



## Employment and Industrial Relations

Policy Category: G. Sustainable Economy

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### Principles

*The Australian Greens believe that:*

1. Australia must have a fair and equitable industrial relations system for all workers.
2. all people have the right to pursue their well-being in conditions of freedom and dignity, economic security and equal opportunity.
3. Australia's future workforce must be highly skilled, highly trained and well paid; the existence of a safety net and the right to collectively bargain are essential to achieving these aims.
4. working people must receive fair and equitable remuneration for their work.
5. working people have the right to be involved in decisions about their work.
6. the right to be a member of a union, to collectively bargain, to collectively withhold labour and collectively organise in the workplace is essential to achieving a sustainable and democratic future.
7. free, independent and democratic unions are an essential pillar of a civil society.
8. people have the right to a safe workplace free from occupational hazards.
9. industrial manslaughter is a crime.
10. the objectives of profitability and efficiency should not override social and ecological objectives.
11. effective processes of conciliation and arbitration before an independent tribunal are a necessary element in any fair and effective industrial relations system.

### Goals

*The Australian Greens want:*

12. the Coalition Government's 'Work Choices' regime, which attacks the working rights of all Australians, to be opposed and repealed.
13. an industrial relations system that protects and enhances the rights of employees and workers by:
  - legislating a minimum standard for pay, annual leave and hours of work that protects all employees and workers;
  - providing comprehensive industry-wide awards that give rights and entitlements in excess of the legislative minimums and which are determined by conciliation and arbitration before an effective and independent industrial tribunal;
  - facilitating industry wide collective agreements that are union negotiated and exceed the Award standards; and
  - ensuring that workplace and union-led bargaining is the primary tool for obtaining industrial outcomes by putting in place a sufficient threshold before any party can refer a dispute to conciliation and arbitration.
14. restoration and maintenance of strong state and national industrial relations systems.
15. the promotion of collective agreements as the primary means of regulating employment.
16. full protection of accrued entitlements of employees.
17. full employment, and job security for all who seek employment.

## AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Employment and Industrial Relations (cont'd)

[www.greens.org.au/about/policies](http://www.greens.org.au/about/policies)

18. protection against the forced casualisation of work and greater protection for existing casual workers.
19. equal access to paid work based on ability and irrespective of gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, marital or civil status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, union membership, disability or religion.
20. elimination of the gender pay gap.
21. a fairer sharing of paid work through mandated shorter standard working hours and a reversal of current trends towards increased unpaid overtime.
22. a more equitable distribution of corporate income between management and employees.
23. a better balance between work and family, social and community involvement.
24. the costs and benefits to employees of workplace bargaining to be shared fairly among all employees.

### Measures

#### *The Australian Greens will:*

25. repeal the Coalition Government's WorkChoices legislation.
26. abolish Australian Workplace Agreements and protect any existing entitlements through common law contracts underpinned by relevant state and federal awards or collective agreement.
27. require employers to enter into collective agreements with their workforce unless a majority are demonstrably opposed to collective bargaining, with the Industrial Relations Commission to have the power to arbitrate if no agreement can be reached.
28. require employers to inform new and existing employees that they are entitled to join a union, and enable the provision of information about the unions responsible for the sector and industry.
29. repeal provisions against legitimate union activity (such as sections 45D and 45E in the Trade Practices Act 1974), and protect unions and workers against common law actions.
30. legislatively protect the right to strike, as recognised in International Labour Organization conventions No. 87 and No. 98, as a fundamental right of workers to promote and defend their economic and social interests.
31. abolish the requirement for secret ballots before industrial action.
32. restore unions' right of entry to recruit members, inspect for and remedy breaches of occupational health and safety provisions, breaches of the Workplace Relations Act and relevant awards or agreements, and other activities relating to strengthening workers' organisations.
33. remove the restrictions on the right of trade unionists to have their dues deducted from their wages directly.
34. repeal any independent contractors legislation that strips employment rights from individuals.
35. limit the use of independent contractor arrangements to individuals who are genuinely running their own business.
36. create and enforce industrial and immigration laws that stop the exploitation of foreign workers, by ensuring they receive the same pay and entitlements as a local worker doing the same job.
37. establish minimum employment standards for trainees and apprentices.
38. ensure that relevant training and skills development is made available to all workers, including apprentices, trainees, part-time and casual employees, without loss of pay.
39. abolish the Australian Building and Construction Commission and repeal the Building and Construction Industry Improvement Act.
40. abolish the Office of the Employment Advocate and the Office of Workplace Services and reinstate the functions of the Industrial Relations Commission.

## AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Employment and Industrial Relations (cont'd)

[www.greens.org.au/about/policies](http://www.greens.org.au/about/policies)

41. require the Commonwealth Occupational Health and Safety Authority (Comcare) to fund additional industry liaison staff, review provisions under Comcare so that workers receive fair treatment and benefits and are not disadvantaged.
42. introduce national industrial manslaughter laws.
43. restore the right of all employees, including casual, fixed term and probationary workers, to challenge termination of employment where it is unfair, with reinstatement to be the remedy except in exceptional circumstances.
44. repeal the current National Code of Practice for the Construction Industry.
45. repeal the higher education workplace relations requirements.
46. increase casual loadings to a minimum of 30% and introduce the ability for casual employees to convert to permanent part time work after 3 months of continuous employment, where employment is on a continuous ongoing basis.
47. provide a national parental leave scheme.
48. establish a National Pay Equity Standard to help correct the gender pay gap.
49. provide industrial tribunals with full powers to make orders to give effect to gender pay equity, on a workforce, industry or workplace basis.
50. establish industry trust funds for protection of workers' entitlements.
51. require the ABS to publish more meaningful monthly measures of underemployment and unemployment, with broader definitions of unemployment.
52. amend the Trade Practices Act to introduce a National Unfair Contracts regime.
53. use a combination of government job creation and industry policy to achieve full employment and job security for all who seek employment.
54. legislate for a mandatory minimum of five weeks paid annual leave for all employees.
55. limit the tax deductibility of any executive salaries to 25 times the minimum full-time adult wage.