

Working Hours And Work Intensification: Issues and Facts

Quick Fact:

Almost one third of full-time employees work more than 48 hours per week; more than half of these are non-managerial, and a third of these work more than 60 hours per week. Australia has the largest proportion of employees working long hours in the OECD. Australia is now the second longest working time country in the developed world.

Issues For Policy At Congress 2003

- from 1856 until 1947 Australia consistently had among the best hours of work regimes in the world. However, since 1983 average hours of work have steadily grown.
- the standard working week is currently worked by only one third of the full-time workforce: fewer than half of all employees only work Monday to Friday, a quarter work weekends, and one in eight have variable hours.
- one in seven workers are working fewer hours than they want, with one quarter of these working part-time because they cannot find full-time work.
- working in excess of an average of 48 hours per week represents probably the largest occupational health and safety risk faced by Australian workers today.
- 60% of overtime is unpaid

ACTU Draft Policy

To build on the the Reasonable Hours Test Case the ACTU and unions will:

- Further investigate the effect of the *European Union Directive on Working Time*, which provides for a limit of an average 48 hours per week, including overtime
- Strengthen the enforcement of payment for overtime, and seek paid overtime rights where they are currently inadequate.
- Bargain to include the right to refuse unreasonable overtime in agreements.
- Improve enforcement of the rights of permanent part-time workers to the pro rata entitlements of full-time workers, including access to training and promotion.
- Authorise a possible test case to cap weekly working hours at 48.

More information on Working Hours in available on the ACTU Website

- a comprehensive Congress background paper and
- the full draft policy

www.actu.asn.au/congress2003

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