issues. We are starting to see strong membership growth (around 7% at time of writing) which, in turn, means strong job growth.

To meet that challenge we have put on an additional organiser and staffed a new office in Rockhampton. Bill Bijoux is a long time state councillor and long term member/delegate whose last role was on the Gold Coast University Hospital job. Bill will be predominately looking after major projects based out of our office in Rockhampton Trades Hall. Please take the time to read the article on Bill in this edition. Personally I'd like to thank Bill for his dedication in moving to Rocky to take on this role for the union and wish him every success.

Hands off May Day

Join the campaign and send a message to Newman and the LNP May Day is the Workers' day and we will not give it up.

Check out Facebook at

<http://www.facebook.com/etuqdnt>

Overseas Workers

The Gina Rinehart Employment Migration Agreement (EMA) proposal to source 1700 overseas workers for a mine development in Western Australia and its mishandling has again ignited the debate around overseas labour, and its impact on local workers. The reality is, there are overseas tradespeople here now and there will likely be more to come. Our challenge is to ensure that overseas workers are not used to undercut our trade, our wages and our conditions, that they join a union and that they receive the same benefits we do as tradespersons in this industry.

Our key focus must be to secure guarantees for apprentice numbers and as per our National Unions' policy ensure our members are placed in work before any overseas labour is sourced.

The Gina Rinehart proposal and public backlash resulted in the belated promise from the federal government to introduce a "Jobs Board." What the government missed was the opportunity to sell that project as providing an additional 6,500 Australian jobs, with perhaps 1700 overseas workers, if all jobs couldn't be filled by Australian labour.

Union campaign gets desired result, now it's over to you.

The relentless campaign by unions to ensure Australian workers get a decent crack at resource jobs has resulted in the Federal Government's "Jobs Board" becoming mandatory for all employers wanting to get EMA's. So for members wanting to work in the resource sector; log on, sign up and get ready at <http://jobsearch.gov.au/resourcesectorjobs/default.aspx> After all the lobbying we have done to get this jobs board right we need to make it a success and not give the employers a free kick not to use Aussie labour.

ETUQ Jobs Board

Long before the government announced their proposed "Jobs Board", the ETUQ was in the process of developing one to ensure that we can place our members into resource jobs before overseas labour is sourced. Through our connections in the industry we are hoping to place members with EBA companies so as to ensure that our Australian workers receive

the work and our kids are trained. The 2012 round of Contracting Agreements will have Apprentice numbers (*worth noting we had Apprentice Ratios in most Agreements until Howard's WorkChoices Legislation took them away*) our ESI Agreements have guaranteed Apprentice numbers as do most industry sectors. The ETU Jobs Board is a free service for ETUQ financial members and can be found at www.etu.org.au/jobs. Please note you will need to register for a password and login for our website in order to access this service.

After we have exhausted local options as above, which will happen in Queensland given the amount of work versus the amount of tradespersons, we are seeking to talk to unions in countries that have similar qualifications and standards as our own. The ETU has a relationship with the Technical Engineering and Electrical Union (TEEU) in the Republic of Ireland and with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) in the United States and Canada. Discussions are also well underway with UNITE in the United Kingdom.

As part of the assessment process, FutureSkills International, a union owned company, will be in a position to assess foreign labour for their suitability to work in this country. **Note** Future Skills is not bringing the skilled foreign workers to Australia. They apply for work on the own accord and get themselves to Australia either through employment arrangements or at their own cost. FutureSkills involvement is to ensure the safe and secure selection of skilled electrical workers and to keep the electrical trade at a standard which many electricians, past and present have fought to maintain.

Australia has a complicated licensing system for electrical workers which vary from state to state. However, all states and territories recognise an Offshore Technical Skills Record (OTSR) as evidence to issue a provisional electrical work permit or licence.

The OTSR enables a person to apply for a provisional electrical licence to any electrical licensing regulator, on arrival in Australia, so they can commence work under general supervision in their trade. The person must also enrol with an Australian registered training organisation to complete required

gap training within a 12 month period.

If workers are already in Australia, have an electrical background and are seeking to work in the electrical trade they can also now apply to have their skills assessed in Australia towards an OTSR. The only requirement is that they have undertaken technical trade training outside of Australia and have never worked in the trade in Australia. These types of skills assessments can only be undertaken by a TRA approved registered training organisation such as FutureSkills International. Many employers seeking to recruit overseas workers may select this option to assure them the overseas worker is able to gain a provisional electrical work permit/licence as soon as they arrive in Australia from the relevant electrical licensing regulator. It's also a much simpler process for applicants to go through prior to arrival. Any worker with an OTSR in the relevant electrical occupation is able to apply immediately for a provisional electrical work permit/licence. Gap training will still be required.

The Process:

Step 1: Self evaluation www.tradeset.com.au

Step 2: Verification of their qualification and employment experience.

Step 3: Practical Skills Assessment.

Step 4: Applicant applies for a provisional electrical licence in Australia.

Step 5: Once a provisional licence has been issued the applicant has 12 months to complete the Gap Training through an approved Registered Training Organisation (RTO).

Step 6: Once the Gap Training has been successfully completed the applicant will be issued with the relevant units of competency (as a 4th year electrical apprentice would receive to apply for his/her electrical licence)

Step 7: Applicant can then apply for their Australian electrical licence.

The process to undertake the OTSR is at a regulated cost. Step 2 at a cost of \$600 and Step 3 at \$1500 and a further \$1000 for re-assessment if the applicant is not successful.

For more information please visit <http://www.futureskillsinternational.com.au>

IMPORTANT NOTICE

for ETU members who work away from home and claim Travel Allowance (TA) or Living Away From Home Allowance (LAFHA)

The Australian Tax Office (ATO) is making changes in relation to the tax implications for (LAFHA), the full raft of changes have not yet gone through parliament, when we are in receipt of details around the changes we will provide advice to members.

In the meantime we also need to clear up a few pieces of misinformation going round. Some employers have been blaming the changes to LAFHA on ETU EBA clauses, this is clearly rubbish, the changes are federal government policy changes implemented through the ATO.

Secondly - there are differences between how LAFHA and TA are treated for tax purposes. Generally LAFHA is claimable for members who work away from home for more than 21 days. TA is claimable for members who work away from home for less than 21 days and includes "reasonable rates" for accommodation, meals and incidentals. Reasonable rates amounts are set out for various travel destinations by the ATO each year the latest determination is available at the following link. <http://law.ato.gov.au/atolaw/view.htm?docid=TXD/TD201117/NAT/ATO/00001>.

Be sure you are claiming the correct allowance.

General requirements, employer reporting and member PAYG withholding requirements for TA

If rate does not exceed the reasonable amount and the allowance is fully expended then no need to report on employee's payment summary and no requirement to pay PAYG tax.

If the rate exceeds the reasonable amount TA will be reported on employee's payment summary and PAYG will be payable on excess amount – NOT the Whole amount.

If the rate does not exceed the reasonable amount, however the full amount is not expended on the items it is intended to cover, no requirement to report on payment summary BUT PAYG will be payable on the amount unspent.

THE UPSHOT IS, KEEP ALL RECEIPTS.

Disclaimer -This information is a summary of advice provided by our accountants and is correct at time of publishing. It is for general information purposes only. For detailed financial advice and legal implications contact your accountant or financial advisor.



STRATEGIC LEAD ORGANISER

KEITH MCKENZIE

Long Service Leave; protect it, take it and enjoy it

How many members have had the chance to accrue and take Long Service Leave?

Long service leave is a benefit unique to Australia, New Zealand and some parts of India and has its originals in the old colonial heritage. It developed from the concept of furlough, which stems from the Dutch word *verlof* (meaning leave) and its usage originates in leave granted from military service.

In the 19th century, furlough as a benefit as it is now known, was a privilege granted by legislation to the colonial and Indian Services. In Australia, the benefits were first granted to Victorian and South Australian civil servants. The nature of the leave allowed civil servants to sail 'home' to England, safe in the knowledge that they were able to return to their positions when they returned to Australia.

Between 1950 and 1975 the concept expanded beyond the public service, primarily due to unions seeking consistency across

both public and private sectors. Nowadays, long service leave is entrenched in Australian culture and legislated at both state and federal levels.

For construction workers, it is extremely rare to achieve ten years' service with one employer. To address this issue the Building Trades Group of Unions successfully campaigned for the Queensland Government to establish a portable leave scheme for building workers, now known as Q Leave. In 2005 the Northern Territory Government followed suite and established NT Build.

Despite the establishment of these schemes it is becoming apparent that many workers do not get the opportunity to benefit fully from the extended leave entitlement. With many construction workers instead of taking a full ten weeks off, tend to use it for a couple of weeks at a time, between jobs more as a default unemployment payment. While this may work for some, it is important that if you

want to use the full provisions, you know your rights and entitlements.

Here are a few tips to help you protect, take and enjoy your long service leave.

1. Check your pay slips to ensure you are accruing Long Service Leave, if not, check with your employer.
2. If you are a building construction worker, ensure your Q Leave (Qld) or NTBuild (NT) service credits are up to date. www.qleave.qld.gov.au or www.ntbuild.com.au
3. If you are getting close to being able to access long service leave, start planning for your break.
4. Long Service Leave entitlements are always under attack from some employers. We cannot take these conditions for granted, as union members we MUST be prepared to always fight to ensure these conditions are forever protected.
5. Enjoy yourselves.....

Spotlight on Chris McGaw

By ANDREW IRVINE

Every Bloke needs a shed – But it's what's inside that matters



Chris in a familiar pose in "The Shrine"

The Eureka flag flying proudly at the back of the neat suburban home in Toowoomba's southern suburbs gives a sneak preview into the contents of the nondescript metal shed that is known to some as "The Shrine". As you walk in it has all the hallmarks of a normal shed, there's tools and a beer fridge a few odds and ends but with these things, the similarities end. This no ordinary shed is a modern day "Solidarity" museum. The shed contains Ned Kelly memorabilia, Your Rights at Work signs, various ETU campaign stickers, flags and pride of place, the Eureka flag. He shows me his piece of the Tree of Knowledge and prized Eureka Stockade fob, with the "Diggers Oath" engraved on the back, a watch given to him by the other love of his life, his wife Leanne. The fob watch reads; "We swear by the Southern Cross to stand truly by each other and fight to defend our rights and liberties"

Many of you will know Chris McGaw 53, is the state president of the ETU. Some of you will know him as the state senior delegate

for Ergon and that he has been this for over 15 years. His mates, who know Chris, know his long, proud history as an ETU delegate (25 years) and that he has been an active member for 28 years. However for many that is where their knowledge of Chris begins and ends.

Chris is a bit of a reluctant icon in the Toowoomba community where he has lived for 50 of his 53 years. He takes on the challenges of being Labour, in a Tory Town, with a commitment rarely seen. His capacity to ruffle feathers and generate debate are undisputed, but above all else you get what you see, a bloke who wants his kids and grandkids to have a future.

I want to leave this place better than I found it.

I caught up with Chris, who I regard as a mate on a recent visit to Toowoomba attending the city's Labour Day celebrations. As usual Chris was in the thick of it as QCU Toowoomba president. It's a testament to the high regard Chris and the ETU are held when

I want to leave this place better than I found it.

representatives from diverse unions the Meat Industry AMIEU and the QSU Services union both paid tribute to Chris and the ETU for support during current local campaigns.

When we finally got time to chat, we talked about the ETU and unions, family, his shed, the ALP, Ergon and birds... yep he is a bird enthusiast and no, they're not canaries.

I first met Chris back in 1998 when as a young raw recruit; I was selected as the Labor candidate for Toowoomba South in that years state election. Armed with a list of "supporters" names and addresses, instructed to get signs up and get them to man a booth. After about five rejections and a couple of maybes, I knocked on Chris's door, I was struck by his support, not over the top just;

Yeh mate, give us a couple of signs and put me down for a booth for half a day. (which I now find out he did all day)

Spotlight on Chris McGaw

We later caught up at Labour Day's and during site meetings at Ergon Energy. But it wasn't until the Your Rights at Work campaign that I began to fully understand the enormous commitment Chris gave to his members and the community. This story aims to give an insight into what makes Chris tick and why.

Chris has union blood in his veins, his family came from Ireland in the 1800's and as with many Irish immigrants they developed a healthy rebellious streak. Chris can trace his union credentials back to his Great Great Grandfather who was involved heavily in the Railway Workers Guild and tragically died on March 12 1898 at the Toowoomba rail yards.

He was pretty well respected; they put a monument up for him at the Drayton cemetery.

His brothers Glen, state vice president and Des, are heavily involved in the Australian Federated Union of Locomotive Employees (A.F.U.L.E).

While he is proud of all his kids and grandkids, his proudest moment as a dad

was when his son Daniel "Blocka" was successful in gaining employment as an organiser with the ETU.

It's always special when your kids follow in your footsteps.

Chris points out that Dan is the second McGaw to be an organiser based at Toowoomba Trades Hall, after his Grandfather's brother was with the TWU in the 1940s and 50s. The McGaw family has a history so colourful you could write a book about it...in fact someone has. I know Chris and his dad had a close relationship and as a publican Noel was in the thick of Toowoomba working class history, he later retired to the Sunshine Coast where he lived out his final days. While Noel left Chris with many qualities, it is the qualities of being genuine and committed that shine through.

While his family history may have shaped his political and union beliefs his immediate family keep him grounded. With his wife

Leanne, mum Eve and sons Daniel, Josh and Brady, daughter Kate and grandkids; Abbey, Zac, Isabella and Kiera he has a pretty full family life.



Abbey, Dan "Blocka" and Chris at Toowoomba Labour Day celebrations 2012.

I catch up with all the grandkids when I can, but because Kate lives close by I spend a lot of time with her and Abbey or "Fred" as I like to call her, like all the grandkids she can light up the worst day.

The following is a summary of Chris's opinions, recollections and predictions all done in his usual unassuming way.

On the ETU now and in the past

Chris is clearly impressed with the ETU's progress since being almost wiped out in the early 80 s when Chris first joined SWQEB as a Trades Assistant, to the strong, progressive union it is today with offices across the state.

We are going from strength to strength – from being almost decimated after SEQEB to the massive growth over the past few years. Dick Williams got us back on our feet and Simmo has taken the next step and modernised the union. I reckon we will only get stronger as we expand further into regional areas, stay true to our values and develop ongoing media strategies.

On Ergon

Again after being virtually wiped out in the 80s Chris reckons the ETU at Ergon has come a long way.

We have got where we are today with 95% density across field worker occupations though hard work, strong bargaining campaigns and delegate development. It

wasn't easy and it won't be easy in the future, we had to fight for it and win.

This warning against complacency was highlighted recently with Ergon's secret Major Projects plans.

Electricity supply is an area that conservatives will go after to privatise, we saw recently the Major Projects issue at Ergon and I have no doubt we will be fighting against the inappropriate use of contractors for a long time yet. We need to be forever vigilant.

Best campaign

The Toowoomba QCU Your Rights at Work campaign 2005 - 2007 – Chris was extensively involved in the said campaign and is proud of what was achieved.

There was about a half dozen of us that put in the hard yards and a lot of others who helped when they could. I am so proud of the campaign we ran. We did it all on a two bob budget; radio ads, race day, mass meetings, record Labour Day attendances, rallies, delegations, we manned most of the booths

with YRAW workers. We used innovation, flair and a lot of free publicity to really give the sitting MP Ian Macfarlane a fright, we got a 10.8% swing the fourth or fifth largest in Australia and we actually won about seven booths in one of the safest conservative seats in Australia. The ETU got behind us as much as it could given the status of the seat. We also had two visits from Sharan Burrow, who got a fantastic welcome when she came here.

During the YRAW campaign Chris had around 150 letters to the editor published under his name. His best memory of the campaign was the day not long before the election when MacFarlane tried to use a side entrance to the elite Downs Club only to find a rag tag group of about 20 'concerned citizens' including one dressed in a Grim Reaper costume carrying a coffin with RIP workers' rights written on it.

MacFarlanes face was priceless. We had been camped outside his office for days and he must have thought he had finally got rid of us, but we'd been tipped off ...and we let him know what we thought of his Workchoices.

Spotlight on Chris McGaw

Worst time in the industry

The SEQEB dispute did massive damage to the industry with some of its legacy still around today. Chris started work just before the dispute began and recalls his own experience.

We were on strike for weeks and only returned to work on state officer advice.

They were tense and angry times, the tactics used by the government were disgraceful.

Workchoices back in 2005 was another challenging time but we saw that one off, if the tories get in federally I have no doubt we will be doing all over again.

Successes at Ergon

- **Apprentice ratios** – Led the campaign to get apprentices out of group training schemes that were ripping kids off and into direct employment. Ergon has to employ no less than 185 apprentices in its permanent workforce.
- **EDSD allowance** – Tough fight back in the mid - 2000s following Sommerville Report. The need for the supply authorities to maintain a trained workforce – essentially a retention allowance. Worth approximately \$7500 per year to tradespeople less for clerical.
- **Living away from home policy** – wrote the original when he was with South West Power and it has continued to stand the test of time and be steadily improved each bargaining campaign.
- **New classification for design work** – new classification level 4 - worked hard to secure a new higher classification, not done through sitting back, but through hard fought negotiations.

Proudest moments

- Being elected president of the ETU – *It was a proud day when I was elected president in 2011.*
- Being a grandfather to four healthy grandkids – *They can make even the worst days seem better.*
- Blocka becoming an organiser – *It goes without saying really proud.*

- Being president of the Toowoomba QCU and the Trades Hall Board, overseeing the oldest purpose built Trades Hall in Queensland. – *I have enjoyed the nearly five years in the job as QCU Toowoomba president, we have made a difference but we have more to do.*

Memories of May Day

With dad running the National Hotel in Toowoomba, May Day parades in the 1960s stick in my mind, there would be thousands of marchers, floats, colour and lots of beer. We were pretty busy back in those days.

"It was as big as the Carnival of flowers"

The ALP

Chris has memories of pretty high-powered Labor Party meetings being held in the family home when he was a youngster so it's no surprise that the ALP has always been close to his heart. However like many of you he was angry at the way the once great party betrayed its working class roots in recent years.

Asset sales were the death knell but it was dying before that. We let the academics, doctors, lawyers and career politicians take over the show

We ended up with too many politicians who didn't know the meaning of struggle, they didn't have to survive on minimum wage or work in casual jobs.

The ALP needs people from working families, fair dinkum workers; nurses, railway workers, electricians and the likes.

They have to reconnect with their history and stand up for workers first and foremost, we know who the tories support and they make no apologies for it. The ALP should do the same, make a stand and stick to it. When I visited Barcaldine earlier this year with the ETU state executive I was struck with the history – unions and the Labor Party are custodians of workers' rights and we have obligations around that.

The birds

Chris has about 30 native birds which he uses for breeding purposes. While his Grandparents showed chooks there's no other family association with bird breeding. Chris had 60, but that has dwindled to its current number. They are all Australian

natives; Rosellas, Lorikeets, grass parrots and Cockatoos.

When I breed them I look for a unique combination that can produce a unique colour

One of his favourites Ozi is a salmon coloured and talkative Major Mitchell, who according to Chris is developing a pretty colourful vocabulary.

You have to be careful what you say he picks a fair bit up.

And in keeping with his love of birds he's also a staunch Rooster's fan, why the Roosters for a Queenslandler?

I was always Roosters from when I was a kid probably because of Arti Beetson, back then you had a NSW team and a Queensland team because they played in two different state competitions, I never saw the need to change, so I didn't.

The shed

The garden shed started out as an ETU meeting place and later evolved into Chris's office and a tourist attraction for visiting delegations,

Former ACTU president Sharan Burrows and most of the ETU boys have been here at one time or another for few beers and a yarn. It's a great place to unwind.

One of the more unusual but accurate pieces of memorabilia is the toilet seat perched on the door which has a sign "contents may offend" and under the lid is a picture of John Howard. That pretty much sums it up, that Aussie larrikin spirit.

Where to from here?

With a state LNP government and ongoing issues in the federal ALP it looks increasingly like Chris will need to sharpen his pencil ready for yet more campaigns. But then again that's what Chris is all about; if something needs doing, an issue needs raising or some action needs taking, he won't take a backward step until it's done.

And like the famous words of his hero Ned Kelly,

'Such is Life'

May Day round up

United we Stand...

The ETU shirts said it all.

ETU Rank and File the Backbone of our Union

ETU member's once again showed the way with fantastic turnouts across the state and the Territory. Some highlights were the impressive contingent in Brisbane and the fantastic turnouts in Moranbah, Gladstone any many other regional areas.

As with previous years the involvement of families made the day even more special. The colour and vibrancy was definitely a highlight of this year's parade.

As always it is extremely important that we build on this show of solidarity and stand together in to the future. We have some big campaigns coming up in contracting and major projects and we face uncertainty around the LNP government's new Industrial relations agenda.

I was at the Brisbane march and caught up with some participants, asking the question what does May Day mean to you?

Kate Cook and daughter Danielle

A liberating and empowering experience, an opportunity to pay tribute to the history of trade unions in Australia.

Mick from City Hall

Good day out, catch up with old workmates and enjoy the camaraderie.

John Ellis and John Cunningham

It's good to remember the struggle.

Without solidarity we would not have what we have now, I can remember when we had three days sick leave and two weeks annual leave.

It's great getting out there marching with your workmates.

It shows our pride in being; Australian, union and an ETU member.

Buddha and Thor

Unreal experience, great to catch up with old mates from different jobs, keep in touch.

Proud ETU member's standing together, standing strong.

Greg Smith (state councillor, Downer)

Shows the success of the union and creates a positive profile in the public eye, but we need more active young members.

Garry Tippo (Energex) marched with his three grandchildren, Dylan, Matthew, Samuel and great granddaughter Keely.

It acknowledges union members and their struggles, but we need to do more.



Mark Cowan...Branded...ETU for life and proud of it.

We know what's coming; individual contracts and the likes are just round the corner...

Keith Bullion – retired

It's about livelihoods we're marching for our brothers and sisters.

By the numbers

Brisbane – huge roll up ETU well represented.

Barcaldine – 30 floats – over 1000 marchers and heaps of activities ETU well represented.

Blackwater – good turnout – ETU well represented.

Gold Coast – over 1000 in total ETU well represented.

Gladstone – good turnout – ETU 170 participants.

Moranbah – huge turnout of ETU.

Townsville – about 1000 marchers ETU well represented.

Toowoomba – about 600 in total with about 70 ETU members and their families.

Sunshine Coast – 500 all up – ETU well represented.

Rockhampton – about 1000 all up – ETU well represented.

Cairns – about 1000 all up – ETU well represented.

Ipswich – good turnout – ETU well represented, race day well attended on the Monday – John and Greg from US attended ETU sponsored a race ETU/IBEW Solidarity Stakes.

Mackay – about 1500 marchers – ETU well represented

There were also activities held in **Bowen, Hervey Bay, Bundaberg, Thursday Island, Darwin** and **Alice Springs**.

May Day round up

Check out the updated May Day pictures from Brisbane and around Queensland on our Facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/etuqldnt>

Gold Coast



Blackwater



Sunshine Coast



Ipswich



Moranbah



Hervey Bay



Townsville



Toowoomba



Bundaberg



Gladstone



Brisbane



FRONTLINE NEWS

Energex negotiations 2011/2012 delegates lead the way

At the start of negotiations for a new Energex Collective Agreement a single management action triggered a flood of new activism and activists.

Energex refused to allow delegates involved in the negotiations adequate time to meet and report back to members on the progress of negotiations.

This pigheaded act enabled the ETU to undertake a strategic change of tact, when the company was required to seek bargaining agents we encouraged active delegates and members from across the state to nominate. This led to 48 bargaining agents, as well as senior delegates and hub delegates, all ETU members, all having the capacity to report back to their depots. Three delegates that took part in the process Judd Pugh, Stephen Pitt and Dane Moloney reflect on the experience.

We asked them how they viewed the process from an individual perspective, member perspective and how it strengthened the ETU.

According to Judd the process was an "eye opener" and that it was overwhelmingly positive.

To actually sit at the negotiation table and see what is happening was fantastic. The agenda's and the frustrations gave me a greater appreciation for the work done by representatives during negotiations.

We had a strong union official presence as well and the unions worked well together, they were very professional, I felt my contribution was valued and I got a fair go.

From a membership perspective I was able to give them almost immediate feedback on the state of negotiations from an ETU viewpoint. This helped a lot when Energex put their counter arguments.

The feedback I got was that members felt they had direct input - through us - to the bargaining process, they also understood the contexts and the timeframes better.

Stephen Pitt deputy depot delegate from Geebung said being an IBR gave him the ability to provide honest feedback to his members.



On the job with Energex delegate Judd Pugh

I got to see the bargaining process firsthand and I was able to give honest feedback with a local flavour, it broke down the mystique and increased the collective knowledge.

All in all I reckon it increased our union's exposure and power in the workplace, it was a great experience. .

Dane Moloney described the process as "appropriate for the circumstances". Energex

played hardball on the release of delegates, so it was appropriate to find alternative avenues for feedback, to and input from members.

From a personal perspective the process was both frustrating and empowering. I got to sit around the table and where appropriate have a say, but I also got to experience some of the frustrating parts of negotiating; the delaying tactics and the lack of will on behalf of IR to negotiate on some issues.



ESI State organiser Trevor Gauld, temporary organiser Dane Moloney and former apprentice delegate Matt Trafford

Delegates lead the way Continued



The importance of safety – Energex overhead crews at work.

Dane remembers a particular occasion about a month after the old agreement had expired where he started to question the will of Energex IR to reach agreement.

We were really starting to gain some ground one particular day we had reached agreement on two significant clauses before lunch. However talks broke down after lunch and in frustration Trevor (organiser) spoke up and said let's focus on what we can agree to and see if we can get another two clauses completed after lunch, to which an Energex Senior Industrial Relations Officer piped up "We can't get too much done in one day..." It may have been meant in jest but it showed that Energex was taking a less than constructive approach to the negotiations on your wages and conditions at a time when back pay and a back dated agreement were not yet secured. Once it was secured we found negotiations moved smoothly.

Although having said that, the positives vastly outweighed the negatives, we were disciplined in our approach, he said.

I was particularly proud of our strong and unwavering opposition to contractor switching, an issue that Energex tried everything to secure.

Being directly involved at the coalface so to speak meant that the feedback to members was instant and relevant. They got information on their issues. We provided the information

through team briefings and report back meetings.

From an ETU perspective, the activism literally went through the roof, the EBA process energised members that had not taken an interest before and we are now in a position to build stronger sustainable structures.

All in all the ETU bargaining strategy has been a great success.

Delegates are diamonds

Although not directly involved in the EBA process Matt Stafford, 32 until recently was performing an equally important role as apprentice delegate in his hub area of Kelvin Grove; overhead section. .

As a slightly older apprentice the role seemed a natural fit. I enjoyed it. I felt I had something to offer in support and such like. The priority areas were always; personal safety, job opportunities and making sure apprentices got decent training plans and weren't just used for menial tasks, and of course that they were treated fairly and without discrimination, he said.

As a delegate I was also able to have quality one on one conversations with new workers about joining the union, I had a pretty good success rate.

I was also on the apprentice committee where I could raise issues on behalf of apprentices and provide direct feedback. It was a great experience.

Matt has also attended ETU training courses and apprentice conferences where he has been able to expand his understanding of how the union works and its values.

The conferences and training are brilliant they really show what the union is about; a democratic, inclusive, progressive union that takes a stand on a wide range of issues. I'm proud to be a member of an organisation I know has my back.



Stephen Pitt, former hub delegate Metro North.

One union • Many stories



What's in a name - Donger

Workplace: Gold Coast Hospital

If you happen to get a job on a major project with a contractor down the Gold Coast or you, attend Gold Coast Labour Day celebrations you will likely come across a bloke called Donger.

He's been a fixture on the Gold Coast since he came from Victoria more than 30 years ago. He proudly announces that he's been a union contact for 28 years and was a shop steward at Vic Rail for another three.

He's done everything from winching and truck driving through to a railway linesman and TA and plenty of jobs in between. He can tell you companies he's worked for and how long he was there. From his early days at Vic Rail to his current gig as a contract trades assistant, Donger has always been union.

It's just what you did back then and I come from a union background. I always knew the benefit of standing together.

How has the union changed over the years?

We have changed in good ways we let people talk and get involved and we are respected on site.

So how and why did he acquire the nickname Donger?

Well it goes back to my early days in high rise construction we would finish for the day and have a few quiet ones. Well I got a beer gut so a few of the boys called me Sargent Donger from the Paul Hogan show then it was shortened to Donger and it stuck.

Family ties

Donger and wife Jen have enjoyed seeing their three daughters grow up on the Gold Coast.

We've seen them grow from nippers in surf lifesaving clubs to school, university, and now they are all successful in their own right.

With little prompting he reels of his daughters names and occupations with visible pride.

Monique 28 is a solicitor, Frai 26 is a school teacher and she's the union rep and the youngest, Morgan is a manager, they've all done well.

Proudest ETU moment

Getting TA rates up to where there should be in relation to builders labourers.

Funniest, craziest moments

At my first job on the coast, I joined the ETU and the next thing we were on strike for four weeks.

Industry changes

He's seen a lot of changes in the industry especially in health and safety and training.

Back when I started we didn't have any screens on the towers or anything it was pretty slack.

I remember applying at SEQEB in the early 80s all I had to do was pass a competency test to get a start. I passed the test but knocked the job back. I knew I wasn't trained for it.

Did you know?

Here's something Donger's mates wouldn't know, he actually has a first name – **Michael**.

Michael saves his best wisdom for last,

I don't see the union as the organiser, it's us. We are the union.

Union Aid Abroad Study Tour to the Thai Burma border

BY PAT ROGERS

Recently I participated in a Study Tour of the Thai Burma Border. The tour which I paid for myself and participated in during my holidays was designed to provide participants with first-hand information about the situation for Burmese refugees on the Thai Burma Border and to increase (improve) our knowledge of the situation "inside" Burma. We visited a range of different community organisations that provide much needed services to the Burmese community in Thailand. Many of these people are refugees but a surprising number are IDP's (internally displaced people) who cross the border to access services, such as medical assistance. We also visited two refugee camps.

The organisations included the Mae Tao Medical Clinic and Burma Children Medical Fund, the Drug and Alcohol Recovery Education (DARE) and the Karen Women's Organisation (KWO) (both located within the Mae La Refugee Camp), the Burma Labour Solidarity Organisation (BLSO) and the Migrant Assistance Programme (MAP), that work with Burmese workers within Thailand, as well as many other organisations providing much needed services to the Burmese refugee community. It is important to recognise that despite the significant changes that have occurred recently in Burma, there are still many issues confronting the people of Burma, in particular the ethnic minorities, and it is important that organisations such as Union Aid Abroad continue to provide support to these communities.

It is also important that the Australian government not succumb to the propaganda of the Burmese government and continue to push Burma to release the remaining political prisoners, to implement a true cease fire in all areas of the country and move towards a truly open and democratic society.



Committed to community... Apheda's; Zoe Bedford and Katy Camarena with Dr Cynthia Muang (Ctr) founder of the Mae Tao Clinic.



One union • Many stories

Billy Bijoux – In the deep end, pickets and walk offs all in a day's work.

Name - Billy Bijoux (Cyril) 49 Years old, (ETU state councillor, former delegate and newly appointed Rockhampton organiser)

History – was born in Mauritius

Memories of Mauritius

It has a melting pot of different cultures, beautiful scenery and lots of different religions. I remember it was a good place to live.

Family moved to Perth in 1960's then on to Sydney, Billy moved to Brisbane in 1987

Mauritius Fast facts

- Island nation situated off the southeast coast of Africa is ranked 2nd in the world for air quality.
- Has a population of 1.28 million
- Is a multicultural country with; Indian, French, African, Chinese, English and Madagascan cultures.
- Became an independent nation in 1968 and a Republic in 1992.
- Has three main trade unions with 150,000 members.

Billy's journey in the Electricity industry

After a 7½ year stint in the regular army and jobs ranging from labouring to horticulture around the place he took up an adult apprenticeship as a fitter mechanic in 1995, and he hasn't looked back. He joined the ETU as soon as possible, became a delegate in his third year.



Beau Malone and Billy Bijoux outside Gold Coast Hospital, a fixture around the coast takes on a new challenge

Despite no family history of unionism it felt natural for Billy to stand up for himself and others.

I saw the benefit of being in a team and as a delegate I looked after the young blokes and took on a caring role for guys who didn't know their rights.

Proudest ETU moment

Being successful in winning the Rockhampton organiser position, along with nomination and election to the ETU State Council and being an ETU state councillor for five years.

What does being ETU mean

Being part of a crew trying to improve our future, our conditions and the integrity of our union, it's an unwritten thing you feel part of a fraternity.

Biggest changes in the ETU over the years

I've seen an increase in; level - headedness, nous, integrity and intelligence when dealing with issues. It is great for our union and for our industry. I'm proud that we've been heavily involved in safety issues and understanding the construction industry.

What's it like living on the coast?

Fantastic it's like I remember Mauritius, beautiful beaches and multicultural. I find it easy to communicate with other cultures, I don't see difference.

What about working on the coast?

It's pretty good, there's always something going on. It can be a bit hard being a delegate because of the transient nature of the coasts population. I work hard to get their trust and respect and then they're gone. However in true Billy philosophy he ads at least they take a good union experience with them.

Family business

Married to Toni with son Elijah 13 they also have fish, dogs and chickens.

When it comes to extended family, Billy keeps in touch as often as he can with his mum who lives in Sydney, two brothers and his sister, he lost his dad about five years ago.

I like to catch up twice a year, we are pretty spread out but we put in the effort.

Billy is enjoying seeing son Elijah mature and he bursts with pride describing his son's achievements.

He is really committed to his rugby and getting fit. We work out at the gym when we can and do Mutay and Zen Do Kia together. And he's collecting academic awards as well. I am a proud father.

When he gets some spare time he likes to spend it with the family soaking up some of the things the coast is famous for; fishing, bike riding and just relaxing.

Billy is a bit of a fixture around the Gold Coast construction sites and he's pretty well known but did you know he has been doing Bonsai for about 25 years because it takes patience and he can control nature. And his real name is **Cyril...**

STOP PRESS

Having been thrown in to the deep end recently, taking up the job as Rockhampton organiser we are sure that Billy will continue to play an important role in the ETU's future.

He has been instrumental in raising awareness around Workplace Health and Safety issues at Cairns Hospital and is adamant safety will not be compromised. His first few weeks on the job have included walk offs and picket lines and he has taken it all in his stride.

We are willing to do whatever it takes to make sure our members go to work and come home safe.

AbiGroup have been absolutely appalling in their dealings with us on this project and we are not going to compromise on safety.

On the Rockhampton job, Billy is steadfast in his assessment

It will be a fantastic experience and I will give it a red hot go, I am proud to have been chosen, there is a lot of development in the pipeline up here and I want to get out there and tell the ETU story.



ESI UPDATE

TREVOR GAULD

EBA's finalised, Ergon held to account and delegate structures starting to work.

ESI – Ergon, Energex and Powerlink

For many Energex delegates the EBA process was an interesting and rewarding one with 48 of them able to observe firsthand the intricacies associated with negotiating a new agreement. (See accompanying story - Frontline News, Page 12 & 13)

For Ergon and Powerlink EBA process included the usual tedious negotiation processes that have become the benchmark for these companies, however we kept on fighting for decent wages and conditions and all in all the results have been hard fought and well received. This observation is supported by the ballot results and well attended paid meetings held throughout the industry in March and April.

The following table provides a snapshot of the key outcomes

EBA Provision	Energex	Ergon	Powerlink
3.5% PA Wage Increases	✓	✓	✓
0.5% off wages			✓
Back Pay	01/11/2011	30/10/2011	27/11/2011
Back Dated Agreement	21/11/2011	30/10/2011	27/11/2011
Increases to On Call / Availability Rates	✓	✓	✓
NO Expansion of Contractor Switching	✓	✓	✓
Comprehensive Use of Contractors Clause	✓	✓	✓
Improved Union Rights/ Delegates Rights	✓	✓	✓
Comprehensive Dispute Resolution Procedures	✓	✓	✓
Increase of all allowance by pay rise Quantum	✓	✓	✓
Retention of "No forced Redundancy" provisions	✓	✓	✓
Improved Income Protection	✓	✓	✓
Improved Funeral Benefit cover	✓	✓	✓
Comprehensive Consultation Clause	✓	✓	✓
Improved Access to Long Service Leave	✓	✓	✓
Workplace Surveillance Clause	✓	✓	✓
Continued commitment to Apprentice numbers	✓	✓	✓



Well attended paid meeting at Energex Geebung

ESI UPDATE continued

Ergon's silence on Major Projects sparks ETU campaign

When the ETU became aware that Ergon was secretly plotting to create, resource and implement a new Major Projects team we knew we needed to act swiftly and strategically. The project if allowed to proceed in its proposed form would have had a massive impact on the job security of Ergon's internal permanent workforce. There would be a massive siphoning off of capital expenditure to external contractors.

Your union allocated substantial resources to develop an internal plan of action that included media, political and legal components. Once the possible impacts of the project hit the press the response from members in the firing line was swift, they initiated meetings to discuss their options this resulted in direct action at Ergon's South West depots where more than 300 members walked off the job in protest. Ergon contacted the ETU late on the 23rd of March to advise they had stopped any further implementation and agreed to convene consultation meetings with the unions.

Key components of the campaigns success

- ✓ Strong delegate involvement.
- ✓ Planned and strategic approach.
- ✓ Direct member action.
- ✓ A decent EBA clause – outlining the scope and processes associated with the use of contractors.

Since March 23 the ETU has secured commitments from Ergon that will maintain our members job security.

New clauses and harmonised OH&S having desired effect

The new bolstered consultation clauses and the federal ALP governments' harmonisation of OH&S is resulting in the ETU having significant and meaningful opportunities to raise issues and have genuine consultation. We will be using these enhanced powers to make sure your safety and that of the public is never compromised and that issues of job security, agreement breaches and other important issues are addressed in a timely and satisfactory manner. We can also report that Energex have agreed to put six senior delegates through OH&S Certificate 4 courses. We are in the process of finalising similar arrangements for Ergon and Powerlink.

And remember if you see a breach report it immediately to your delegate and Safety Rep, work safe and stay informed.

The priorities for the next few months in ESI

- ✓ monitor the implementation of the new agreements.
- ✓ delegate development – training and conferences.
- ✓ finalise and bed down new delegate structures.
- ✓ continue to use enhanced consultation clauses and OH&S structures to build union power across ESI.

Upcoming Events and Training

Delegate training July ESI Conference 10 -14 September 2012

Obviously a union organiser is not a role that can be stepped into without some help and I would like to thank the delegates at Ergon, Powerlink and Energex for their assistance in helping out while Trevor has been taking a well-earned break.

Specifically I would like to thank the senior delegates and state senior delegate's John Taylor, Chris McGaw and Shane Mills. It's always a team effort, but any wins we've had in the last 6 or 7 weeks can definitely be attributed to you guys. Many thanks also to the other ETU organisers.



Temporary Organiser Dane Moloney on the job with the Energex overhead boys.

It's a comforting thought that with our current delegate structure someone can step into the role and things continue to run relatively smoothly. With the work we will be putting into training and development of our delegates in the next few years we are only going to get even stronger in the ESI sector.

Dane Moloney



ESI CONTRACTORS UPDATE

WENDEL MOLONEY

ESI Contracting Agreements putting ETU members on the front foot.

Since March many ESI Contractor Agreements are close to completion and while it has been a struggle at times we are starting to win back conditions attacked and outlawed under Workchoices.

The agreements struck have generally included;

- ✓ Four decent pay rises – on lodgement, Nov 2012, 2013, 2014.
- ✓ Increases in allowances.
- ✓ Use of contractors/ Labour Hire clauses that prevent subcontracting and provide job security.
- ✓ Tighter dispute resolution procedures.
- ✓ Massive increase in CIRT \$75 - \$95
- ✓ Increased rights for shop stewards, including training and access.

Key companies that have or are close to signing off on ESI contracting agreements; Eastern Trees, Downer, Tenix, Thiess, GEIGER, Formway, Skilltech, Electrix, Vemco, Jemena (ZINFRA)

A peaceful transition

Jemena is an example of a company that saw the benefits of working productively with the ETU to get a skilled workforce. They went from being a non EBA company to being one of the first to sign up. The transition from non-union to EBA was achieved without resorting to industrial action. For those workers in Jemena who are not yet members, it's time to join, if you work next to a non- member, talk to them about the EBA and how it was achieved.

The road ahead

For those members in companies that have signed off on agreements it is now about implementation – including developing and strengthening delegate structures and utilising WH&S legislation to strengthen workplace consultation.

For those awaiting sign off – stay informed about your agreement, attend meetings as they come up and talk to non- members.

For all members, we have made significant progress during this round of negotiations but we cannot be complacent, we are facing the prospect of hostile governments at both State and Federal level, we must recruit non - members, educate all workers and activate for strength. Well done to all the delegates that have been involved in representing members.

International Workers' Memorial Day April 27th 2012

About 1500 workers braved the chilly April wind to pay their respects for their fallen comrades.

As Federal Workplace Relations Minister Bill Shorten finished speaking about the need for stronger laws to protect health and safety and the mother of a child killed by Asbestos spoke of her grief the gathered steeled themselves for the emotional barrage that is the laying of the hardhats.

As 16 hard hats were laid one for each fallen comrade and one for the toxic legacy that is Asbestos Related Disease the realisation sunk in that these workers were doing something most of us do every day – going to work. Crane driver 57 male ... painter 20 male, each hard hat handled with care and compassion. The red eyes erupted as the minutes' silence was punctuated with the sounds of a soulful rendition of tears in heaven and children flanked by wives of loved - ones lost, unfurled a banner with the simple message "work safe and come home"

The International Workers' Memorial Day is a day to remember the fallen but it's more than that it is a day to take back to the workplace the simple message "unions make workplaces safer" Along with organisers there was a healthy contingent of ETU members present on the day I asked them why they attended:

Mark Cowan

"It's a mark of respect, and it creates awareness and knowledge about the need to do things safely, we must not allow employers' to cut corners with safety"

Matt Simpson



"I'm proud to be here, I'd hope that if something happened to me that it would not be forgotten, we must learn from history and make sure it never happens again"
Damian Reidy

"Supporting the families who have lost someone, to show they're not forgotten"
Matt Clay

"To support comrades and show respect"

For Paul Barber CFMEU Q Health lead delegate

"No amount of money is enough when lives are at stake. We must continue to educate workers not to cut corners, do it safe do it right, work safe and come home"



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CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY UPDATE

CHRIS LYNCH

Construction – CBD, City south and Ipswich

With a healthy increase in development applications recently, construction in Brisbane is due to take off again. Q electrical and Stowe seem to be picking up the majority of the work.

Indooroopilly has just kicked off which will see Stowe members employed until April 2014. The height and site allowances for that job are \$4.65 site and 56c height. It appears that Logan City Electrical have reached the maximum amount of employees at the Queensland Children's Hospital which has approximately 12 months left to run.

Airport link is finally coming to an end after a seemingly endless array of issues and concerns. The conduct of some managers and site superintendents was nothing less than disgraceful. However a big congratulation goes out to all our members across the project who hung in there amidst all the rubbish. In the end we got better conditions and we ironed out several hundred safety issues, but more importantly we finally got management to sit down and talk with us through strong delegates. It goes to show anything is achievable when we unite and fight as one. Bring on Legacy Way the next road infrastructure project cab off the rank. In an all too familiar scenario, ETU members have been targeted for standing up for safety at work, the following email has been necessarily edited to protect the member's identity. However the sentiments are real and unsolicited. Members should never compromise on safety.



MARK BATEMAN

Peter,

My name is John (name changed) and up until recently employed on a significant infrastructure project in Queensland. I would like to take this opportunity to say THANKS and to praise the union and in particular, a couple of union organisers. All too often, people are quick to whinge when things don't go the way they wish. Not in this case, this email is meant for ALL ETU members to keep the belief in our great union, and pay tribute to the good deeds that are done on a daily basis.

I was "made redundant" from the job, in my view the only reason I [and some others] were "made redundant", was because we refused to bow to pressure and energise unsafe switch boards. We refused to compromise on safety that would put workers lives at risk. Safety is Non - negotiable.

Due to the relentless work put in by Chris Lynch and Mark Bateman on a daily basis and Peter Ong as the sounding board for them both.....our union was able to negotiate a fantastic result for members.

If you would pass my message of congratulations onto these fellows and thank them for all the hard yacka and time they have and continue to put in. Our great union is well served by blokes like these.

And it shows that we CAN and DO win against the Bastards.



Get the facts on bowel cancer

Bowel cancer, also known as colorectal cancer, is the second most common cancer diagnosed in both men and women in Australia. In Queensland alone, nearly 3,000 people are diagnosed with the disease each year. From the age of 50, the risk of developing bowel cancer increases significantly, with 50 per cent of bowel cancers occurring in people in the 50 to 69 age range.

Bowel cancer symptoms can include bleeding, persistent changes to normal bowel habits, unexplained tiredness or weakness, anaemia, on-going abdominal pain or cramping, significant or unexplained weight loss, and a loss of appetite.

If you are over 50 or have a previous history or a strong family history of bowel cancer or polyps you are at higher risk of developing the disease and should consult your doctor – as should anyone who is experiencing symptoms.

It is important to remember you do not have to have symptoms of bowel cancer to be at risk of the disease. Regular screening has the potential to reduce the risk of developing bowel cancer and many bowel cancers

are preventable through changes in diet and lifestyle, in particular by maintaining a healthy weight, eating healthily and enjoying regular physical exercise.

Bowel cancer is one of the easiest cancers to treat if found early, yet it is Australia's second biggest cancer killer because not enough cases are detected early.

In 2006, The Australian Government implemented the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program, which currently provides Australians turning 50, 55 or 65 years of age with a free Faecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) testing kit in the mail.

This important program has the potential to save thousands of lives and Cancer Council encourages everyone who receives a test kit in the mail to participate in the program.

For further information about bowel cancer or if you require assistance or support, please call the Cancer Council Helpline on 13 11 20 or visit www.cancerqld.org.au.

Cancer Council Queensland is a non-profit organisation and our achievements are a result of the ongoing support and generosity of local Queensland communities.

CONTRACTING/CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY EBA 2012 CAMPAIGN

More than a thousand ETU members endorsed the union's Log of Claims at mass meetings held across the state. From Cairns to Brisbane. This show of solidarity will provide the necessary drive as the campaign ramps up in coming months for the new Contracting Union EBA.

The meetings gave members the opportunity to endorse the Log and show their determination to get out there and sell the message to their workmates,

'It's time to stand up and be counted'.

The one thing every electrician in the industry should be talking about at the moment is their EBA. Those of you who don't have a union EBA it's about time you stood up and got involved, when an organiser comes to your site ask questions, if there are non-union members on your site start talking to them, they need to be educated. If you need to get an organiser out to your site make the call. We can't be everywhere at once and we are not mind readers, but if you give us a call we will get there to; speak with members, educate non-members, and explain the process for negotiating a union EBA.

It makes sense - union EBAs deliver the best wages and conditions and if we have all electrical companies on a union EBA then we have a level playing field in our industry and we won't have grubby companies bringing down the rates of pay and conditions.

For the rest of us on a Union EBA its time to start talking it up getting everyone involved tradesman, TA's and apprentices alike. We can't afford to be complacent like we were last time, a lot of our members believed the propaganda that was being peddled by the employers, "the GFC is going to destroy us", "you're lucky to have a job" surprise, surprise the companies survived, everyone got jobs and the only thing that happened was you didn't get the pay increase you deserved. This time around everyone will need to lock in, stay strong and win.



L-R: Robert Wechsler PSG, Lee Cruse from Q Electrical, Damien D'Arcy and Curtis James LCE

Key components of the Log of Claims

Wages and allowances

- Wage increase 6% per year
- Superannuation; \$174, \$182, \$191, \$200
- Cirt increase; \$90, \$95, \$100, \$105
- All overtime Double time
- Travel per day \$39, \$41, \$43, \$45
- Increase Leading Hand/ Foreman allowance
- Boot allowance \$150
- 6 Sets of uniforms
- Increase to site allowance
- Increase wet weather hours to 32 hours
- Tool allowance increase as per wage increase
- LAHA Increase \$90/ day and accommodation

Conditions and Rights

- Apprentice cause – Intake, Ratio, Direct Hire
- Portable sick leave Fund
- Remove wording "To provide a uniformly neat and tidy company".
- Look at wording around technology clause
- Heat stress policy in EBA
- Back Pay clause
- Delegates clause to include access to employee lists and paid meetings.
- Employment security clause
- Agreement Interpretation clause
- Remove multiskilling clause
- 1 paid union meeting per month
- Annual leave accrual around number of hours worked
- Consumables; Coffee, Tea, Sugar
- 2 days paid training per year
- 10 mins wash up time to be included in EBA
- Salary sacrifice clause to state paid in weekly
- Higher duties clause
- Agreement to be underpinned by Award
- 1 weeks - notice to be added to shiftwork clause
- Construction Wiring clause
- Payslips 48hrs to be added to clause

You have endorsed the Log now it's time to get the deal.

- **LOCK IN**
- **STAY INFORMED**
- **BE ACTIVE**
- **BE INVOLVED IN THE CAMPIAGN VIA THE ETU WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK.**
- **TALK TO NON MEMBERS AND ASK THEM TO JOIN**
- **STAND UP AND BE COUNTED**

Standing room only as ETU fires first salvo in EBA battle

More than 500 ETU members from across Brisbane's contracting industry sites attended the first meeting of the 2012 EBA campaign at the Brisbane Exhibition Centre on the 14th June.

The numbers were fantastic and showed how ETU membership was growing in the Industry

and according to national assistant secretary Allen Hicks, it sends an indisputable message to employers and non-members alike, we are strong and united.

This great turnout sends a clear message that electricians in contracting and construction are up for it and united, It also tells the

employers that ETU members are not going to cop what they got last time.

Across the state from Cairns to the Gold Coast, the story was the same "stand up and be counted" as the log was emphatically endorsed and the campaign officially began.



MAJOR PROJECTS UPDATE

PETER ONG

Lack of planning frustrates boom

Despite all the media hype about the Queensland resources boom, I receive about 20 phone calls a day from members trying to get a start on major projects who have registered with the relevant companies only to be told that they are not ready to hire yet. While there are many contributing factors to these delays, deficiencies in transport and accommodation planning are the main issues. It's a disgrace that companies are building 40 billion dollars worth of projects without putting basic necessities in place first. These so called major construction companies surely knew how much labour they would need, when the project would start and therefore, what accommodation and transport needs would be required prior to construction. Apparently not, construction has started on these projects without camp accommodation being completed or in some case even started. This obviously creates major logistical issues for the companies but more importantly for our members. While some projects got in early and secured accommodation close to where their job is, others have members travelling anywhere up to an hour and fifteen minutes each way. It is clear that the project agreements \$40 a day travel allowance, which compensates for up to 30 minute is insufficient, so we are now in dispute on these jobs to

secure payment for the excess travel caused by poor planning. Put simply they can pay to compensate our members for the excess travel, and if they don't then their jobs stop. Another significant factor was flight availability, companies had relied on inadequate existing flight arrangements rather than chartering, thankfully this issue is being resolved

Another evolving issue that will need urgent attention is moteling, where companies build two thirds of the rooms they require in the camp and instead of providing secure ongoing accommodation for their workforce they hot bed, making the workforce pack up all their gear and move out of the room when they go on break. After their week off they come

back into a different room and set up again and they do this every three weeks for the life of the project. Unfortunately this practice has been generally accepted in the west albeit after action at the Pluto project that resulted in considerable fines for all unions involved. The above concerns are a mere snapshot of the types of issues facing members, throw in rosters, health issues and guest workers and it really is - If You Don't Fight You Lose.

Also, as reported on page 3 of this journal, the union has set up the ETUQ jobs board to try to assist members link up with potential employers, if you haven't registered, go to www.etu.org.au/jobs and put your name down.

Projects Started

QC, AP and G LNG/Bechtel
South Walker Creek Coal Mine
Daunia Coal Mine
Broad meadows Coal Mine
Kestral Coal Mine
Wiggins Is Coal Facilit
Hay Point Coal Facility
Kenya Water Treatment Plant
Fairveiw Gas Compressor station

Camp construction

Roma - Electrix, Wandoan - Laing O Rourke, Injune - Downer Engineering.

Contacts

ttp://rime.becpsn.com
Downer Engineering
G&S Engineering
Laing O Rourke
Monodelphous
John Holland/ Monodelphous
Maconnell Dowell/ Electrix
Laing O Rourke
Downer Engineering/ Clough



Contracting Industry Redundancy Trust

CIRT was established in 1990 to provide income security for employee members working within the electrical industry particularly those on major construction sites. Benefits from the fund are designed to assist members and their families when confronted with the realities of redundancy.



Benefits of CIRT membership:

Redundancy	when your employment is terminated due to shortage of work you may claim your funds immediately and NO TAX will apply.
Retirement	claim your funds when you permanently retire from the industry on or after age 55
Leaving the Industry	when you permanently leave the industry you may claim your funds (<i>however a 12 month waiting period will apply and funds will be taxed.</i>)
Severe Financial Hardship	the Trustee will consider paying your benefit.
Total & Permanent Disability	if you are disabled and cannot work and have supporting medical evidence

CIRT ONLINE www.cirt.com.au

- to view your CIRT balance and update personal data
- for all your CIRT and JETCO forms

As a CIRT member you may be eligible to apply for a training subsidy from JETCO to assist you to maintain or upgrade your electrical industry related skills

JETCO can subsidise the cost of your electrical industry related training up to \$1200 per calendar year.

JETCO is also able to assist you to apply for a training subsidy from Construction Skills Queensland for the following courses:

- Certificate II in Telecommunications Cabling
- Telecommunications Open Registration
- Restricted Telecommunications Registration
- Telecommunications Structured Cabling (including Cat5 and Coax)
- Telecommunications Cabling – Optical Fibre
- Construction Wiring Program
- C-Bus Basic
- Cert II Air-conditioning Split Systems
- Restricted Electrical License (Plumbing etc)
- Verify compliance and functionality of general electrical installations
- Select and arrange equipment for general electrical installations
- Develop compliance policies and plans to conduct a contracting business
- Solve basic problems in photovoltaic energy apparatus
- Design grid connected power supply systems
- Install, configure and commission grid connected photovoltaic power systems

For all CIRT and JETCO enquiries contact the administrators

Brisbane (07) 3506 7788
Local Call 1300 200 123
Fax (07) 3506 7700
E-mail enquiries@cirt.com.au
JETCO 3506 7787/3506 7787

Postal Address:
CIRT Administration
C/- Malcolm V Leeke & Co
8 McIlwraith Street
PO Box 42
EVERTON PARK QLD 4053



CONSTRUCTION CAMPAIGN

PROFILE

Spotlight on Damien D'Arcy



- ✓ Leadership
- ✓ Knowledge
- ✓ Organisation
- ✓ Respect

Damien D'Arcy, 34 is committed and prepared in his dealings with members and management alike. And he calls a spade a spade. Like many other delegates that form the backbone of the ETU, he made a decision a long time ago it was better to make a stand than to stand back. With no family history of unionism Damien's knowledge has developed through 10 years of involvement in the ETU.

I joined the ETU back in 2002, Macca (Keith McKenzie) signed me up at the Meriton job on the Gold Coast.

What struck me after a few years of doing domestic housing for dodgy single operators was when you are on a major project like Meriton; it's the unions that provide information and support.

Without unions workers don't know their rights and they don't have a say, it was a real eye opener.

Damien has worked for many of the companies well known to the construction and contracting sectors; STOWE, ODG, Nilsen, Telen and Logan City. He says one of the biggest issues facing the construction sector is the influx of non-EBA companies undercutting good companies that abide by safety regulations and pay decent wages.

Sham contracting and companies banding together to increase their profit margins at the expense of their commitments to health and safety are huge issues. Just have a look at the OH&S issues at Airportlink and Cairns Hospital. It is unions that keep workplaces safe and companies accountable.

Damien is representative of a new breed of delegates in the ETU, a strong presence at the workplace is complemented by a desire to be active in the union itself by having a say in union policies.

It's not enough to have muscle and brawn in the workplace it's about lobbying and involvement. The ETU's democratic structure not only facilitates involvement it encourages it.

In five years Damien wants to have increased his knowledge and be celebrating that as a long

term delegate he has built up a strong history of representing and supporting members in the industry.

I look forward to working closely with the ETU officials to enhance rights and safety across the electricity industry.

Damien also takes a keen interest in the broader objectives of the ETU around social justice and human rights including the Uranium debate.

I have strong views that Uranium is tomorrow's asbestos the movie "When the Dust Settles", really informs members about the dangers in Uranium mining.

As a father, and husband Damien enjoys his time off to spend time with his wife Cezane and three daughters Taliah, Kiara, Ashlen (all three are under the age of five).

My family are why I am so passionate about safety, workers have the right to go to work and come home safely, earning a living and supporting your family should never be at the expense of safety.

Apart from spending time with his young family Damien likes to keep fit by doing boxing and mixed martial arts.

This job can take it out of you with the long hours and the type of work, so it's important to fit.

Working with management

A fundamental requirement of any delegate is the ability to represent members' interests in dealings with management. It can be a daunting task for delegates employed in insecure work. Damien has had to work on getting a balance and says it comes back to fundamental skills.

To be a successful delegate you need to be organised, informed and tenacious but importantly when dealing with management you need to exercise judgement.

There are some significant safety issues in construction not least of which is fatigue, therefore it is important that we fight hard for sacred Saturdays and RDO's, and we have.

There are times when an issue is just not widely supported by the members and dealing with those that raised it can be a bit of a mine field. That's where judgement and respect is important.

It is important to give the bosses the opportunity to do the right thing and have a clear plan to deal with them if they don't – it's

the old anger hope action.

Working with other unions can be tricky but Damien contends it again comes down to gaining trust and developing relationships that work.

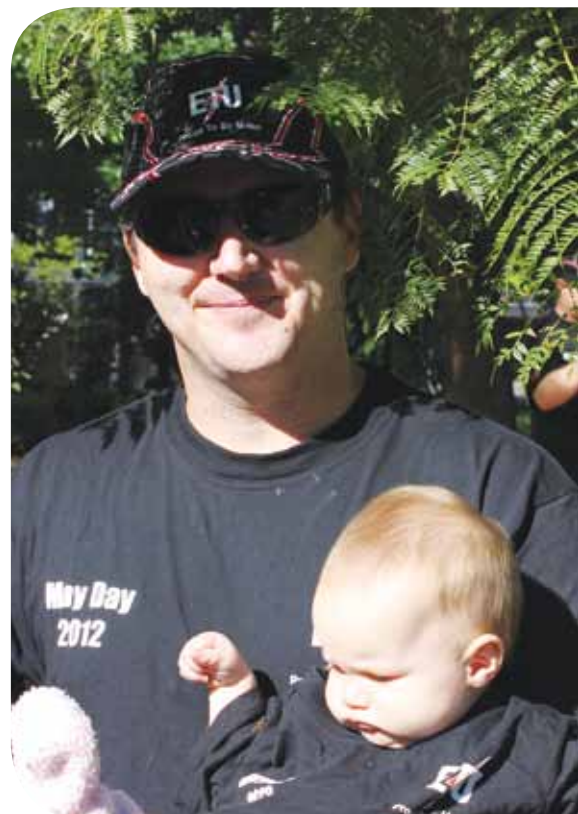
Working in the construction industry means working with other trades and being able to develop productive working relationship with the unions that represent them is fundamental.

Damien has been on some major projects including Airportlink, Gold Coast Hospital and Mater and sees the upcoming contracting EBA as a huge campaign.

It will be a massive campaign and we need to make sure we have as many companies as possible under EBA conditions so safety and wages are not compromised.

Apart from attending conferences and Labour Day celebrations Damien is also a regular attendee at the annual Workers Memorial Day (see related article)

Workers Memorial Day, is an important reminder of why we strive as union members and delegates to keep our workplaces safe, work safe and come home.



Damien with daughter Ashlen at recent Labour Day celebrations in Brisbane.



NEWS IN BRIEF

ANDREW IRVINE

June 8 QR National abandons bush – as further details outlining QRN plans have been released the devastating impact on regional and remote communities becomes clearer. Operational Support Depots in Charleville, Emerald, Hughenden, Paget and Mt Isa and a Locomotive Maintenance Department (LMD) at Redbank face the axe while massive downsizing will occur at Rockhampton LMD, Redbank Wagon and Foundry facilities and Rockhampton and Jilalan workshops. When privatisation kicks in, it kills regional and remote communities.

June 7 State IR changes – union concerns justified laws rubber stamped and passed June 7, increased power for the government to curtail industrial action, politicise the QIRC and ram through wages agenda by having the QIRC consider Fiscal Strategy in public sector wage increases.

June 6 BMA Coal Update - talks continue some progress made. Keep up to date at <http://www.etu.org.au/content/coal-update-bma-bowen-basin-dispute-joint-union-campaign-0>

June 6 Ports of Auckland Dispute - Facilitation is continuing between Maritime Union New Zealand (MUNZ – Local 13) and Ports of Auckland. The parties held two further meetings this week with more meetings scheduled for next week and later in June. Keep up to date at <http://www.munz.org.nz/>

June 4 2012 BCS members finally vote on EBA – BCS members at Brisbane domestic airport finally have something to smile about – voting up an agreement that will make significant inroads into reducing the disparity in wages between Brisbane and interstate. BCS members have faced QANTAS type lockouts and took matters into their own hands in March picketing the terminal and gaining national and international media coverage. For more check out Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/etuqldnt>



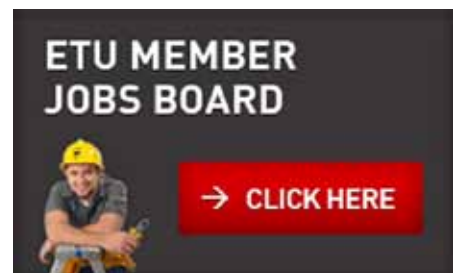
Photo competition winner announced *Comrades*

After much deliberation the photo competition has been run and won thank you to all who took the time to submit photos. Winning photo by Craig Thomas. The boys at Queensland Energy Resources (QER) in Gladstone in April 2011. Some of the boys in the picture include: Craig Thomas, Geoff Murphy, Scott Murray, Joey Bradley, Adam Logan, Aaron Holzwart, Stuart Cunningham, Paul Ribot, Laurie Welch and many other Comrades.

Audited accounts

2011 audited accounts now available on website under members section at www.etu.org.au

ETU "Jobs Board" launched, already seeing plenty of activity get on board at, www.etu.org.au



A Message from the editor of the National Magazine

By now you'll have received and hopefully read the national magazine. Naturally, it covers stories about the great successes in QLD. The QLD branch's battle with former premier Anna Bligh over privatisation and the recent successes in protecting member entitlements after the collapse of the Hasties Group are clear stark examples of the power of unionism.

Only recently I received a call from Alf Aldrick from Wollongong, who joined the ETU in 1949 after serving in the jungles of New Guinea. It's my intention to write a story about Alf for the next magazine. People like Alf are the bricks and mortar of this great union. After some eight years looking after communications and the ETU magazine for the Victorian branch it's a delight to be hearing stories and seeing first hand what ETU members across the nation are doing.

A state union is only as strong as its national office. That's why national assistant-secretary Allen Hicks is passionate about a national magazine that not only speaks to but can mobilise and inform members nationally. That's why we will continue to promote the apprentices campaign in the national magazine and be seeking stories from the states. If we are to win these battles and those that will come should Tony Abbott get his foot inside the Lodge we must act with a unified voice.

That's why I want to hear from you. If you have a story that members across the nation should know about please send me an email at philcleary@bigpond.com

I can be contacted on 0408 784 280



HONORARY MEMBERS GROUP

GORDON ABBOTT

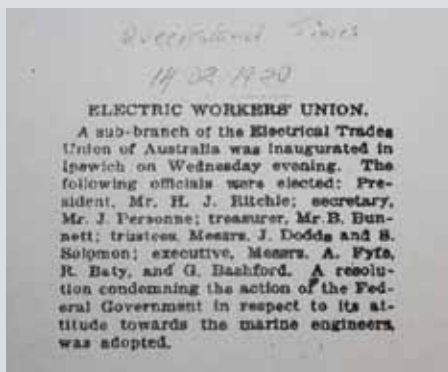
Sharing our history, showing our pride... today and into the future

As discussed in previous editions of the *Electrical Worker*, the ETU Bi Annual Conference 2011 pledged its support for the formation and continuation of an Honorary Members Group within our branch. We have been steadily developing some activities, plans and merchandise to provide some direction for honorary members to show your continued pride in being a member of the ETU. For example we march on May Day to show support for our union. However some activities specifically relate to our group including the provision of a unique "Honorary Member polo shirt" and, our campaign to share our history. Many of you have enjoyed a long association with the Electrical Trades Union and as we move towards our 100 year celebrations in 2015, your stories, our stories will be a

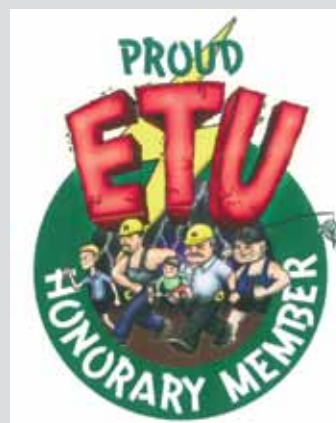
crucial aspect of this significant milestone.

In line with the *sharing our history* objective is our union's ongoing association with the Australian Workers Heritage Centre at Barcaldine. At a recent ETU executive meeting at the Barcaldine facility, the union resolved to increase our presence, while we have co-sponsored a clone of the original Tree of Knowledge there is very little else about our history at the centre. Your stories and memorabilia can change that. Please send your photos, memorabilia, newspaper clippings, old membership cards, anything that sheds a light on to our history to andrew@etu.org.au or Gordon.abbott@etu.org.au or alternatively you can contact us on 3846 2477.

An example below documents the formation of the ETU sub Branch in Ipswich dated 1920.



Left: Courtesy of honorary member Alan Brims – provided 5/5/2012



In line with our show your pride objective we are asking those members that have not already done so, to order their shirt and wear it with pride.

Koch's History Snippets

ONE of the proudest members of the Electrical Trades Union in Queensland has to be Gus Leary.

Gus, now 84, began his apprenticeship on August 13, 1945 - two days before the Japanese signed the surrender agreement which ended the horror of World War II.

He has been a member since that time, and has kept every one of his union tickets.

Gus was also a life-long member of the Eureka Youth League and used lead the march for the group on Labour Day in Brisbane.

Now in poor health, Gus is in an aged-care facility at Hamilton in Brisbane, but he has severe misgivings about his current digs.

"I have a conflict of interest here," he said last week.

"You see, I am an atheist and this place is run by the church, and there are all church things about.

"I just feel uncomfortable about that."

Gus is serious about his "conflict" and is seeking to move to Greenslopes hospital

as soon as possible.

He is currently receiving intensive medical attention for skin cancers, a legacy of an employment career spent on outside jobs, mostly with Queensland Rail and the Southern Electric Authority.

He spent most of his working life in the Maryborough area and retired to Tin Can Bay.

"One of my earliest memories is when I began my apprenticeship I joined the union in Brisbane and had to go to college two nights a week," he said.

"In early 1946 I got a letter from the ETU stating I was in arrears and had not paid my union dues of four shillings and sixpence for the year.

"The fine for late payment was one shilling. Archie Dawson was the secretary then and I went in and reminded him that I had lodged my application to join with him and he said he would notify me, but never did.

"Eventually the fine was wiped and I was a member all my working life until I retired in 1987 when I turned 60.



Tony Koch is compiling the 100 year history of the Electrical Trades Union in Queensland, to be published in 2015. Current and former members are encouraged to contact Tony if they have anecdotes, memories, photographs or any other material they think should be included in the book.

Tony's contact details are: email apkoch@hotmail.com Telephone 0419655516.

Tony spent 30 years as a journalist in Queensland with The Courier Mail and The Australian newspapers. His website is www.tony-koch.com



STATE GOVT UPDATE

JASON YOUNG

Government owned Corporations and QR National

QR National, down the wrong track, from great state – owned icon to train wreck pandering to shareholders.



Huge job cuts announced on June 5 will herald the start of a massive downsizing of this once great company, the more than 600 voluntary redundancies will affect many ETU members across the state from Sarina in the north to Redbank in the south. No region or job category is spared. While the company is spinning the announcement as no forced redundancies, they are also advising specific depots and workshops that they will be closing. At the meetings held with unions and staff the company indicated clearly that 6500 positions were “in scope” this is QRN language for apply for redundancies. The first round of redundancies will take place in August this year and will likely number between 600 and 900.

This decision is a disgrace it leaves many members in vulnerable situations not knowing if their job is secure into the future. The ETU and other unions took a principled stand against the sale of Queensland assets for this very reason. When governments sell public asset, jobs are lost, communities are devastated and we all pay the toll. This QRN decision had its origin the day the Bligh Labor government sold the asset.

The ETU will be closely monitoring the process, and aims to ensure those that apply for VR are given every opportunity to go and those that want to stay are not “tapped on the shoulder”, we will also be monitoring workload and career path implications.

Queensland Rail – Agreements signed off now down to implementation



With the Queensland Rail agreements finalised and signed off, the focus must now shift to the implementation phase.

As we have all seen in the past, it takes activism and involvement to make agreements work. All members need to be vigilant.

One of the key areas of implementation will be the progression structure review process. This is currently in the final planning stages and will be ongoing. As the process rolls out it will be important that your delegates are made aware of any issues members have. If there are issues of concern contact your onsite delegate.

Power Generators - Agreements finalised at CS and Stanwell but more to come at Tarong

ETU members at power generation companies CS Energy and Stanwell have voted up their agreements. While Tarong Energy members have refused to roll their agreement over, citing the fact that the continued roll over of agreements has left some issues unresolved, particularly around work/life balance. There will be more to come... Tarong members not already involved should contact their delegates Mark Reid and Scott Tucker to get involved in the campaign

With the likely Federal LNP government, it is extremely important that we develop and maintain sustainable delegate and activist networks at every worksite.

STOP PRESS

State Government changes to IR legislation May 2012

The ETU is currently developing fact sheets for delegates and members concerning the new State Industrial Relations changes that will have impacts on Queensland Rail, see the ETU website for updates.

Upcoming Railways Events

Date claimer

5-8 November 2012 - Rail Industry Conference



Ports of Auckland Dispute The first of many lines in the sand

According to ABS figures 25 772 Kiwis settled in Australia during the 2010-2011 financial year. Many families have moved away from their support networks looking for a better life, better work and higher wages. While we welcome our Kiwi brothers and sisters, we are mindful that they have been historically targeted by anti - union contract companies to undercut EBA rates. The ETU as a blue collar union is determined to support strong union campaigns that have the potential to halt the exploitation of workers. The Ports of Auckland dispute is one such campaign,

As the sun sets on Auckland's Waitemata Harbour a small but determined group of picketers take up their shift outside the Port of Auckland. Amongst the larger crew leaving to make way for the night shift is ETU delegate Dane Moloney. Dane is part of an ETU delegation that has been there for the weekend showing solidarity with 300 port workers who had been sacked by their employer Ports of Auckland Limited (POAL). But it's more than that, Dane and the ETU are acutely aware that what is happening in Auckland is part of a concerted attack on working people in New Zealand.

The Ports dispute as it has become known has gained international notoriety and is seen by many as a watershed for New Zealand's battered union movement. On one hand, you have the Maritime Union of New Zealand (MUNZ) fighting for the rights of its members to have some sort of work - life balance, permanent work and a say over their rosters. On the other, you have POAL that is seeking to increase productivity and efficiencies to generate a 12% profit pa, by contrast current POAL profit is 6.5% while many international ports run at between 2 and 4% profit. POAL proposed to increase the profit by demanding maximum flexibility, including no limits on casual labour and employing essentially an on call workforce being paid standard hourly rates. The existing collective agreement has a clause preventing contracting out during the term of the agreement. That would explain why the company didn't contract out before bargaining began last September. They went



into bargaining demanding the wharfies sign away their right to secure employment.

Many people Dane spoke to see POAL's hard line tactics, that included sacking the unionised workforce and lockouts as thinly disguised union busting.

"They know what is at stake here, if they let this happen without a fight, unions in New Zealand will be dead and buried. POAL put up an agreement that was never going to be acceptable and then sacked its unionised workforce when they didn't accept it"

To understand the importance of this dispute you have to go back to the days when the Employment Contracts Act (ECA) the New Zealand equivalent of WorkChoices was first introduced in 1991. The intent and outcomes of the ECA are well documented. It was initiated by a conservative government to de-unionise the labour market, it removed any legal rights unions had and set about dismantling the New Zealand labour movement. Unions were redefined as Friendly Societies. The legislation removed the rights for unions to enter premises, conduct meetings and organise, it made union membership completely voluntary. Further it gave employers the right to veto union recognition as a party to a collective contract. According to NZ academic Paul Harris It sought to, and was successful in

providing employers with incentives and means to pursue strategies of de-unionising and de-collectivising workplaces.

Many employers took an aggressive approach to pressure union members to abandon their membership and collective contract coverage. The attack on unions continued unabated during 1992 and 1993 when new legislation was passed providing employers with absolute authority to decide the types of, health and safety and training regimes they would implement. These laws also removed the right of unions to have any input into these important regimes.

The decline in union membership over the period was spectacular and devastating. Union membership dropped from 603 000 or 41.5% density in 1991 to 307 000 or around 20% by 1998.

It was devastating for union resources and status it lead to some high profile unions disappearing altogether while regional areas lost union offices and officials. However, the worst outcome for workers was the demise of collective bargaining and industry standards. By 2000, 99% of registered agreements were single employer and only 24% were collective agreements a drop of up to 60% on 2001 figures.

In a nutshell unions disappeared, resources were stretched and influence was minimal



Ports of Auckland Dispute Continued

and because they had no legal rights, unions became marginalised. Despite the election of a more union friendly Labour Party and re-introduction of union rights through the Employment Relations Act 2000, the union movement has never recovered from the ECA. Union membership is still low. In 2010 (the latest figures available) there were around 380,000 rank and file union members in New Zealand representing approximately 21% of all wages and salary earners in the country.

It is in this context that the importance of the POAL dispute to Australian workers gathers momentum. If it happens in Auckland, Australia will be next. Essentially POAL is seeking to undermine the right of the MUNZ members through their union to be consulted on workplace changes and job security. It has all the hallmarks of a management style that is hell bent on revisiting the ECA bastardry – refusal to negotiate in good faith, refusal to accept the right of the MUNZ to represent its members' interests in relation to contracting out and rosters. POAL is turning back the clock to a time when they had absolute control. Into the mix must be added the spectre of privatisation, currently the port is owned by the people of Auckland although new legislation has watered down the rights of ratepayers to take part in a referendum regarding privatisation. There is clearly an agenda on behalf of port management and as suggested by many observers the National Party government to break union influence, casualise the workforce and sell off the port.

If this all sounds familiar, throw in aggressive lockouts, no shortage of non-union strike breakers and a mother of all PR campaigns to discredit hard working members and you have MUA dispute Mark 2.

What POAL didn't count on was the level of support the sacked wharfies would get in Auckland and beyond. The Save Our Port internet and Facebook campaign gave community members the opportunity to get informed and involved. And get involved they did with huge crowds taking to the streets in April (see picture above) it also showed the human face of the campaign and gave people the other side of the story.

The community campaign and the show of

strength from international unions, including the ETU, IBEW, MUA, maritime and transport unions from around New Zealand around the world, forced POAL to lift its lockout, re-instate the sacked workers and re-commence negotiations. However, signs are that POAL is not moving on its original proposals...the battle continues.

The ETU was/is proud to stand with unionists from around the world to support the MUNZ and its struggle for justice.

Key lessons from the POAL Dispute

- International solidarity – helped turn the tide.
- Community campaign – galvanised local support and used social media well. <http://www.saveourport.com/>
- It is a watershed dispute for NZ unions similar to MUA in 1998.
- Companies are becoming more aggressive in the use of lockouts – with tacit approval from conservative governments.
- Could happen in Australian workplaces as we face the prospect of wall to wall LNP governments with anti-worker sentiments.

From the coalface

Darryl Wakerley went to New Zealand to support the Kiwi wharfies during the recent lockout and noticed some similarities with the Patricks dispute of 1998, here is his story.

I worked as an electrician at Patrick's container terminal at Fisherman Island and being a member of a union I was sacked as was the case with the rest of Patrick Stevedores workforce Australia wide. The circumstances surrounding the MUA dispute are well documented but essentially we were sacked because we were union members. The involvement of the Howard government in the dispute is also well documented, with many commentators pointing to a conspiracy between Chris Corrigan (owner of Patricks) and the Liberal government headed by John Howard to break union power in Australia under the guise of increasing productivity.

Now some fourteen years later we had a similar situation occurring with POAL sacking their entire unionised workforce again under the guise of seeking productivity

improvements. Similar to Patrick's, POAL already had replacement non-union labour ready to start work as soon as the union labour was retrenched/sacked. As with the MUA dispute the use of mass sackings and lockouts were the weapons of choice. As it stands the dispute is far from resolved however union workers have been reinstated following legal action.

I was extremely proud and honoured to have the opportunity to go to New Zealand with organisers from the ETU to show support for the Kiwi wharf labour, some of whom are electricians.

We attended the picket line, we marched through Auckland city and we let them know that they have support from the ETU here in Australia. We, as a union, had given a donation to help support the workers and their families which was gratefully appreciated. We shook hands with the rank and file dock workers, had a beer with them and let them know of our win against Patricks in 1998 and that we would be there to help until their fight was won.

While I was there I noticed the massive support from around the world; USA, Canada, the International Transport Federation were all there, messages were also read out with support from dock workers in Japan vowing that any ship loaded by scab labour in Auckland would not be unloaded in Japan. religious organisations also got involved with messages of support from Catholic, Jewish and Protestant churches in Auckland supporting the dock workers.

It was an empowering experience for me and clarified for me what being a member of the ETU is all about, the strength of being united.





International Solidarity Networks that work

Jørgen Juul Rasmussen General Secretary Danish Union of Electricians (Dansk EI – Forbund) visited Australia for the first time last month and hopes it will lead to an ongoing partnership with the ETU.

It is so important have international networks and support, it was evident in the recent Schindler issue that international unionism can change the course of a dispute. Schindler were not happy when the dispute in Queensland went international.

Following requests from the ETU, DEF made representations to Schindler over the sacking of ETU delegate John Faint in Queensland. DEF also coordinated responses from other European unions.

I am here to learn from your experiences and to strengthen our links further. We have long standing networks with other Scandinavian electrical unions and also strong links with the Irish TEEU It has been fantastic meeting ETU officials and Greg and John from The IBEW.

Companies are increasingly global in nature and we need to be too.

Denmark union density is at around 70% overall.

The Danish labour market is, to a great extent, regulated by the various players in the labour market themselves, as opposed to by legislation. Under the Danish model, employers and employees reach voluntary collective agreements on pay and working conditions. The trade unions play a pivotal role in the Danish labour market, and there is a high level of union membership among Danish workers.

Dansk EI –Forbund has approximately 30,000 members - 89% density with thirteen regional branches, they organise all types of electricians.

Some interesting facts about Denmark and Danish trade unions

- Danish model of industrial relations, is called flexicurity - a combination of flexibility and job security.
- Collective bargaining is respected, there is no legislated minimum wage other than that which is negotiated by unions.
- They have just come out of 10 years of conservative government, although there were some changes to union roles, they didn't undermine collective bargaining or core union rights.



Scott Reichman, Jørgen Juul Rasmussen and Schindler ETU Delegate Mick Lee.

- Denmark recently elected a left-leaning Social Democratic Party led - coalition and there are high hopes for some major investment in green energy and laws to deal with social dumping. In a blast from the past, they are also holding tripartite talks involving unions, government and employers with a focus on education policies, employment and future investment.
- Denmark primarily uses gas, coal but there has been a significant shift towards wind and solar, Denmark opposes the use of nuclear power.
- There is no legislated minimum wage in Denmark. Unions negotiate national agreements that include among other things minimum wages and conditions.

American visitors join the picket line in Cairns

Greg Lucero and John Easton Jr. are Secretaries (Business Managers) with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) – local 66 Houston Texas.

Greg looks after the outside workers (linesmen, substation, building trades) while John looks after inside worker primarily sparkies. The strength and numbers vary with Greg enjoying an 80% density (percentage of eligible workers

that are members) while John has 15-20% density.

John and Greg are the latest IBEW representatives to come to Australia to share intelligence, strengthen bonds and learn from each-others experiences. The relationship between the IBEW and the ETU stretches back to 1996 when the ETU became aware that US companies Entergy and TXU were buying utilities in Australia.

Greg sums up the basis of the relationship

Companies are going international and we need to do it as well, the intelligence we share give us leverage.

While they were in Queensland Greg and John attended the Cairns Hospital redevelopment site where they took part in activities, and were impressed with the ETU's organising strategy.

The ETU's capacity to shut down a job because of safety issues was fantastic to watch and be involved in – your guys really stand up, John said. We will be doing our bit to assist. We have contacted our branches in the US and will be putting pressure on AbiGroup and Lend Lease through our networks. We will also be using our experiences to organise and energise our members.

John, Greg and his wife Leah also attended Labour Day festivities in Brisbane and Ipswich,

We had a fantastic time and the parade was awesome, the community spirit with kids and families was a highlight, they are our future, John said.

While there are differences in the US and Australia industrial relations some things stay the same.

Greed doesn't stop at any border...it is up to us as unions to protect our workers and their families, negotiate decent wages and ensure our members return home safely, John said.



R – L Greg, Leah, John and Chris presenting the connections of Felony Flight with the ETU/IBEW SOLIDARITY STAKES trophy at the Ipswich Labour Day races.



GENERAL TRADES UPDATE

GARRY ROGERS

Manufacturing and General Trades Conference sets positive agenda

The plight of apprentices, consistent pay and conditions and the increasing use of contractors were among the many topics discussed at the annual Manufacturing and General Trades Conference in April.

Delegates from as far north as Townsville gathered in Brisbane for the three day event, some of the key initiatives to come out of the conference included;

- ✓ Support for the National 'Stand up for Apprentices' campaign.
- ✓ Support for common conditions and pay parity across the industry.
- ✓ Support for the ETU Support Levy.
- ✓ Support for a national approach to training.

For Lindsay McPherson 61, the apprentice issue hits pretty close to home, as a tradesman at Royal Brisbane Hospital and the father of a now fully qualified electrician he has seen the difficulties they face firsthand. Lindsay saw his son Jamie go through the cycle of poor wages and inconsistent payments from his group training provider that almost caused him to give up on the trade.

It was in the third year he wasn't being paid consistently and his mates were saying things like I'm getting 40 bucks an hour as a labourer. He asked me straight is it worth it?

It's a hard argument to counter when the difference is so great, luckily he got taken on as a direct employee soon after and completed his apprenticeship and hasn't looked back. But it was touch and go for a while. I can totally see why 40 per cent of apprentices fail to finish their time.

As a tradesman, Lindsay is adamant there needs to be commitment shown when apprentices finish their time.

Most of them have a lot to offer they are familiar with the work and the environment and they have been appropriately trained, they should be given a go.

For 31 year old Unity Water electrical fitter mechanic Owen Visini, the conference is a great opportunity to learn from the experience of others.

I want to represent members to the best of



Delegates from all over Queensland attended the conference held over three days 18-20 April.

my ability - their livelihoods are on the line. By talking to other delegates, I have learned new strategies and skills.

Key learning outcomes from the conference;

- ✓ Communication strategies – media, member meetings, consultation.
- ✓ Negotiation strategies and tactics.
- ✓ Importance of planning/ reviewing/checking.

Key issues;

- Consistent pay and conditions.
- Consistent approach across the industry.

Membership growth;

- Building union strength through achievements and delegate development.
- Solidarity across the industry, EBA negotiations.

Apprentices;

- Standard set of payment levels and conditions into EBAs.
- Better national award conditions – to create stability of employment.

Dron Singh 53, an electrician at Golden Circle is the veteran of two conferences and like Owen he enjoys learning from the experiences of others.

Sharing experiences allows us to develop useful knowledge and strategies for our own workplaces.

I have really enjoyed the emphasis on planning and preparation, the steps taken before attending meetings, negotiations and so forth.

When I attend these conferences they are like a refresher and I enjoy the camaraderie, I feel really energised when I return to work.

Like Lindsay and Owen, the apprentice issue is an important one. Dron draws attention to two issues; wages and conditions and willingness of employers to take apprentices on.

Our trade suffers when young people get paid double that of an apprentice for working at McDonalds.

The pay and conditions are a barrier and they need to be improved, they need a living wage. The other issue is ten years ago there were eight electrical apprentices at my work now there are none. There is a lack of will on the side of employers. They appear to be increasing contract and casual labour at the expense of apprentices and permanent workers.

Training is another issue Dron sees as needing to be addressed.

The bosses seem to think they can install new machinery and expect us to just know what to do with it, without appropriate training, it is becoming a big issue.

From discussions with the organisers and the participants, the conference has been a positive learning experience. As for the success, that will become clearer as the months pass but the last word goes to Dron who sums up the feeling.

I really feel part of something, and as they say united we stand divided we fall.

APPRENTICES

By SCOTT REICHMAN

Secure Adult Apprenticeship conditions now before it is too late

Queensland is currently the only Australian state where adult apprentices are paid appropriately however come December 2014 Queensland adult apprenticeship provisions in the Modern Awards lapse. It is extremely important that future Enterprise Bargaining Agreements (EBAs) contain specific provisions about this. Without specific provisions we cannot ensure that we attract and value adult apprentices. In other states adult apprentices are paid as little as \$7.22 per hour.



STAND UP FOR

Our Apprentices | Our Trades | Our Future

standup4apprentices.com

National Campaign to combat local issues

Stand up for Apprentices is the national campaign of the Electrical Trades Union to improve the conditions for Australian apprentices. Apprentices are key to our industry's future but apprentice conditions have deteriorated to the point where first year apprentice's earns as little as \$7.22 per hour. STAND UP tackles this disgrace head with representation on at state, federal and local level to get a fair go. The centrepiece of the campaign is the ETU's application to Fair Work

Australia which includes;

- A \$137 weekly increase for 1st year apprentices.
- Increases for apprentices in their second, third and fourth years.
- Better protections for apprentices when they are studying at college or TAFE.

Apart from the campaign it is important that apprentices know their entitlements and protections, these include; right to work in a safe and harassment free workplace, **minimum rates of pay – can't be paid lower, standard 38 hour week, meal, crib and overtime breaks, training contract, paid time for college or TAFE, right to participate in protected action, minimum 4 weeks leave, minimum 10 days sick leave, minimum 9% super, protection from unfair dismissal.** If you believe your employer is breaching any of these conditions contact the ETU immediately.

For information on the campaign go to

<http://www.standup4apprentices.com.au/the-campaign/>

Some local examples of the hardships and disadvantage experienced by apprentices:

As we all know apprentice wages are average to say the least but with the cost of living going up these kids are finding it extra hard to live in rural and remote towns where the resources boom is forcing up accommodation costs.

- A Roma apprentice being forced to live in a caravan and sharing amenities because renting a house is far too expensive
- A Wandoan apprentice was renting a unit for 6 months in town for \$250 p/w. Once the new coal mine was announced his rent was increased to \$600 p/w. Now he has to live in a "shack" 40kms from town as it is the only affordable accommodation available
- Apprentices working second jobs just to pay the rent, as their base income struggles to cover living costs

There are also examples of employers employing apprentices under their own group training companies to avoid paying EBA rates for RDO's, annual leave, sick leave, Tafe time etc, even though the apprentice is working for the EBA company.

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TOOWOOMBA REPORT

DAN MCGAW

Around the regions Toowoomba and the South West

Bargaining updates - EBA negotiations are underway at; Tarong Power Station, Lend Lease Millmerran Power Station, JBS Beef City, J.V. Geiger Civil and Electrical, Lend Lease Infrastructure Toowoomba.

Major Projects - Some of the key developments on the Darling Downs and the Surat Basin centre around natural gas, where towns like Miles and Chinchilla will become the hubs for massive multi-billion dollar ventures. While this industry is ramping up there are issues around; pay rates, rosters

and FIFO issues including 'Moteling'. I will be continuing regular site visits in this important growth area. Another area that will ramp up in the near future will be the NBN rollout in Toowoomba.

Labour Day in Toowoomba was again a great success with the ETU well represented with more than 70 members and their families attending. It was good to see new participants including members from ZINFRA.

Workplace health and safety issues I have noticed an increase in accidents resulting in serious injuries. One simple example highlights the need to be vigilant on safety. An ETU member's fall from a ladder,

resulted in serious injuries and multiple operations. The member is still in hospital and slowly on the road to recovery.

South West action forces rethink on Ergon's Major Project group (see ESI article page 17)

Membership on the rise in South West Membership in the SW has shown some steady growth since the allocation of a fulltime organiser to the region and with the rollout of the NBN and the major projects in the Surat Basin the area is set for considerable growth into the future. Feedback also suggests that issues are being resolved sooner because members have better access to the union and its resources.



GOLD COAST REPORT

BEAU MALONE

Intervention makes Foil Insulation Testing Program safer

It is extremely disappointing when governments continue to implement programs without consultation with unions. One such occasion relates to the FITP where a lack of working knowledge needlessly put workers and the public at risk. However, the ETU working alongside the Workplace Health and Safety Department (WHSD) went a long way to ensuring Transfield (Person Conducting Business Undertaking) had the correct 'safe work method statements' and procedures in place to prevent any further potential harm to the public or the sub contractors that were carrying out the tests.

Prior to the ETU and WHSD getting involved, many workers were not provided with personal protective equipment (PPE) necessary to work in houses where there was asbestos present. One sub-standard contractor was encouraging members to work in areas where asbestos was present and then enter living areas without the required PPE. This clearly dangerous and illegal practice put the health of workers and the public at risk.

While this is clearly unacceptable sadly it is a common occurrence, we all know corporate giants like Transfield and the like will only

carry out the bare minimum when it comes to OH&S. It should go without saying that members should not accept everything the employer tells them about safety and whether or not something is safe. If you are in doubt and I will come down to your workplace and have a look, if we deem it necessary we will put a stop to the work until the safety issues are eliminated and/or rectified.

Contracting; bosses use QANTAS style lockouts against NSW ETU members

STOWE and Fredon had put threats to their employees that they would lock them out of their workplaces, if they continued to pursue better wages and conditions, otherwise known as "A Fair Go". While this threat has been removed this time, it will become clear to bosses that the use of intimidation tactics won't be tolerated.

Gold Coast City Council (GCCC)/ All Connex;

So far our members have agreed, endorsed and handed over our log of claims. Given the diversity throughout GCCC the ETU will be working alongside QSU/APESMA/Plumbers Union/CFMEU/AMWU/AWU. No doubt this too will present its challenges. At this stage all



unions have locked in and are pushing for the same outcome, it will be in the best interest of all members involved if this continues.

Rocky road ahead for power plant members

While we have been able to secure most of their entitlements under threat after Rocky Point Green Power Plant went into receivership earlier this year, the bad news is that they are out of work and the companies looking at reviving the plant are looking to reduce pay and conditions. This is a new challenge for these members and we will be working hard to maintain the same pay and conditions. At nearby Rocky Point Sugar Mill, EBA negotiations are under way, and it will be my hope that the workers there can lock in, stick together and achieve a better outcome as they are currently some of the lowest paid tradesmen in the industry.

Labour Day;

In my absence Damien D'Arcy and Billy Bijoux organised the ETU festivities on the day. So a big thanks to them and their families for their great efforts. If you have ideas that could increase the numbers of members participating in May Day activities, email me on beau@etu.org.au "Work safe and keep ETU strong"



STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

SCOTT REICHMAN

New Man, same Old Policies

Members, the election of a LNP government in the March state election has as expected created some issues for state government employees. In May this year the Newman government introduced new Industrial Relations legislation (without consultation with stakeholders) that will impact on heavily on state and local Govt members in the state but particularly public sector workers. Some of the key concerns are;

- Requiring the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission to consider the state's financial position and fiscal strategy risks making the wages of public sector workers subject to political views such as the importance of achieving a budget surplus.
- Potential misuse of the Attorney General's right to 'terminate industrial action' provision, could be used to shut down lawful employee action, taken in support of our unions position during legitimate bargaining negotiations. This will tilt negotiations heavily towards government position again politicising the QIRC.
- The total lack of consultation around these changes - legislation was presented to parliament before consultation had occurred.

As we receive more information about the effects of the legislation, factsheets will be available online.

Link to submission www.etu.org.au/news/

Job cuts

The ETU like other public sector unions condemns the use of the "Establishment Management Program" (EMP) to dismiss workers on temporary contracts and believe this is purely about reducing the number of state government employees with a view to privatising certain functions.

No guaranteed pay increase without cutting conditions

As many departments prepare to enter EBA negotiations, it is becoming clear the LNP will be attacking hard won conditions. The government is offering 0% pay increase unless we sell conditions including increasing hours of work. They have also indicated they intend to remove consultation clauses and contracting out/job security clauses. If the early exchanges are anything to go by, we are in for the biggest attack on Queensland workers since Workchoices. We need to be prepared and willing to stand up and be counted.



FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND REPORT

STUART TRILL

No surrender on safety at Cairns Base Hospital

Abigroup have shown their true colours with regard to workplace health and safety in recent times. Brisbane City Hall refurbishment and Cairns Hospital Project have seen numerous amounts of safety issues brought to light only to have Abigroup management override the site specific workplace health and safety committee.

As can be read from the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 Part 5 Consultation, representation and participation, the elected workplace health and safety reps/committees have the right to put a stop to unsafe work. Further The Person Caring for Business or Undertaking (PCBU) should be supporting those actions until such time the issues are rectified.

Instead Abigroup have repeatedly overridden the

safety committee's rulings. Not only have the project managers and state manager been seen to disregard and override the safety reps views, they are even overriding their own directly employed Abigroup safety officers. The workers on these sites took safety matters into their own hands during May by walking off the job until specific issues were rectified.

For more information on rights and responsibilities under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 refer to the following link <http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/W/WorkHSA11.pdf>

It should be noted that AbiGroup chose contractors John Goss Projects CQ (JGP Electrical CQ Pty Ltd Northern Region) a non EBA company for the project. JGPElect CQ Pty Ltd won the contract by severely undercutting industry rates. We will need to get companies like this under a new contracting Union EBA to maintain and enhance safety and industry wages and conditions.

The Log of Clams for the Contracting and Construction Union EBA negotiations has been endorsed and it is now time to lock in, stay strong and win.



No tie downs on screen at Cairns Base Hospital



SUNSHINE COAST/WIDE BAY REPORT

DAN BESSELL

Smiles all round as Union EBA contractor wins Kawana hospital contract

The news that Nilsen's (a union EBA contractor) were awarded the Kawana Private Hospital electrical contract will make many ETU members on the coast happy. This job has been in the pipeline for some time and to see it finally coming to fruition is great for our members.

Labour Day on the Coast was a success, higher numbers than last year, perfect weather, plenty of beers and fun stuff for the kids. Like every year, the ETU Labour Day T Shirts were very popular and ran out in the first two hours. Mental note for next year, if you want a shirt you got to get there early.

Negotiations turn sour at Bundaberg Sugar Mill

After many frustrating meetings where the employer has refused to agree to just about all of the members claims negotiations are at a stale mate. The company is demanding workers work all of their RDO's in exchange

for a 3% per year wage increase. This is a bitter blow for our members as they are already paid on the lower side of the average electricians wage because over time they have compromised in order to keep hard fought conditions they have won over the years such as RDO's. The standoff has resulted in members voting to take protected industrial action. This is particularly gutsy given the fact that the company used lock outs during the last round of EBA negotiations.

100% union

I am proud to say that the Adco job at Hervey Norman Maroochydore has 100% union membership; eighteen workers, 18 members, a delegate and a Work Place Health and Safety Rep in place. Well done to the boys at Eaton Group.

Community connection kicking goals on the Sunshine Coast

When ETU Sunshine Coast regional delegate, Warwick 'Wazza' Watson first approached organiser Dan Bessell about sponsoring a junior footy team he was met with;

I'd love to mate but...look we've been through that before

Undeterred he persevered and with the support of fellow ETU member and coach of the Kawana under 13 Grays junior rugby league team, Troy Jessup they put together a plan to overcome the challenges.

We knew the ETU had sponsored sports teams before and had not got a lot out of it, we wanted any sponsorship to have a real impact through exposure and to break down the barriers that exist in conservative areas of the Sunshine Coast, Wazza said.

What they have been able to achieve with a modest amount of sponsorship is pretty impressive; ETU signage at games and around the ground, ETU logo's on the front of the shirts, sponsorship recognition with parents and club members and ongoing exposure because the players get to keep the jersey. Troy loves coaching and being out with the kids in the fresh air and reckons the sponsorship deal which he also contributes to, is a real benefit to the ETU, the club and the parents.

The sponsorship pays for jerseys, shorts and socks and takes a bit of the financial pressure off parents.

But the biggest thing for me is that the ETU is doing something positive for the community, promoting a healthy lifestyle and developing community connections. We play games as far north as Gympie and as far south as Bribie Island so there's a fair bit of exposure.

Organiser Dan Bessell agrees,

For the ETU, it's a way of giving back to the community and breaking down some old stereotypes. Unions have done it pretty tough in places like the Sunshine Coast, but we are now developing a presence and this is a way of the community seeing a holistic view of the ETU. It wouldn't work everywhere, but it's having a good impact here.

It can also be useful as a conversation starter if we find ourselves in a Your Rights at Work type campaign in the future.





NORTH QUEENSLAND REPORT

WAL GIORDANI

G'day members. Well we are half way through another year and things are busy in the Townsville office with renegotiations of Union Collective Agreements across a range of industries and preparations in full swing for the state wide contracting EBA campaign.

Current EBA negotiations include **Sugar Industry** (Sucrogen), **General Trades** (Coca-Cola), **Mining** (Xstrata Copper) and **ESI Contractors**.

Unseen Dangers... electrical safety 101

I have had several electrical safety issues occur on a major construction site in Townsville leading to minor electric shocks. After the latest incident, I had the opportunity to address a mass meeting on the site after it was shutdown. At this meeting, I spoke about the "Unseen Dangers" in the electrical system and appliances on a construction site.

We are all taught, from a very young age, about mechanical dangers for example, we instinctively know not to touch a spinning saw or drill bit as it will cause injury. But when it comes to electrical equipment there is no physical difference that can be seen whether it is *Alive or Isolated*. We all know that there are very few second chances with

electricity and I reinforced with members from other construction unions that if they are unsure about any piece of electrical equipment, whether it is a temp board or extension lead, tell the "Lecky" on site.

I believe as licenced electricians we have a responsibility to inform all our fellow workmates on site about the dangers associated with the electrical equipment we work with every day and I would encourage all our members to take the time to have this conversation with their "mates on site".

Future of our movement is good hands

On a more positive note, Labour Day in Townsville was very well supported with approx. 80 members and their families attending the march and subsequent family fun day in Strand Park (see photo). A great day was had by all and it was good to relax and socialise, over a couple of beers, with the members. The most heartening thing for me on the day was the number of children from all unions attending the march. On a lot of occasions these kids chanted louder than their parents did!! If this is the future of the union movement, I am sure it is in very safe hands....

Cheers.



MACKAY REPORT

GLENN HALL

No backing down at BMA Bowen Basin

Since February this year the dispute between the combined unions (ETU, CFMEU, AMWU) and BHP Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA) across six mines in the Bowen Basin has gone from bad to worse.

Key outstanding issues:

- Rosters.
- Living conditions and accommodation.
- Maintenance of union elected safety positions.

BMA has twice put out a non-endorsed agreement and both times they have been resoundingly defeated with the latest result in May producing a staggering 83% no vote.

So why don't BMA get the message? Put simply they are doing the bidding of their big business mates who are in turn slowly but surely using everything in their armoury to demand the dismantling of the FairWork Act.

Given the risky state of the federal labor government and the prospect of wall to wall coalition governments this push will only get stronger.

What we need to do, stand strong and stay united, one of the hallmarks of the BMA dispute has been the capacity for three unions, the CFMEU, ETU and AMWU to join together and fight as a Single Bargaining Unit (SBU)

BMA are playing hardball, much the same as QANTAS did late last year. They have used every trick in the book including threatening to take investment overseas, declaring a Force Majeure over the mines and threatening and proceeding with mine closures including the closure of the Norwich Park mine. The Norwich Park Mine decision had a significant effect on me as it was where I worked for 17 years prior to becoming an organiser with the ETU, and many good mates were still there. See photo of special RIP T shirt signed by ETU members at the site.

Despite 18 months of stalled negotiations, the SBU is standing strong with the combined union members voting to undertake a seven day strike from May 24th across the six remaining sites.





NORTHERN TERRITORY REPORT

MICHAEL HAIRE

ETU reach high notes for injured comrades

In October 2011, 2 ETU Members employed at the Power and Water Corporation, Ferdie Mauboy and Kevin Grant were seriously burnt in an 11KV accident at the Casuarina Zone substation in Darwin's northern suburbs. Both men sustained horrific burns and were left in induced comas for a number of weeks while receiving expert treatment in Darwin and Adelaide.

Their ETU Delegates immediately set up a Benefit Fund to start raising funds to assist with all manner of out of pocket expenses families are subject to at times like this. The Delegates ensured all contributions raised were matched by Power and Water and the NT Government.

Members, employees and the general public kicked in to raise thousands of dollars with significant donations from the ETU's Queensland and NT branch, the ETU National office and local contractors. We even had rank and file Members from interstate donate toward the fund in a true display of solidarity

Local businesses and bands got behind a Fundraising night with sporting memorabilia auctioned at the Railway Club in November. The night was well attended by sporting identities, and local Ministers. Three ETU Members played in a band that

entertained the hundreds of people that attended in between auctions.

Ferdie has now returned to work in a reduced capacity and Kevin continues to astound people with his determination and progress through his recovery

The Mauboy and Grant families would like to take the opportunity to thank the ETU's Members, Delegates and Officials that assisted in any way. They will be eternally grateful for everyone's time, effort and donations that will assist in improving their standard of life as they continue their rehabilitation.



Gus Cameron (front), Jim Preston (Left) and Trevor Hankinson (Right) in 19 Mile band

May Day in the Territory

Once again May Day in Territory was a great success with good turnouts in Darwin and Alice Springs please see photos below.





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ETU Workers Compensation Union Law Service Case Study

John, an ETU member recently accessed the ETU's Workers Compensation Union Law service when his application for Workers Compensation was rejected by WorkCover Queensland. On the first day of a 9-day fortnight work rotation in Central Queensland, staying at the hotel organized by his employer John suffered an injury. When he was going from his hotel room to catch a bus across the road to transport him to his work site, he fell down the hotel stairs, injuring his leg. He applied for Workers' Compensation on the basis that he was injured when he was away from home to work.

WorkCover rejected the application on the basis that John has sustained his injury within the boundary of his property/residence even though John resided in Brisbane. However John would not have been at the hotel in Central Queensland if he was not working in this fly in fly out role for his employer. The employer advised WorkCover that the hotel was not under their control, that the applicant had a choice of where he stayed, and that the employer had no control over John's choice of accommodation.

As a part of the ETU's Workers' Compensation Union Law service, John was referred to Hall Payne Lawyers which undertook enquiries on John's behalf and these revealed that John never paid for accommodation whilst he stayed at that hotel. In fact, the hotel had always been booked by the employer and was considered an accommodation privilege that could be revoked if the worker behaved inappropriately. Other workers working at the same site as John also stayed at this particular hotel. In addition, the employer provided its workers with free transport to the site every morning. The extensive involvement that the employer had with the hotel was therefore established and revealed the strong ties between John's work and his accommodation.

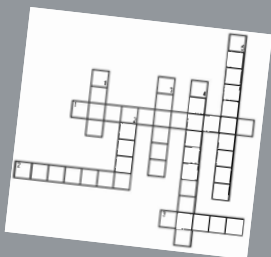
Ultimately Q-comp decided that the original decision of WorkCover was wrong because had it not been for John's employment with the employer, he would not have been residing at the hotel and would have had no reason to be walking down the stairs when he fell. The decision by WorkCover was overturned and John's claim has now been approved.

This case demonstrates how members of the ETU can benefit from a Workers' Compensation Union Law referral to Hall Payne Lawyers if they have any questions or problems regarding Workers' Compensation. I can report that of 16 reviews conducted under this union law service during the past 10 months 11 have been successful. This legal service provided to you by the ETU is one of the many benefits of your membership in the union. Call your ETU Organiser or the ETU Office for more information about this service or for a Workers' Compensation Union Law referral. In particular, members are advised to seek legal advice if their claim for Workers' Compensation is rejected, ceased too early or if a lump sum offer is being made to them.

Crossword Solution

Across	Down
1. electrician	1. volt
2. sparkie	2. cable
3. union	3. strike
	4. picketline
Key	5. insulation

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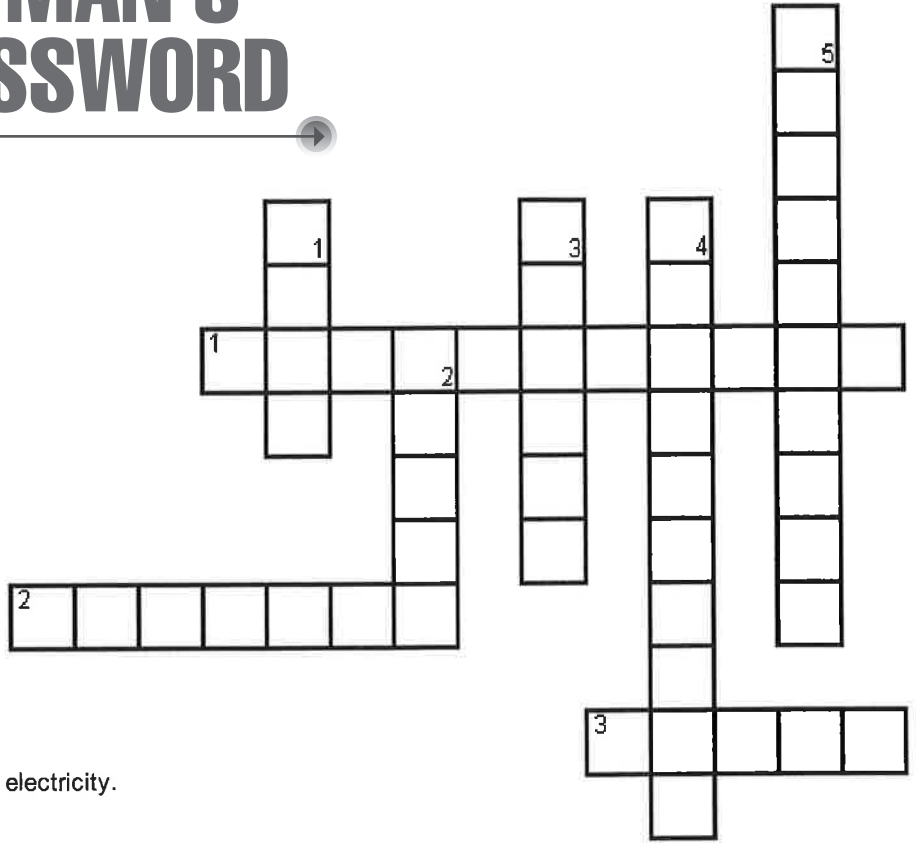
BOLTMAN'S CROSSWORD

Across

1. A individual who works in the electrical industry.
2. Nick name for an electrician.
3. A group of workers committed to supporting each other.

Down

1. Unit of electric force.
2. Insulated wires for carrying electricity.
3. Withdrawal of ones labour.
4. Union members standing together.
5. Substance that prevents the passage of electricity.



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