2016: Another busy year for the ETU WA

As you would be well aware, 2016 has been another busy year for the union and its members.

The ETU WA Branch would like to extend its thanks to all those members and supporters who have supported the union and its campaigns over the last 12 months.

From the crucial fight to save Western Power from privatisation, to the campaign for apprentices, as well as the numerous campaigns in the FIFO and construction sectors, the union and members have been working hard to protect and improve the rights and working conditions of workers in the electrical trades, with a number of significant wins along the way.

Unfortunately the 2016 Federal election saw the return of the Turnbull Liberal/National Government, and subsequently, with the help of One Nation and the cross benches, the return of its anti-worker, anti-union ABCC.

The fight is set to continue in 2017, with the State Election in March and the likely sale of Western Power should the Barnett Government be returned, looming large.

The campaign to save Western Power is critical not only to ETU members, but all Western Australians, and the ETU will fight right up to election day, and beyond, to ensure Western Power stays in public hands.

We look forward to your support in 2017.
Federal Government interference trashes negotiations with Australian Submarine Corp

Recently ETU members from the Australian Submarine Corps (ASC) Henderson facility, started a series of rolling bans and stoppages, as unprecedented meddling and the imposition of Australian Public Service guidelines by the Federal Turnbull government, trashed an enterprise bargaining process that had already dragged on for two years.

ETU members at the ASC's Australian Marine Complex facility south of Perth, voted overwhelmingly to endorse protected industrial action including stop work meetings, bans on work away from site, overtime and call outs.

Unfortunately the Federal government's ideological war on Australian workers and interference in the bargaining process, left ETU members with no choice but to take protected industrial action to get some of kind of compromise on the table.

With the government hell-bent on removing workforce consultation on critical workplace matters such as rostering and permanency of employment (an industry-standard to avoid escalation of disputes across the heavy engineering sector) members felt compelled to take action.

These workers aren't public servants. They get none of the benefits of the public sector but are now expected to accept public sector bargaining constraints. ASC has known industrial peace for many years due to the diligent work of union representatives and the constructive approach of Submarine Corp management.

Members were close to an agreement with ASC after two years of bargaining, but the Turnbull government came in with a wrecking ball and trashed 25 years of industrial harmony at ASC.

This is not about money, it's about the Federal government directing the ASC to strip more than 80 conditions from our Enterprise Agreement, including dispute resolution and consultation over roster changes.

Our members are dedicated, highly skilled and highly productive, and they deserve better than this shabby treatment.

The campaign continues!
Senate passes legislation to re-establish anti-worker ABCC

Late November 2016 saw legislation passed through the Senate to re-establish the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC).

With the help of One Nation and other cross bench Senators, the Turnbull Government were able to pass legislation that will see the re-establishment of the anti-worker, anti-union ABCC.

However in a small win for workers, the bill that was finally passed was not the same bill previously proposed by the Federal L/NP government, and quite different to one they took to the double dissolution election in July.

In order to secure the support of some of the cross benches (i.e. Derryn Hinch’s Justice Party and Nick Xenophon Team senators), the Turnbull government were forced to make serious concessions and accept substantial amendments to the legislation.

Whilst the re-establishment of these draconian and discriminatory laws is bad news for workers, these amendments will help make the legislation slightly less oppressive for workers.

One key amendment included in the legislation will allow builders that have non-code compliant agreements to tender for Commonwealth-funded projects for the next two years.

Other amendments passed with the legislation include:

- builders tendering for government work required to provide information on local content and compliance with Australian Standards;
- the establishment of a security of payment working group;
- the ABCC required to act impartially and in a "reasonable and proportionate manner" to each of the categories of building industry participants;
- the construction code must include provisions that seek to give preference to Australian workers rather than those on visas;
- the Commissioner required to enforce the Fair Work Act's requirements on wages and entitlements, general protections, including protection of freedom of association and prohibitions on coercion, discrimination, sham arrangements, industrial action, strike pay and right of entry.
Christmas greetings from the ETUWA

Dear Members

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family, a safe and happy Christmas from myself, and all the Officers and Staff.

Please note that over the Christmas period, The ETU Union office will be closed from 12.00pm, Wednesday 21st December 2016, and then reopening from 8.00am, Monday 3rd January 2017.

Proud to be Union.

Les McLaughlan
Secretary ETU WA Branch

Click [here](#) for all membership enquiries