

Friday, 2 February 2018

## **ACTU statement on the passing of Andrew Casey**

The ACTU expresses our sorrow and condolences on behalf of everyone in the Australian union movement to the family and loved ones of Andrew Casey, who passed away suddenly Thursday.

After starting his working life as a boilermaker's assistant, Andrew transitioned into the media, working as a reporter covering industrial relations and education for the Fairfax newspapers in Australia and London, before taking a communications position at the ACTU under Bill Kelty, where he worked for nearly a decade.

He served the movement in subsequent roles at the Australian Workers Union, the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union, the Australian Nurses and Midwives Foundation and the Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Union (now United Voice).

Andrew's work laid the foundations for the online component of the strong campaigning culture that exists within the Australian union movement. He ran the first Australian email campaign for wage justice for working people at the Hilton Hotel during his time at the LHMU, and was a founding editor of global union news portal LabourStart.

Andrew was a committed and active member of the Australian Journalists Association and the Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance, and a passionate educator of journalists about industrial relations. His legacy includes the establishment of a Walkley Award for industrial relations reporting.

Andrew arrived in Australia as a refugee from Hungary when he was a small child in the 1950s – he was fond of saying he had people smugglers to thank for his life in Australia.

He was a passionate campaigner for social justice both within Australia and throughout the world, particularly for asylum seeker and human rights causes.

Andrew is survived by his brother, son and daughter.

### **Quotes attributable to Sally McManus, ACTU Secretary:**

“The passing of Andrew Casey represents an immense loss to the Australian union movement.”

“Andrew's contribution to the lives of working people in this country, his tireless energy and his guidance for young unionists and reporters will be sorely missed.

“Andrew was the kind of unionist we all aspire to be – he lived union values every day, giving his experience, his wisdom and his time to improve the lives of working Australians. He was principled, compassionate and generous.

“He was an elder statesman, a moral barometer and an active and vigorous campaigner for the length of his life.

“On behalf of all Australian unionists I offer condolences to his friends, family and loved ones.”

**Quotes attributable to MEAA media section President Marcus Strom**

“Andrew was an active member of the Australian Journalists Association and MEAA for all his working life.”

“He already had a fine record as a newspaper journalist before becoming a pioneer of modern union communications.

“He was passionate about preserving good industrial relations reporting, and was the driving force behind the establishment of the Walkley Award for workplace journalism.”

“He will be sorely missed.”

**ENDS**

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